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**"Why don't you let her try doing it herself?" Ideological and practical conflict
in the early childhood classroom**

by

Gay Wilgus

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City
University of New York**

2002

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

"Why don't you try letting her do it herself?" Ideological and Practical Conflict in the Early Childhood Classroom

by

Gay Wilgus

Adviser: Distinguished Professor Stanley Aronowitz

Diverse ideologies, values and beliefs about childrearing and early educational practice can create conflict in the early childhood classroom. Some conflictual ideologies derive from teachers' cultural, ethnic or educational backgrounds, others occur between teachers of similar background. Conflict of this nature has been given scant attention by research literature and by teacher training programs.

Existent studies suggest that teachers' ideological and practical choices can be understood exclusively in terms of their cultural backgrounds. This study maintains that other elements are involved, since some teachers espouse ideologies antithetical to those attributed to their cultural groups.

The theoretical framework addresses problems with traditional early childhood research methodologies which rarely solicit early childhood teachers' input. Researchers often work at a significant distance from the

early childhood classroom, generating theory, policy, curriculum innovation and professional development strategies which do not benefit classroom teachers.

Research was conducted in New York City at 1. an Early Head Start program in a housing project and 2. a preschool serving upper middle class families. Teachers at both sites were from diverse cultural and class backgrounds. Ethnographic data included extensive classroom observation and open-ended interviews in which teachers described their beliefs about and practical approaches to early childhood education, then identified which of these results in conflict with co-workers.

"Categories of conflict" were identified for each school. These included conflict over 1. encouragement of children's autonomy versus adherence to teacher direction 2. appropriate limit setting strategies 3. feeding, napping and carrying practices 4. treatment of co-teachers and subordinates 5. disagreements with administrative policy and practice 6. the role and rights of parents at school 7. curriculum and materials

Identified conflicts were then historically contextualized. Conflicts common to both sites were compared in detail.

Questions raised by the study are explored. These include: Should Developmentally Appropriate Practice invariably serve as the "bottom line" in early childhood classroom practice? Should teachers' or parents' "intuitive" beliefs about childrearing wield weight? Is the child's "best interest" at risk when one voice is overpowered by the other?

Indications for reform of teacher training programs and for mediated discussions among early childhood personnel are made.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Linda Flowers, Professor of English Literature at North Carolina Wesleyan College, whose untimely death from cancer in January of 2000 left a great hole in my circle of support for this project. Her perspective-giving advise and sense of humor about dissertation writing, no doubt, was crucial to my completing this study. It would have given me great pleasure to tell her I had.

and

to her good friend, my mother, Anne, for always being so enthusiastic about almost anything I decide to do

and

to my own early childhood gang, my sister and brothers, Shelley, Walter and Alex

and finally

to the memory of my father, James, who died in 1991, the year I began my doctoral studies; he would have been very excited to know I finished.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

It is 9:30 a.m. in Loretta's two's classroom at the Children's Center. Hazel and her best friend, Claire, are fingerpainting at the art table. They are each covered up to their elbows in blue and red paint. Special fingerpainting paper has been placed inside "messy trays" with low edges to keep the paint from going all over the table. Hazel and Claire make huge swirls on the paper with their hands, mixing red and blue paint together. They look across the table at each other and giggle. Hazel holds her hands up for Claire to see. She opens and closes her hands, savoring the feeling of the gushy paint, squealing with glee. She claps her hands together so that small drops of fingerpaint splatter out from her hands and fall to the paper. Stella, the assistant teacher, looking up at the sound of Hazel's clapping, makes a beeline from the block area to the art table. "Okay, that's enough," she pronounces. "You're making a huge mess. It's time to clean up. Let's go." She grasps Hazel by the wrists, holding her hands over her head as she propels her from behind to the bathroom. Once there, she turns on the water and thrusts Hazel's hands under the faucet, rubbing them together vigorously. "You're not supposed to get it all over you, you're just supposed to paint on the paper with your fingers!" she admonishes as she scrubs Hazel's forearms. "If you want to play with the paint you have to remember that...otherwise you make too big of a mess and I have to clean it up!" All signs of delight have faded from Hazel's face as she stares into the running water. The excitement that filled her body moments ago has dissipated into resignation. Loretta, the head teacher, watches from outside the bathroom door, a pensive look on her face. Finally she approaches Stella. "It's really okay if they make a mess...that's how two year-olds explore and learn...in fact it's really important for her to see what the paint feels like, even on her arms." Stella turns and marches out of the bathroom, leaving Hazel poised at the sink, "Well then YOU clean her up!" she quips. Loretta mutters at Stella's retreating back, "Why don't you try letting her do it herself?"

No doubt hundreds of scenarios of this nature are played out in early childhood classrooms all over the country, if not the globe, daily if not hourly. The range of beliefs, values and ideologies about childrearing and early educational practices is extensive. Some ideologies involve abstract notions which leave it to the discretion of the individual educator or parent to determine their concrete curricular implications; others involve rigidly systemized prescriptions for adult interaction with and instruction of children. The early childhood classroom is one place in which teachers, administrators and parents with different ideologies and practical approaches to the education and care of young children come into contact with one another,

setting the stage for conflict. The resultant scenarios could be referred to as, in Julia Wrigley's words, an "ideological minefield" (Wrigley, 2001). Some of the conflict-causing ideas or practices stem from firmly embedded notions derived from teachers' cultural or ethnic backgrounds. In other situations, conflict occurs between teachers from the same or similar ethnic or cultural backgrounds or between teachers who have identical educational backgrounds, that is, who attended the same teacher training program. In any case, when conflict arises, significant consequences for both teachers and children emerge. My first hand experience in such situations is the primary motivation for this study.

The most difficult aspect of my work as a group teacher of two year-olds arose from scenarios like the one described above. Each schoolyear I supervised at least one assistant, one aide, and six student teachers. These various people would arrive in the classroom with diverse ideas about how best to interact and work with two year-olds. Many times their ideas were different from, and sometimes sharply opposed to, my ideas own ideas about appropriate ways to interact with young children. In a few cases, their ideas alarmed me. For example, one elderly woman who was participating in an early childhood certification program for senior citizens refused to let one of the little girls wear a blue smock to paint. She insisted that the child must wear pink and stood by this pronouncement until the child lost interest in painting altogether.

This situation and others like it made me quite uncomfortable: I wondered, "Should I state my "expert" opinion as a graduate of Bank Street College's Infant Toddler Parent Development Masters Program, insisting that the other teacher conform to my model? Could I "let it slide," even though it went against a pinciple of child development I had learned to hold dear?

What would be the long term implications of my decision for the child? Would she experience some sort of permanent developmental damage if I didn't intervene with developmentally appropriate practice? What about the other teacher? Would she be defensive? receptive? hostile? hurt? All these questions mingled together, making me unsure and indecisive and, at times, paralyzed in anticipation of the consequences of my choice of action.

Complicating matters was the fact that my co-teachers, assistants and aides were frequently from different cultural groups than I. While they were African-American, Caribbean-American, Puerto Rican, Dominican and, in one case, Nigerian, I am white, or as Cynthia Ballenger would say, "North American." As Mallory (1994) New (1994) Lubeck (1994) Holloway and Fuller (1999) and Gonzalez-Mena (2001) have each discussed problems with the notion that other teachers or I should simply decree to these teachers that they must do things "my way," the middle class white way, the way endorsed by the dominant culture. Simply standing behind the arguments "because this was what I had learned in my teacher training program," or "because according to developmental theory..." or "according to Developmentally Appropriate Practice (the National Association for the Education of Young Children's position statement on early childhood educational practice) states..." did not seem sufficient rationale. Aren't the origins of the student teacher's or aide's thinking due some consideration? Perhaps their reasons for handling a situation with a child "their way" were "valid" on some alternative grounds, that is, on grounds other than Piagetian principles or Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

Unfortunately discussion over the possibility of finding oneself in ideological-come-practical conflict, including ones which were culturally based, with one's co-workers had not been given substantial attention by my teacher

training program. Student teaching seminars addressed this issue tangentially, as many times students would bring up issues of co-worker conflict for group discussion. I became invested in the project of sending my graduate students into their first early childhood teaching experiences better prepared for co-worker conflict than I myself had been. As anyone who has worked with very young children knows, the relationships between co-teachers, teachers and assistant teachers and student teachers must be healthy, functional ones, in fact must be something like a good marriage, if the classroom dynamic is to be even tolerable. As theory describes and as practical experience bears out, when children sense tension between the adults who are taking care of them, they absorb this tension in very visceral ways. Although they are unlikely to speak about it, one is likely to see its detrimental effects in different forms, like aggression or withdrawal.

I believed one aspect of implementing my project - better preparing teachers for coworker-conflict - would involve generating a body of research which discusses how conflict occurs and is played out between teachers in various early childhood classrooms settings. Specifically, I wanted to describe and analyze what happens when teachers with diverse early childcare ideologies and interactional styles with children encounter one another in the day-to-day routines of early childhood education. Research materials of this nature, I believed, could provide insights into the sources, nature, details and usual outcomes of ideological and practical conflict between early childhood teachers. Such material could moreover be utilized in teacher education/training programs to better prepare teachers-in-training for their real-live classroom experience.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is focused on problems with existent approaches to early childhood educational research. Of foremost concern is that early childhood teachers' professional and personal knowledge is given little consideration when it comes to decisions about the content of teacher training programs, early childhood educational policy and reform (Schulman 1987), teachers' professional development (Holloway and Fuller 1999). Decisions about these issues are typically left to policymakers and academics whose work frequently takes place at a significant distance from the early childhood classroom. Teachers who work on the "front lines" of the early childhood classroom, are rarely perceived as a viable source for early educational research material. One consequence of this situation is the generation of research literature which sometimes has little to do with the everyday, lived situations of daycare and preschool teachers. The resultant "knowledge" is, as Goodson describes,

from the teacher's point of view, decontextualized...it is produced 'out there, and 'up there' on an apparently superior plane in forms and terms with which they cannot engage. Further, much of this knowledge appears to be critical of teachers (Goodson, 1992:15).

To make matters worse, early educational policy and guidelines for classroom practice derived from this body of research risks to house an agenda different from those of teachers, to "miss the point" with respect to the actual situations of teachers and children in schools (Swadener and Marsh 1995). Additionally, as Clandinin and Connelly point out,

Packaged knowledge and policy claims...have an ethereal quality, as if they somehow appeared and exist independent of human agency. This gives them an "unconditional" and "depersonalized" quality (Clandinin and Connelly 1995:11).

Schwab (1983) has pointed to the overall danger of this situation, asserting its possibility to create "stripped down knowledge claims" or "rhetorics of conclusion." From these arise what Clandinin and Connelly (1995) call "sacred stories," that is, ideologies which are promoted in teacher education programs or by practicing teachers for whom the origins of these ideologies are obscure, sometimes appearing to have an almost mythical origin. As the current study bears out, sacred stories are sometimes "preached" to teachers-in-training, or even veteran teachers, without ever having been critically examined by the "preachers."

Owing to this problematic situation, as described above, it is the argument of this study that early childhood educational research needs to devote more significant attention to teachers' professional and personal knowledge - not only for broader decisions about early childhood educational policy and guidelines, but for with reference to the curricular content of teacher education programs as well. As discussed previously, this study particularly focuses on teachers' personal and professional knowledge derived from situations of coworker conflict. In describing situations where their philosophical commitments to early childhood education and choices of classroom practices have brought them into conflict with other teachers and administrators, teachers reveal the essential values, beliefs and ideologies they espouse.

Existent studies have suggested that the source of teachers' ideology and practice can be identified and understood exclusively in terms of teachers' cultures of origin. Sally Lubeck (1985) asserts that the black teachers she observed at a Head Start program appeared to value group solidarity over

individuality in children. Accordingly, the daily schedule they devised for children included very little time for "free play," that is, time in which children were free to move around the space at a pace they determined, working with whatever materials interested them at the moment, in modes determined by their own curiosity. On the other hand, large amounts of time were devoted to group activities in which children were expected to listen to adult instruction and to respond as a group with the "correct" answer to teacher-posed questions.

By contrast, the white teachers at a preschool program allotted two large slots of the daily schedule to free play. During this time children learned to select, begin, engage in and end explorations of materials on their own. Additionally, children were provided with "transformational materials" like water, sand and clay, which offer numerous possibilities for children's manipulation and discovery. Also teachers conversed with children during their explorations encouraging them in their efforts and giving them new vocabulary to describe their activities.

The black teachers, on the other hand, spent the children's "free play" time doing paperwork in a section of the room off-limits to children (Lubeck, 1985). All told, the white teachers were heavily invested in helping children to develop and pursue their own individual interests, in modes chosen by the children themselves while the black teachers were wanted to children to focus on learning to "be part of the group."

Carol Joffe has discussed the childrearing and early educational values of the middle class white parents of children at a nursery school in Berkeley as compared to those of the working class black parents of children at the school. Joffe found a significant difference in black parents' vs white parents' attitudes toward the teaching of "basic skills," e.g., reading, writing and math,

to nursery school-aged children. While white parents perceived their children's nursery school experience as a "last chance for freedom" (Joffe, 1977:75), black parents stated they "wouldn't mind if (teachers) tried teaching [their children] something..." since they believed their children "were ready for that" (Joffe, 1977:116) Since the black parents believed their children would be frequently required to sit, listen and wait when they entered elementary school, they thought it important that their children begin learning these skills in nursery school.

In a similar vein, Kohn (1977) has argued that while encouraging children to conform to external demands can be associated with working-class families, middle-class families prefer that their children learn self-direction (Powell, 1994).

It is the position of the current study that the elements which come into play when daycare and preschool teachers formulate beliefs about early education and practice are significantly more obscure and complex than these studies suggest. In fact, sometimes teachers adopt early educational philosophies and praxes which are antithetical to those attributed to their cultural groups of origin by existent studies. For example, although harsh disciplinary measures - including yelling across the room at children - have traditionally been associated with minority groups, in the current study it was the middle class white teachers were more frequently observed engaging in such behavior. While certain teacher characteristics such as culture of origin, socioeconomic class, or training in certain teacher education programs, can sometimes be linked with teachers' early educational ideologies and classroom practice, it is the argument of this study that other, less visible elements come into play here. Rather, what happens is that elements from teachers' cultures of origin, teacher training programs and other experiences

are mixed together and reconfigured in such a way that a teacher sometimes emerges with beliefs and practices that bear no obvious relation to any of his "characteristics." For example, teachers who have attended the same teacher education program, taken all the same courses and studied with all the same professors, sometimes come away with vastly different - if not directly opposing - ideas about appropriate modes for interacting with young children.

Accordingly, it is the position of this study that only through the use of more comprehensive methodological approaches, like teacher narratives of practice and teacher life stories, does the researcher stand a chance at identifying and understanding the more nuanced elements that come into play in daycare and preschool teachers' philosophical and practical choices.

METHODOLOGY

Research was conducted at two sites in New York City, the Lower East Side Early Head Start (LESEHS) program and the Children's Center in Lower Manhattan. LESEHS serves 0-3 year old children who reside in the housing project in which it is located. The majority of the children are Puerto Rican and Dominican. The other children at the school are African-American and Chinese. Many parents are participating in welfare-to-work programs, others are employed as cashiers, maintenance workers, clerical workers and retail saleshelp. There are three classrooms, one for infants, one for one year-olds and one for two year-olds. Two of the head teachers for the program are white as is the director. The assistant director is Puerto Rican. One head teacher is Filipina. All three assistant teachers are Hispanic - one is Peruvian and two are Puerto Rican.

Almost all the children at the Children's Center are middle and upper middle class whites. In seven classrooms of approximately 15 children each there are a total of eight African-American children, and usually one or two Asian children per class. There is a heavy international presence, mostly European. Most parents work in professional fields, including investment banking, law, fashion design, architecture, real estate, theater and film. Of the head teachers at the Children's Center, five are white, as are all three administrators. One of the head teachers is Caribbean-American and one is African. Five assistant teachers are white, one is African-American, one is Puerto Rican. These sites were selected owing to the fact that, as previously mentioned, one area of interest for the study was the potential role played by teachers' cultural and ethnic backgrounds in co-worker conflict situations. A diversity of cultural and ethnic backgrounds was represented by the teachers and parents at these two sites.

In keeping with the above-described theoretical position, the bulk of the research data was gathered through open-ended interviews with teachers and administrators in which they were encouraged to construct and recount their individual "narratives of teaching" and "life stories" as teachers. Teachers at each site were also formally observed during classroom activities for sessions of at least one hour, once per week for a period of one year. Teachers were each interviewed, at length, at three points during the study: once at the beginning of the year of observation, again in the middle and a third time at the end of the observation year. Interviews lasted anywhere from 45 minutes to two hours, depending on the amount of material the interviewee volunteered. During the initial interview teachers were asked to describe their larger philosophical positions on early childhood education, what they valued most in their work, what they believed were the most important things they

taught children, and how they went about doing these. Additionally, they were asked to describe which, if any, of their philosophical commitments and which of their classroom practices had brought them into conflict with other teachers, administrators and parents. They were then asked to describe the nature and details of these conflicts, as well as their outcomes. In subsequent interviews, teachers were asked to "update" the researcher on any changes in educational philosophy or classroom practices they had made. They were also asked to describe any new conflicts they had experienced with other teachers, parents and administrators. All interview material was recorded in anecdotal form by the researcher.

Data collected from both interviews and observations were then aggregated in narrative form for each school. Analysis of this material involved identification of patterns and correlations in the substance and nature of the conflicts described by different teachers. The categories of conflict which emerged for LESEHS included disagreement over 1. how much one should encourage autonomy as opposed to adherence to teacher direction in children 2. appropriate limit setting strategies, including the language one should use when setting limits 3. how food should be served to children 4. appropriate treatment of co-teachers and subordinates, including appropriate forms of confrontation 5. disagreements with administrative policy and practice 6. what role and rights the parents should have/how teachers should interact with parents 7. appropriate curriculum and materials 8. how to help children (or not) deal with their emotions

Categories of conflict for teachers at the Children's Center involved disagreement over 1. teachers' disagreement with parents' limit setting and disciplinary techniques 2. differences in opinion between parents and teachers, between teachers, and between teachers, administrators and

parents, with reference to regulation of infant and toddler bodily functions, including feeding, napping, and diaper changing 3. differences in ideas of teachers and administrators as to appropriate curricular materials 4. differences between teachers, and between teachers and administrators with regard to appropriate interactional styles with children 5. teachers' problems with certain administrative policies 6. differences in ideas as to how subordinates - including assistant teachers, student teachers and parent volunteers - should be treated by superiors, i.e., head teachers and administrators.

Categories of conflict identified for each school were then correlated with the historical material described in Chapter 3 in an effort to place the contemporary conflicts over early childhood educational ideological and practice in historical context. As was established in Chapter 3, many of the conflicts described by teachers in the current study have occupied a conspicuous place at various moments in the history of early childhood education. Continuities, similarities and contrasts between the conflicts as historically described and as described in their contemporary versions were then sought.

Analysis of the findings for each site were then correlated. Categories of conflict common to both schools were identified. These included disagreement over 1. encouraging autonomy and independence in young children as opposed to promoting attention to teacher/adult direction 2. appropriate roles for parents in the preschool/daycare setting, including appropriate interactional styles for teachers to utilize with parents 3. appropriate disciplinary/limit setting techniques to utilize with children, and significantly, the language used by teachers during limit setting 4. policy and

.

curriculum 5. styles of serving food to children 6. what sorts of materials to use in the classroom and teachers' interactional styles in presenting these 7. flexibility in educational commitments and teaching style, that is, appropriateness of "thinking outside the box" when working with young children 8. appropriate levels of affection and familiarity between teachers and children 9. acceptable modes of confrontation between co-workers and 10. appropriate modes for the treatment of subordinates, including assistant teachers, student teachers and volunteers

Details of the conflicts as described by different teachers at each school were then compared in order to identify and discuss differences and similarities in the origins, nature and outcomes of common conflict. For example, although teachers at both schools discussed conflict with other teachers over "best practice" in feeding young children, the nature of the disagreement differed from site to site. Conflict over feeding children at the Children's Center focused on whether or not the teachers should serve the children's plates for them or whether the children should be allowed to serve themselves, i.e., take an active role in determining how much food they would consume. At LESEHS, teachers were conflicted over how much coercion to engage in at lunchtime. Teachers were aware that for some of the children at LESEHS, lunch might be the only full, nutritional meal they would receive all day. Thus they would encourage children to eat more than they seemed inclined to eat on their own. Sometimes they would tell children they needed to eat more before leaving the lunch table. Although some of the teachers were aware that coercing children to eat flies in the face of developmentally appropriate practice in that teachers are supposed to be encouraging children to develop self-regulatory skills, including self-feeding, they were also concerned about the child's physical well-being.

As mentioned previously, Chapter 3 details a critical history of early childhood educational ideology, practice and conflict over these. This chapter was included to provide an historical context for ideological and practical conflict as described by early childhood teachers in the current study. This material was not included in the curriculum of my teacher education program. When I learned of it while conducting the current study, I believe it provided me with new insights and a certain depth to my understanding of early educational conflicts in their contemporary version. I had formerly believed that the battles in which I found myself embroiled with other teachers and administrators were new - that I and the involved parties were the first to experience them. Thus discovering that, in fact, many of the battles that are being fought in contemporary early childhood settings had been fought in early childhood settings since shortly after the Civil War was a revelation. These battles have included disagreement over

1. the overall goals for early childhood education, for example, encouragement of children's autonomy over attention to adult direction
2. the role parents should play in children's education, both in formal and informal settings
3. the role of the teacher in early education, including the teacher's relationship to parents
4. the types of materials which should be provided for children in early educational settings
5. appropriate disciplinary or limit setting strategies.

I became interested not only in comparing the historical conflicts to their contemporary counterparts, but additionally to understanding why the same arguments repeatedly arise. For example, are there certain economic, social, cultural or political conditions under which these battles are produced? In any case, inclusion of this material seems important to the current study in that it can provide the reader, not to mention contemporary childcare workers,

educators and administrators, with tools to better understand early childhood ideological and practical conflict.

Finally, the larger implications of the study's findings are considered. In particular, the peculiar recurrence of certain "theme" conflicts over early childhood educational ideology and practice, as identified in the history chapter, is discussed in light of the contemporary versions of these conflicts as described by teachers in the study. Other questions raised by the study are also explored. These center on a search for an appropriate knowledge base and for appropriate criteria for the successful resolution of contemporary conflict over early childhood ideology and practice. Questions center on the following issues: Should Developmentally Appropriate Practice always serve as the "bottom line" or should teachers and parents more "intuitive" beliefs about early childhood practice wield more weight? Can both camps receive equal consideration? Are there situations where the child's "best interest" are put at risk by letting one voice overpower the other?

In the concluding discussion, recommendations for management of identified conflict situations are offered in the interest of pre-empting or reducing the possibility for such conflicts and all their accompanying negative effects for both teachers and children. These include recommendations for revisions to teacher education programs as well as for the implementation of mediated sessions and workshops within preschools and daycare centers, as discussed by Holloway and Fuller (1999).

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study centers on problems arising from epistemological and methodological approaches to early childhood educational research: specifically that early childhood teachers' professional and personal knowledge is frequently given last consideration when an appropriate basis is sought for the content of teacher training programs, for early childhood educational policy and reform (Schulman 1987), and for teachers' professional development (Holloway and Fuller 1999). Rather, decisions about these issues and the knowledge base on which they are made are routinely left to policymakers and academics who occupy positions distant from the early childhood classroom and with agenda which differ significantly from those of their subjects, the daycare and preschool teachers. Teachers have frequently been relegated to, at best, stepchild status when it comes to the very areas of knowledge in which they possess hard-earned expertise. That is to say, teachers who function on the "front lines" of the early childhood classroom, are rarely asked for input when it comes to discussing early childhood ideology and setting guidelines for classroom practice. This situation has moreover served to generate a body of research literature which often has little to do with the actual, everyday situations of teachers in daycare centers and preschools, as well as policy which does not appropriately address the situations of real-live teachers and children in schools (Swadener and Marsh 1995).

It is the argument of this study that it is this very body of knowledge - teachers' professional and personal knowledge - which should serve as the primary basis, not only for broader decisions about early childhood educational policy and guidelines, but for the curricular content of teacher education programs. The study will particularly focus on teachers' divergent

philosophical commitments as to early childhood education, as well as conflicts over early childhood classroom practice.

PROBLEMS RELATED TO EXISTING RESEARCH ON TEACHERS AND TEACHING

Goodson (1992), Clandinin and Connelly (1995) and others have described problems arising from the fact that research about teachers, teaching and educational ideology has routinely been conducted by academics and others whose work and focus are in many respects distant from the positions of the teachers themselves. Goodson describes the dangers inherent in acceptance of this practice, as well as its implicit message that the proper locus for control and expertise in educational research is the university community educational bureaucracies (Goodson 1992). Goodson refers to this perspective as one of "curriculum as prescription." He asserts that there are significant costs involved in accepting this "myth of prescription," for instance, a concomitant acceptance of existent modes of power relations. According to Middleton, the specific problem lies in the fact that, "people intimately connected with the day-to-day social construction of curriculum and schooling- teachers - are alienated from the 'discourse of schooling' " (Middleton 1992:20). Goodson adds that most educational research to date, particularly that which is utilized for teacher training, is written by academics who work within academic contexts, whose work is designed primarily for scholarly journals and whose audience is primarily other academics. As he describes,

The knowledge they produce is, from the teacher's point of view, decontextualized...it is produced 'out there, and 'up there' on an apparently superior plane in forms and terms with which they cannot engage. Further, much of this knowledge appears to be critical of teachers (Goodson, 1992:15).

In addition to distancing teachers from educational research, this preoccupation with prescription has yielded research materials of little practical use to professionals in the field as

they have found that little of this prescriptive technology is appropriate to specific situations whose nature is uniquely personal, instinctive, intuitive, reflective and practical (Goodson 1992: 15).

Butt et al have described how the application of prescriptive science to educational research has presented additional problems for educational reform.

..the hidden relationship between theory and practice in prescriptive science, that theory is superior to practice and must be directly applied to the practical in order to improve practice, [has become] embodied in the human interactions between reformers and teachers. The relationship between outsiders (reformers) to insiders (teachers) [is] a vertical and unequal one. Reformers [have] not [worked] with teachers in understanding classroom reality. In general, they [have been] ignorant of the culture of the school and classroom (Butt et al, 1992:53).

And

the reformer's neglect of the central role of teachers' intentions and pedagogical expertise in effecting significant classroom change has resulted in the limited impact of curriculum innovations on classroom practice (Butt et al 1992: 52).

Goodson has outlined a brief history of this marginalization of teachers by educational research. In the 60's teachers were "shadowy figures on the educational landscape, mainly known or unknown through large scale surveys or historical analysis of their position in the society...present in aggregate through imprecise statistics..." (Goodson, 1992:3) In the early 70's "case study researchers began to examine schooling as a social process...sympathies of the researcher lay primarily with the pupils...who were the underdogs in the classroom...teachers were the villains..." (Goodson, 1992:3). In the late 70's when the focus moved to "the constraints within

which teachers work....Teachers were transformed from villains to victims and in some cases, 'dupes' of the system" (Goodson, 1992: 4). This final phase, Goodson points out, directed research to the significance of how teachers view their lives and work, but without yet confronting "...the complexity of the schoolteacher as an active agent making his or her own history" (Goodson, 1992:4). Despite this apparent step in the right direction, Goodson asserts, teachers were still viewed and treated as "interchangeable types unchanged by circumstance or time..." (Goodson 1992:5)

McEwan has identified other problems in research on teachers and teaching:

reductive scientific approaches to the study of teaching aim to describe [teaching] in objective terms...to direct attention only to the outward and observable phenomena and take no account of the rich interior lives that teachers lead -their decision making, their plans and deliberation, and their habits of reflection (McEwan, 1995:170).

Goodson points out the large scale, problematic implications of these methodological approaches to the study of teachers and teaching:

the results of the research paradigms employed in the academy....slants the shape of its findings. By systematically failing to record the voices of ordinary teachers, the literature on educators' careers actually silences them. Methodologically, this means that even while investigating an issue where decision-making is paramount, researchers speculate on teachers' motivations, or at best, survey them with a set of forced-choice options. Theoretically what emerges is an instrumental view of teachers, one in which they are reduced to objects which can be manipulated for particular ends (Goodson, 1992:6).

OTHER OBSTACLES IN EDUCATIONAL RESERCH: DICHOTOMIZING OR COLLAPSING OF THE THEORY/PRACTICE RELATIONSHIP

Clandinin and Connelly describe other dilemmas created for both academics and educators alike by the above-mentioned perspective of the relationship between theory and practice:

At one end of the imagined continuum, educational researchers and theorists are expected to produce practically useful theoretical knowledge. But the record is bleak. The kind of research and theory produced tends to be held in little theoretical regard by disciplinary scholars and held to be of little practical value by practitioners. Education researchers who opt for more local, practical work tend to be dismissed by their own scholarly academy, while gaining little by way of practical acceptance. And researchers who opt for more theoretical pursuits tend to disappear from notice in the practical world while gaining little by way of status with their disciplinary colleagues. At the other end of the continuum, teacher practitioners are expected not merely to teach in a way that embodies an expert practical knowledge of teaching, but to do so reflectively. Furthermore, teaching, the practical knowledge it exhibits, and reflecting on it are thought to be dangerously narcissistic unless teachers use theoretical knowledge about teaching, learning and subject matter.. When teachers make an effort to use this theoretical knowledge as intended, they are often thought to be unprofessional , with insufficient confidence in their practical experience to work out what action should be taken (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995: 6).

Carr (1986) adds that past efforts to understand teacher practice have utilized a natural science model where practice is seen as atheoretical - as part of the phenomenal world, not the theoretical world.

This study asserts the importance of theorizing educational practice, specifically the classroom practice of daycare and preschool teachers. However, as mentioned previously, it is argued that such theorizing should be conducted by and with the practioners themselves. Underlying this argument is the belief that preschool and daycare teachers are not only capable of participating in intellectual conversations about their everyday activities but are in fact consistently obliged to do this on a day-to-day, sometimes moment-to-moment basis as they make the myriad decisions during their daily work with young children.

Clandinin and Connelly (1995) discuss the dangers associated with collapsing the terms "theoretical knowledge" and "practical knowledge": Practical knowledge refers to a "body of convictions and meanings, conscious or unconscious, that has arisen from experience (intimate, social, and traditional) and that are expressed in persons' practices" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:7). Practice, and thus practical knowledge, Clandinin and Connelly maintain, also includes "intellectual acts and self-exploration." Theoretical knowledge, by contrast, usually refers to "codified knowledge found in books" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:7).

Schwab maintains that the outcome of these reductionists tendencies results in "stripped down knowledge claims" which he terms a "rhetoric of conclusions." Clandinin and Connelly point out that school policy or other statements "stripped of the public deliberative origins" tend to have an "abstract epistemological quality of theoretical knowledge stripped of its inquiry origins" and thus appear as this sort of "rhetoric of conclusions" (Schwab, 1983 quoted in Clandinin and Connelly, 1995: 9).

Research findings in the current study suggest that certain early educational ideologies and the practices which derive from these are also susceptible to this type of reductionism. Specifically, certain ideologies promoted in teacher education programs can be "preached" to teachers-in-training or even veteran teachers without ever being critically examined by the teachers who subscribe to them, and who base their classroom practice on these. When this happens, such ideas and praxes take on the character of what Clandinin and Connelly call "sacred stories," ideas that appear to have some obscure, almost mythical origin. That is to say, the theoretical origins and the inquiry that gave rise to these ideas are rarely if ever examined by the people who believe and preach them.

Crites maintains that sacred stories are "so pervasive they remain unnoticed and when named are hard to define. They seem to be elusive expressions of stories that cannot be fully or directly told because they live in the arms and legs and bellies of the celebrants" (Crites, 1971 quoted in Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:8). Importantly, it is this somewhat camouflaged location of sacred stories - in the "legs and bellies" of their celebrants - which makes them largely inaccessible, in turn making them largely unassailable. In this way, sacred stories bear resemblance to the above-described educational research which is produced "out there and up there," that is, at a location inaccessible to teachers who might wish to contest it.

Crites has moreover pointed out that "the universality of the supremacy of theory over practice gives it the quality of a sacred story" (Crites, 1971 quoted in Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:8). To add to this dilemma, "theoretical knowledge claims uprooted from their origins and standing in abstract, objective independence" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:11) are then packaged for teachers in textbooks, curriculum materials, and professional development workshops. The ultimate consequence is that like the sacred stories and rhetoric of conclusions from which they are derived,

Packaged knowledge and policy claims...have an ethereal quality, as if they somehow appeared and exist independent of human agency. This gives them an "unconditional" and "depersonalized" quality (Clandinin and Connelly 1995:11).

Moreover, teachers are not, by and large, generally expected and sometimes not permitted to personalize these 'rhetoric of conclusion/sacred story' materials by considering how these fit their educational philosophies and teaching styles. In this sense, teachers are

screened from the subjectivity of human agency that gave rise to the material ... while being taught that their own agency with regard to the decontextualized and denarrativized material would amount to incompetence and disobedience...To debate their appropriateness is to question someone's authority (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:11).

The larger epistemological consequence is, as alluded to above, that the abstract, rhetorical and sacred nature of these materials - textbooks, policy, etc. - obscures or eliminates any possible "point of entry for debate and discussion" over what gets taught, how it is taught, and why it is taught. Clandinin and Connelly describe the resultant scenario where "the discussion is removed from matters of substance to matters of personality and power" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:11).

Butt et al (1992), Middleton(1992), Craig (1995) and Knowles (1992) have discussed how this pre-empting of teachers' agency extends down to the teacher training process

the pre-service curriculum reduces the intrinsic ambiguity of teaching through a technological mindset that deintellectualizes teachers and depoliticizes the inherently ideological activity of teaching...(Butt et al, 1992:56)

Moreover,

Shaped by their training to look outside of themselves for truths about their own reality and further deskilled by the bureaucratization of teaching...experienced teachers find themselves at mid-career in a state of burn-out that 'does not come from overtaxing one's intellectual and mental capacities...but from not being able to use those abilities to handle difficult emotional and managerial problems" (Butt et al, 1992:56).

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH: TEACHER NARRATIVES AND LIFE STORIES

Assuming that the ultimate goal of the educational research on teachers and teaching is to obtain at least a minimally authentic understanding of the ideologies and personal philosophies on which teachers base their classroom practices, with the ulterior motive of locating an appropriate body of knowledge upon which to base teacher training and development programs, curriculum theory, policy and reform, several revisions in both research methodologies and theoretical perspective are indicated.

McEwan (1995) and others have pointed to one important revision in methodological and theoretical perspective which might address the above-described problems created when educational researchers "keep their distance" from teachers.

Any effort to give a description of how teachers think must be rooted in the various practices in which teachers are engaged, rather than in some capacity that transcends teachers' actions and aims to abstract it from them (McEwan, 1995:172).

And moreover,

Practices have their own narratives. We as teachers must...understand teaching (and individual praxes) as a narrative and, in so doing, come to see our own pedagogic values and purposes as contingent and revisable. Such an acknowledgement moreover brings us to a discussion of what teaching may become (McEwan, 1995:175).

Thus focusing on teacher practice not only has the potential to bring studies on teachers and teaching to their rightful research site, but also identifies a potential source for educational reform.

Goodson suggests "....new more contextually sensitive research," in particular, methods which stress life history. He adds, "In understanding something so intensely personal as teaching, it is critical we know about the person the teacher is (Goodson, 1992:5).

Along similar lines, Clandinin and Connelly suggest that the pertinent subject of study is "how the embodied, narrative and relational knowledge teachers carry autobiographically and by virtue of their formal education shapes, and is shaped by their professional knowledge context" (Connelly and Clandinin, 1995:3). They maintain that while useful, studies which focus exclusively on teachers' practical knowledge present only a partial view of teachers' knowledge.

TEACHER NARRATIVE AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Middleton and others have advocated for teacher autobiography as a means for understanding teacher beliefs and practices. They assert that

Writing one's autobiography becomes...in part a process of deconstructing the discursive practices through which one's subjectivity has been constituted: what specific power/knowledge relations have shaped and regulated one's life (Middleton, 1992:20).

Working along similar lines, Giroux asserts there is a need for teachers to

delve into their own biographies...to look at the sedimented history they carry around, and to learn how one's cultural capital represents a dialectical interplay between private experience and history (Giroux, 1982:158).

Giroux adds that student teachers "must be given the opportunity to use and interpret their own experiences in a manner that reveals how the latter have been shaped and influenced by the dominant culture (Giroux, 1982:124).

Rogers (1969) asserts that learning of any importance "can only be self-discovered and self-appropriated. It is most telling when experiences emphasize the self, personal relevance, interest, involvement, activity and feelings" (in Butt et al ,1992:58). According to this position, theoretical perspectives and research methodologies which encourage teachers to reflect on their own experience and learning, as does teacher autobiography, are among those which provide the most opportunity for teacher learning. As McEwan describes this, "in telling their stories, teachers transform their perception and understanding about how they came to believe and do what they do about early childhood educational values" (McEwan, 1995:12).

Thus recounting autobiographical materials, a process which requires teachers to reflect upon the life experiences which have led them to and guided through a career in teaching is hopefully one means for giving teachers an opportunity to interpret their own experiences, to, in McEwan's words, construct "narratives of teaching." Participation in this experience likewise has the potential to provide teachers with insights into how the early educational ideologies and classroom practices they choose have been shaped by the dominant culture.

The current study, in utilizing such an approach, intends to sponsor the teacher's voice. In addition, it proposes a potential remedy to the above-described, problems with educational research practices in which teachers are reduced, as previously described, to "objects which can be manipulated for particular ends." Rather, participating teachers are encouraged to, through collaborative inquiry, write their own stories, not only of their past lives as teachers, but of their current and future lives as teachers as well. This approach also presents a potential remedy to the situation where, as previously described, academics, policymakers and others located in "up

there and out there," inaccessible positions hand down "rhetorics of conclusions" and "sacred stories" to teachers, about what is best for students as well as for teachers.

Thus rather than "rhetorics of conclusion" recounted in "a language which is propositional, relational among concepts, impersonal, situation-independent, objective, nontemporal, ahistorical and generic" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:14), what is sought is a "language of the classroom story," that is, a language which is "relational among people, personal, contextual, subjective, temporal, historical and specific" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995:14).

This "language of classroom story," in that it is formulated and utilized by the teachers themselves as they recount autobiographical material and construct narratives of teaching, is accessible to teachers. This means that, unlike the above-described inaccessible-thus-unassailable nature of sacred stories and rhetorics of conclusion, the ideologies expressed in the "language of classroom story" are easily challenged by teachers. Research which centers on collaborative inquiry and utilizes the language of classroom story thus stands as a potential antidote to the previously described research practices which distance teachers from studies of teaching and subsequently silence them in decisions about educational policy, reform, and teacher education.

Teacher narratives appear useful if not indispensable to the project of understanding teachers and teaching for additional reasons. Existent studies have suggested that the source of teachers' ideology and practice can be identified and understood exclusively in terms of teachers' cultures of origin.

Carol Joffe's study Friendly Intruders asserts that working class blacks tend to push for the teaching of "basic skills," such as reading and writing, as early as possible. In so doing, they neglect the value of "free play" and opportunities for independent exploration in children's learning. Sally Lubeck's study, Sandbox Society, asserts that black Head Start teachers value group-oriented educational activities which require children to attend, first and foremost, to teacher direction. Middle class white teachers, on the other hand, value activities which allow the children to select what materials they will work with during "free play" sessions so that the child develops a sense of her uniqueness and individuality. However, it is the position of the current study that processes by which daycare and preschool teachers formulate beliefs about early education and practice are significantly more obscure and complex than these studies have suggested. In fact, the current study revealed that some teachers subscribe to early educational philosophies and praxes which are antithetical to those attributed to their cultural groups of origin by existent studies. While isolatable variables within teachers' biographies, e.g., culture of origin and socioeconomic class, as well as training within certain teacher education programs, can often be associated with given educational ideologies and classroom practice, there are other, less visible elements which apparently come into play here. As Giroux (1983) has pointed out, teachers are not passive vessels into which the educational philosophies of their cultures of origin and of their teacher education programs are poured. Such a suggestion does a great disservice to teachers' intellectual capacities. Elements and experiences from cultures of origin, teacher training programs and other settings are mixed together, mulled over, rearranged and reconfigured in such a way that the individual teacher emerges with a set of beliefs and practices that might bear no obvious

relation to any of these constituent elements or experiences. For example, some teachers in the current study who attended the same teacher education program, that is, they took all the same courses and studied with all the same professors, apparently came away with vastly different - if not directly opposing - ideas about appropriate classroom behaviors for both children and teachers. In similar fashion, teachers who have grown up in largely identical settings - in the same housing project, during the same time period, with the same general set of cultural practices, and with very similar educational backgrounds - can have very different ideas about how to work with young children.

Middleton (1992), McEwan and Egan(1995) and others have all discussed the above-described "idiosyncratic" perspective of how teachers construct narratives of teaching.

Middleton maintains that teachers are not mere passive victims... in the process of formulating who they will be and what they will do in the classroom as teachers, but 'creative strategists' whose everyday realities are also their own idiosyncratic constructions (Middleton, 1992:20).

Mc Ewan and Egan point to the importance of seeing teachers "not simply as individuals acting purposefully...but as individuals engaged in what the philosopher Justus Buchler once referred to as a kind of 'methodological groping...a kind of comradeship with chance' " (McEwan and Egan, 1995:17).

Buchler (1961) describes the relationship between students and teachers as a "conditional alliance" in which "the methodic agent requires only alertness and strength of perception" (quoted in McEwan and Egan, 1995:17).

And, moreover, "...each instance of practice contains an element of contingency and obscurity which only a desire for new insight can surmount...." (quoted in McEwan and Egan, 1995:17) For teachers, this means doing what "feels right...even though you can't say for sure why you're doing it" (quoted in McEwan and Egan, 1995:17).

With the above perspectives and points foremost in mind, it is the position of this study that only through the use of more comprehensive methodological approaches, like teacher narrative and life stories, can one stand a chance at accessing and understanding the less visible, more nuanced elements that contribute to daycare and preschool teachers' practical decisions and philosophical commitments.

On a corollary noted, this study intends for the experience of (re)constructing these narratives to be helpful to participating teachers in that, as Gudmundsdottir points out, "by using narrative form we assign meaning to events and invest them with coherence, integrity, fullness and closure" (Gudmundsdottir, 1995:31). Whyte (1981) adds, "Narrative functioning always involves interpretation and reinterpretation, the structuring of experience... It involves, in short, the transformation of 'knowing into telling' (quoted in Gudmundsdottir, 1995: 29) This theoretical perspective and methodological approach are simultaneously expected to address the above-described need "to produce teacher-centered professional knowledge...to develop a modality of educational research which speaks both within and to the teacher" (Goodson, 1992:15).

POTENTIAL MISAPPROPRIATION OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE OR "LIFE STORIES"

Goodson (1992), Denzin (1991) and others have described historical usages of autobiographical narrative or, in their terms, "the life story," pointing to the more negative potentials. Goodson describes how in the late 80's the life story became an important political vehicle, centering on liberalism's position that although one's work could be alienated in a capitalist system, "all could be restored in the private domain." As a result, private life was opened to the "helping" professions like doctors, teachers, psychologists, social workers, etc. As Goodson states, "forces of organized virtue...in the hope that the private transactions could make up for the collapse of communal traditions and civic order" (Goodson, 1992:7).

With reference to the life story, Denzin cautions,

they make a hero of the interactionist-ethnographer-voyeur who comes back from the field with moving tales of the dispossessed. They work from an ideological bias that emphasizes the situational, adjustive and normative approach to social problems and their resolutions, whether this be in the classroom, the street or the home (quoted in Goodson 1992:8).

Denzin further describes how the life story has moreover acted to maintain certain myths about private life.

The life story project...presupposes a body of textual work that keeps the private/public division alive and well. Two myths are perpetuated. First that urban, modern man, woman and child have enclaves of privacy that the complex urban society cannot touch. Second, the skilled ethnographer-biographer can make sense of these worlds and in so doing bring to life the sacred inner worlds of experience of the oppressed subject. But in making the sacred visible, in a pornography of excess which leaves no secret uncovered, the biographical text, in a single, swift stroke, erases the boundaries between the public and the private while it ceremonializes that which it has just exposed. In so doing, it perpetuates the myth that the private life and its inner meanings still exists... (quoted in Goodson 1992:9)

Denzin makes a convincing case here for altogether eliminating life stories/autobiographical narrative as a methodological approach. Adding to this dilemma, McEwan and Egan (1995) have described how

suppression of narrative in most scholarly writing is...often considered a disciplinary requirement and demonstration of the scientific ideal that identifies objectivity with the scientist's detachment from the object of study (McEwan and Egan, 1995:167)

However, if the ultimate project of the current study is to "allow the teacher's knowledge of classroom realities to emerge" (Butt et al, 1992:53) then it is difficult to locate a more appropriate, alternative methodology. In any case, utilizing teacher narratives seems to offer more promise than the above-described methodologies which leave the study of teachers and teaching entirely to the discretion of policymakers and academics. Thus, although the validity of Denzin's cautionings about teacher narratives/life stories as a methodology are recognized by this study, alternative approaches appear even more hazardous in their ability to silence and undermine the subjects of the research - the teachers. As Denzin summarizes this, "In making the personal public the biographer follows a textual politics which valorizes the subjects in question," that "locating a study at the individual level "valorizes the subjectivity of the powerless individual" by calling attention to her personal sense of agency (quoted in Goodson, 1992:9) and this is surely one goal of the current study.

And as Butt et al have discussed, materials gleaned from autobiographical narrative and collaborative inquiry with teachers stand to contribute significantly where educational reform and curriculum inquiry are concerned. Specifically, how

Understanding teachers knowledge, practice and thoughts have changed over their personal and professional lives can contribute to an

understanding of how classrooms have come to be what they are AND THUS HOW THEY MIGHT BECOME OTHERWISE [emphasis mine](Butt et al, 1992:57).

Berk adds

Reconstruction or reorganization of experience, such as that which takes place in collaborative teacher autobiography, adds to the meaning of experience and increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience (in Butt et al 1992: 59).

Butt et al moreover maintain that collaborative inquiry has the potential to "(bring) researchers to liberate themselves from stultifying conceptions of scientific inquiry," a factor which "(locates) it within an emancipatory epistemological and practical approach to curriculum inquiry" (Butt et al, 1992: 56).

ADDITIONAL METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Other methodological problems which bear addressing have been named. These include those arising from the popular practice, as described above, of dichotomizing the relationship of theory to practice. Carr (1987) asserts that this perspective has "predisposed us to think that educational practices can be philosophically analyzed apart from their history" and this "radically misconceives the nature of action and practices and misplaces the proper task of informing ourselves about educational matters" (quoted in McEwan and Egan, 1995:177).

McEwan adds that the overly logical philosophies of teaching focus on structure rather than process, that is, "how things are rather than how things change," and maintains that this "divorces teaching from its social history" (McEwan, 1995:172).

With the above points in mind, the current study includes a critical historical review of early childhood ideologies. This is intended to provide an historical and social context for current ideologies of early childhood education

and the practices that arise from these as described by teachers in the study. This will hopefully produce a slightly more complex, in-depth, picture of early childhood teacher practice and avoid "divorcing teaching from its social history."

As McEwan states

If we wish to understand something as an act of teaching, we need to know how it arose and how it has evolved...to go beyond the individual psychological states of the teacher and ask how these states of mind arose....to explore teachers' motives more deeply, explaining the reasoning that [precedes decisions]...to delve into the past, and not just into the past of individual teachers, but into the traditions of pedagogic practice within whose orbit teachers think and work (McEwan, 1995:172).

In summary it is the essential theoretical perspective of this study that material gathered from teachers' autobiographical narratives and collaborative inquiry is the appropriate framework through which to gain an understanding of the philosophical and practical commitments of preschool and daycare teachers, in particular, those which most often result in conflict.

Chapter 3

A Critical History of Early Childhood Educational Ideology: roots of contemporary conflicts described by interviewed teachers

Although seemingly innovative ideologies have appeared at different moments in the history of early childhood education in the U.S., in fact, the chronology reveals a remarkably consistent dynamic, including the perpetual recurrence of a limited number of "theme" arguments and disagreements over "what is best for children" in group care/educational programs. Significant disagreement has occurred over 1. the overall goals for early childhood education, for example, encouragement of children's autonomy over attention to adult direction 2. the role parents should play in children's education, both in formal and informal settings 3. the role of the teacher in early education, including the teacher's relationship to parents 4. the types of materials which should be provided for children in early educational settings 5. appropriate disciplinary or limit setting strategies. One particularly salient conflict which has pervaded these arguments involves issues of class; specifically, beginning with the Infant School movement in the U.S., shortly after the Civil War, the dialogue among policymakers and educators over whether poor and working class children should be cared for and educated differently than middle and upper class children has been ongoing.

Although these conflicts have been clearly identifiable and wielded significant weight within many chapters of early childhood educational history, they are often omitted from the content of early childhood teacher education programs. Although the study of such conflicts and their history would appear to contribute importantly, if not crucially, to the preparation of early childhood educators, program content often does not devote significant attention to these issues. It is the argument of this study that historical conflicts over early childhood ideology and practice be awarded a significant place in early childhood teacher preparation programs.

COLONIAL AND POST COLONIAL AMERICA - THE BEGINNINGS

Beginning in 18th and 19th century America, children from a range of class backgrounds were taught to read the Bible in neighborhood dame schools for a small fee. Braun and Edwards trace the Dame School to 17th century puritan Connecticut and Massachusetts where "little boys and girls struggle through their horn books...." under the direction of an older woman who was alternately "stirring the pot and turning the spindle" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:81) in her kitchen. In the early 1800's a number of children were in either primary schools or dame schools. In fact in 1839, 40% of the three year-olds in Massachusetts were enrolled in public school. There were also "common schools " which took in very young children and were run by religious groups including Quakers, Sunday school supporters and evangelicals (Beatty, 1995:23).

Sunday Schools appeared in several northeastern America cities in the later 1700's. The idea for these had come from across the Atlantic where Robert Raikes, a philanthropist and printer, concerned over the "ragged unsupervised children of factory workers playing noisily on Sundays in the working class area of Gloucester" (Kaestle, 1983: 44) had paid dame school teachers to work with children who came to school on Sunday. Philadelphia's First Day School Society, an offshoot of Raikes's program proposed to "give rudimentary instruction to the 'offspring of indigent parents' and to keep the Sabbath from being 'employed to the worst purposes, the depravity of morals and manners" (Kaestle, 1983:44). Activities at the Sunday school consisted of hymn singing, prayer and learning the alphabet. Older children learned to read, memorize from, and recite from the Bible since it was believed that

memorization would help children to develop a healthy sense of discipline and industry (Kaestle, 1983:46).

In 1825 Robert Owen, a Welsh industrialist who had established schools for the children of factory workers in New Lanark, Scotland, worked with American reformers to open a school for young children, New Harmonie, in southern Indiana. Of the 400 children served, 100 two to five year-olds were placed in an infant school. New Harmonie's grander purpose was to improve the worker's lot through education and simultaneously fashion a model industrial community. Believing that character would be determined by the educational environment, Owen asserted that children should not be scolded or punished, should have continual kindness, and be encouraged to ask questions of adults (Kaestle, 1983:47). In keeping with Owen's motivation to "devise new pedagogies that harmonized with children's natural inclinations, rather than forcing them to sit still and quiet for long periods" (Kaestle, 1983: 47), instructional techniques which allowed children to explore and interact with actual objects, rather than being given abstract information about these, were promoted. Additionally, Owen believed that play, music, dance and exercise should occupy a significant place in the curriculum (Kaestle, 1983: 47).

Apostles of Papa Pestalozzi, a Swiss-born educational innovator, arrived at the school in 1826 (Osborn, 1980: 44). Pedagogical disputes between the Pestalozzian teachers combined with disagreements over finances resulted in Owen's leaving the school and the eventual end of this communitarian project (Beatty, 1995:24).

An infant school society was begun in New York by Johanna Bethune, a wealthy widow, with Governor De Witt Clinton's encouragement. Clinton had asserted education's primary role as the reduction of "fraud, intrigue,

corruption, and violence" and the production of "intelligent citizens would would not be misled by demagogues and radicals" (Kaestle, 1983: 49). The Infant School Society of New York concentrated on the moral and religious education of school-aged children but also on the education of children aged 18 months to six years. Although Bethune's schools were modeled on the English charity schools, Kaestle asserts that unlike the English, who feared that "mass education would make workers unfit for their station and spread sedition and dissent among the lower orders" (Kaestle, 1983:36) that "conservative Americans generally believed in schooling for social stability. They feared ignorance, not instruction" (Kaestle, 1983:35).

But this is not to assert that charity school proponents were interested in equal educational and economic opportunity. In fact, in precociously social reproductionist fashion, Boston's city missionary, Joseph Tuckerman, stated

To those who would leave a certain number uneducated that that they may thus be fitted and disposed for the lowest office of life, I could observe...that if every child in our country, in the world, between the ages of four and fourteen were in a school...and should receive as much instruction as could be given them, it would be found that in the diversity God has made of human capacities...there is an ample provision for the whole number which is wanted for every service (Kaestle, 1983: 36).

Rather, social mobility was perceived as purely incidental to the cause of mass education in America. Thomas Paine, Stephen Simpson and other radical working class spokesmen advocated for schooling for equal opportunity but were opposed to the separate education for the poor provided by charity schools. They favored common school education, paid for by public funds and for all groups of children (Kaestle, 1983:35).

The motivations of infant school supporters varied. Although "...all agreed that social morality was built upon individual character, and that the infant school could elevate the character of the poor..." (Kaestle, 1983:48) three different purposes were identifiable: "saving children's souls through religious education, saving one's own soul through good works, or preparing for the millenium." Each bore at least some relationship to the widespread 19th century Protestant belief that Christ would come to earth again and rule for a thousand years and that "benevolent works" might speed his coming (Kaestle, 1983). Sylvester Graham, a Philadelphia minister, preached in 1829 that "the latter-day glory may be at hand," and urged that "...the Bible be stereotyped upon the pages of the youthful heart, by Infant and Sunday-School instruction..." The Infant School Society of Boston declared in 1834 that "a ray of millenial light has shone on us, and reveals a way in which poverty, with all its attendant evils...may be banished from the world" (Kaestle, 1983:49).

The infant school movement in Boston and other locations spawned an important debate as to the most appropriate methods for educating young children. Its essential tenets involved stigmatization of poor parents as "vicious and indolent" and placed emphasis on personal morality. A principle mission involved rescuing children from family environments construed as detrimental, and success was perceived as dependent upon getting children when they were still unspoiled and impressionable (Kaestle, 1983:47). Kaestle however adds that

charity workers...were not simply rationalizing self-interest by blaming the victims of an inequitable economic system. If they were partly the creators, they were also the captives of religious theories that emphasized

individual responsibility and economic theories that demanded an unregulated marketplace (Kaestle, 1983:50).

In spite of its above-described stigmatization, the movement likewise engendered an infant school movement among middle class populations. As Sarah Hale queried in her Ladies' Magazine, "Why should a plan which promises so many advantages, independent of merely relieving the mother from her charge, be confided to the children of the indigent?" (Kaestle, 1983:50)

William Russell's "The American Journal of Education" documents the founding of infant schools in New York and Philadelphia (1826), Hartford (1827), Boston and Providence (1828). With Russell's encouragement, "about ninety ladies" met in August of 1828 and founded the Infant School Society of the City of Boston (ISSCB). Although many of these women were from lower social class backgrounds, some were the wives of wealthy evangelicals from the Society for the Religious and Moral Instruction of the Poor. (Beatty 1995) The ISSCB and the Society both advocated for the education of the poor, but it was the women of the ISSCB who focused on the education of very young children. As Ladies' Magazine explained this phenomenon, "Men are apt to regard children under the age of four either as plagues or playthings" (Beatty, 1995:26).

Bronson Alcott, a Connecticut schoolteacher was invited to teach at the Salem Street Infant School in Boston in 1828 by an ISSCB member. Alcott, having studied Pestalozzi, Owen, and Goethe brought romantic educational philosophy to the infant school scene. Alcott had observed Bethune's infant schools in New York and found them "too mechanical and sectarian." Philadelphia's infant schools he described as "an engine of orthodoxy" (Beatty, 1995:29). His Observations on the Principles and

Methods of Infant Instruction (1830) asserted "every infant is already in possession of the faculties and apparatus required for his instruction..." (Beatty, 1995:29) According to Alcott it was the teacher's job to facilitate children's development, to "accompany the child in his progress rather than to drive or even lead him..." (Beatty, 1995:29) Alcott asserted that children's development was best encouraged by opportunities to play, "the appointed dispensation of childhood." Additionally, Alcott believed infant schools should serve all young children equally, regardless of socioeconomic status. As Kaestle states,

for Alcott...the real breakthrough was not merely in offering instruction to the poor, but in recognizing that young children needed kindness more than discipline, curiosity more than authority, and real objects more than words (Kaestle, 1983:50).

This 1830's assertion represented a radical change in ideologies about early childhood education. Although academic instruction and precocity had once been favored, these were now considered detrimental to children's development. With reference to this issue, Amariah Brigham, director of the Hartford Insane Asylum, asserted that precocity was "not just a developmental problem..." that "...early excitement would only bring forth beautiful, but premature flowers, which are destined to wither away, without producing fruits" (Beatty, 1995:29).

Accompanying these trends were other changes in ideology, specifically, the romanticizing of the ideal of womanhood which emphasized women as "goddesses of the hearth" whose role it was to nurture and educate young children; hence the promotion of home education for children and "new fears about the effects of separating children from their mothers" (Beatty, 1995:30). As a logical consequence, infant schools were accused in print of

providing "occasion for remissness in the discharge of parental duties" (Beatty, 1995:30). It was asserted that

The strength of the domestic attachment in the child is also weakened, by removing him for a considerable part of the day from the home, furnishing him with enjoyment of a higher kind than he could experience there (Beatty, 1995:30).

Ladies Magazine, formerly the great advocate for infant schools reneged in stating, "We have never urged their adoption by those who have the means to provide for their infants" (Beatty, 1995:30).

Boston's 1835 economic depression coupled with the other above-described withdrawal of support resulted in the cancellation of public funds for infant schools and the end of the infant school movement in Boston (Beatty, 1995:31).

The infant school movement was replaced by a family school movement which proposed that it was mothers who should be their children's teachers. Arguments for this position were fueled by ideas that public schools were filled with immoral influences coupled with those about the potentially dangerous effects of didactic teaching on young children. Beatty maintains that the development of moral character at home was believed to be a "compass for navigating the uncertainties of life" and the remedy to "the unrest and social problems endemic to Jacksonian America" (Beatty, 1995:31). Between 1830 and 1840 several manuals on childrearing practices, family life and the importance of moral education in the home were published. The underlying agenda of such publications and propaganda appeared to be to maintain traditional Christian values. Such publications also latched onto the idea that mothers were particularly qualified to be home educators since they were "innately more emotional than men and thus better at education of the heart, on which moral education depended" (Beatty, 1995:31). The early

19th century saw the promotion of increased and visible affection between mothers and children as crucially important, a stance which was reversed by the the 20th century assertion that too much "mother love" is dangerous to children's development (Beatty 1995).

In accord with this more child-friendly line of thinking, Samuel Goodrich asserted

to require these little creatures to sit down upon benches, to bend studiously over a book, to restrain their tongues, and keep their legs and arms motionless, ...(was) violating nature, injuring the health and disgusting the pupil with the whole business of school education (Beatty, 1995:32)

Goodrich added emphasis to this plea in citing a case where a mother's ambition for her child "caused her to push her son's mental development prematurely, creating a monster whose 'head grew rapidly, and at last became enormous while his limbs became shrunk, and almost useless' " (Beatty, 1995:32).

Beatty attributes the new, more relaxed attitude toward early learning to economic and technological developments which made life in 1830's America more secure and comfortable (Beatty 1995). She describes a passage from Jacob Abbott's 1830 The Little Philosopher; or, The Infant School at Home in which a mother allowed her infant to tear the pages of a new book. In response to her older child's report that the baby was up to "mischief," the mother asserted,

It is not mischief. A piece of paper is something new and curious to him; and he likes to shake it about and to see how it will move; and to pull it, to see how strong it is, and how easily it will tear. In that way he is learning the nature of it (Beatty, 1995:33).

Also appearing were manuals which instructed mothers to encourage their children to "question the why and the wherefore" of everything they observed in the natural environment (Beatty 1995).

Early nineteenth century publications and ideology additionally assured parents and educators that infancy and early childhood were, in fact, critical periods in children's lives. Manual writers asserted that infancy was a particularly important state since "children's consciences were still 'plastic,' receptive to instruction" and that "later was too late for character training" (Beatty, 1995:34).

This belief clearly advocated for the home as the appropriate location for moral education, resulting in the favoring of the family school over infant schools. Affirming this position, Lydia Sigourney commented, "Why yield [the child] to the excitement of promiscuous association when it [sic] has a parent's house, where its innocence may be shielded, and its intellect aided to expand?" (Beatty, 1995:34). As Beatty points out, Sigourney was at least in part responding to the crowded, underventilated classrooms where teachers did not have the time or proper training to educate young children (Beatty, 1995).

FROEBEL

The Froebelian Kindergarten appeared on the American scene in the mid-nineteenth century. In that it was presented as a supplement rather than a replacement for childrearing within the family, the kindergarten posed less of a threat to the sanctity of family life than had the infant school. Additionally, the Kindergarten was for young children only and thus not part of a large public school with all its health-threatening factors. For these and other reasons, the kindergarten made great progress in legitimizing education for young children outside the home. The focus on social development rather

than academic skills attracted reformers who saw the Kindergarten's potential for promoting social harmony and also for reducing and resolving conflict between the social and economic classes. However, despite Froebel's expectation that the kindergarten would serve all children, kindergartens in both Germany and America remained effectively divided into those for poor and working class children and those for middle and upper class children (Beatty, 1995).

Froebel, born in 1782 in Thuringia, Germany, was originally a student of philosophy, science and literature. He was particularly intrigued by the work of Johann Fichte who proposed Pestalozzianism as a medium for national regeneration in Germany through education (Osborn, 1980: 45). Having studied at Pestalozzi's model school in Yverdon, Switzerland, Froebel was attracted to Pestalozzi's emphasis on learning by play and discovery through concrete experience but believed Pestalozzi's methods to be "mechanical and superficially worked out" (Beatty, 1995: 40). The program of Froebel's school for young children, which he began with two army friends (!), included lots of physical labor and long walks through the woods and mountains. In 1837 he opened his "Anstalt fur Kleinkinderpflege" (institution for fostering small children) in Blankenburg. Teachers came from all over Germany to see the institute and to study with him. Unhappy with the name of his invention, Froebel decided to change it to "kindergarten" or child garden where "growing plants are cultivated in accordance with Nature's laws..." (Beatty, 1995:41) He asserted, "...here in our kindergarten, shall the noblest of all growing things, men [sic], be cultivated in accordance with the laws of their own being, of God and Nature" (Beatty, 1995:41). Osborn has pointed to the intensely religious basis of Froebel's philosophy, describing how "Froebel wanted children to learn the sources of evil in civilization and the methods for

eradicating evil" (Osborn, 1980:45). He wanted for children to experience unity with God and maintained that "man is an active, creative being," that "a new thought at once blesses its creator and enriches all of humanity..." (Osborn, 1980:45).

Froebel believed that children experienced unity of inner states and external actions through play. As Beatty explains,

The key to the inner-outer connection was self-activity, through which the inner was made outer... Humans became truly godlike in diligence and industry, in working and doing...for children...play is the purest most spiritual activity of man at the stage and, at the same time, typical of human life as a whole - of the inner, hidden natural life in man and all things (Beatty, 1995:41)

Thus mothers should, according to Froebel, be instructed to "cultivate, foster and protect" play as "the plays of childhood were the germinal leaves of later life" (Beatty, 1995:41).

Froebel moreover asserted that education should be

passive and following rather than categorical and prescriptive...The child, boy, man indeed, should know no other endeavor but to be at every stage of development wholly what this stage calls for (Beatty, 1995:42).

Froebel invented 20 "gifts and occupations" based on "folk craft activities and geometrical concepts" (Osborn, 1980:45) to implement his educational ideology. These were designed to help children symbolically comprehend "the unity of the universe, the connectedness of inner and outer states, part-whole relationships" (Beatty, 1995:42). They taught through contrast and thus were presented in a particular sequence so that children experienced the law of opposites. For example, the first six were solid shapes, the next seven were flat shapes.

Gift #1, six small wooden balls of different colors for infants to manipulate, was designed to help the child symbolically experience unity

through the roundness of the ball. The contrasting colors were designed to help the child learn to distinguish color and form, to abstract by comparing colors and to experience mobility, motion, direction and position (Osborn, 1980:47). Gifts came with elaborate instructions for teachers and parents, explaining how to introduce the gift to the infant and to "demonstrate" its potential through different ways of holding, moving and swinging it from a string (Beatty, 1995).

Some of the other materials designed by Froebel included "connected and disconnected slats of various lengths; round and square wooden sticks of different lengths and colors; whole and half wire rings, colored thread, seeds, shells, beans for constructing hundreds of precise formal figures" (Beatty, 1995:44). The seventh Froebelian gift came with 92 pages of instructions with 554 steps in how to use it, suggesting a certain lack of value for the child's spontaneous explorations of the material.

Occupations included sewing colored thread on premarked cards, drawing geometric networks on special slates, pricking designs into premarked paper and stringing colored beads (Beatty, 1995:44). The use of premarked cards and paper likewise indicates a disinterest in children's spontaneous explorations, that is to say, the educational goals and lessons are from the outset teacher-determined.

Froebel devised most of his ideas about appropriate activities for young children by actually watching young children at play. His goal was to nurture development by "expanding the earliest intimate play relationships of adults and children, getting mothers and teachers to participate actively in children's play...rather than standing apart from them as adult authority figures" (Beatty, 1995:44). Ironically, his elaborate instructions as to how the gifts and occupations should be utilized and taught somewhat automatically establishes

adults as authority figures in that it is they who determine what materials children will experience and, for the most part, what the exact nature of these experiences will be.

As Beatty describes, Froebel

conceptualized children's play as quite a structured activity and was ambivalent about the value of spontaneous free play.....play was 'not trivial but highly serious.' It gave 'joy, freedom, contentment, inner and outer rest, peace with the world... Undirected play was...a waste of time (Beatty, 1995:45).

In fact, as Froebel himself asserted, "without rational conscious guidance, childish activity degenerates into aimless play, instead of preparing for those tasks of life to which it is destined to lead" (Beatty, 1995:45).

Froebel's book, Mother Play, included poems and rhymes for mothers and babies. These were designed to not only encourage sensory perception, body awareness, movement and sensory discrimination but also to promote bonding between mother and child. The second set of games taught such concepts as classification, number and size. The third set encouraged the child to focus on more distant objects like the moon and stars. Finally, social relationships, as well as moral themes, including concepts of good and evil, were introduced (Beatty, 1995).

Froebel believed that city children should have the same or similar experiences as country children since the experiences of the latter represented a more "natural" form of learning and play. Accordingly, songs about animals, gardening, plants, etc. were created. As Beatty describes this effort,

Froebel thus contributed to the creation of a new artistic style and literary genre, children's kitsch, a combination of idealized folk culture and artificial naturalism that was to become the hallmark of popular commercial culture for young children (Beatty, 1995:46).

Froebel believed in the family as the place where basic principles were learned and characters formed, particularly by mothers who were expected to set loving and moral examples. Although he believed "the most important social learning was relational" (Beatty, 1995:46), Froebel also believed in the importance of the establishment of a sense of individuality, that, "each child should develop as much as possible in accordance with his own individuality and personality" (Beatty, 1995:47). Play was the most important element in both these endeavors in that it provides children with a chance to learn how to express themselves and also to co-operate.

Additionally, Froebel believed in the importance of games in that "...reciprocity or turn-taking was the essence of social harmony...." that "Each member of the circle should have a chance to lead, for it is especially developing to a child to recognize himself...in his own activity, and...as the member of a well-ordered totality" (Beatty, 1995:47).

In attempt to teach them respect for the work of laborers, Froebel had children from upper and middle class families imitate the activities of the working class. Through the use of such activities, Froebel perceived the kindergarten as a place where "congenial, respectful and potentially equitable relations among people from different social class backgrounds..." could be achieved, a concept which made Froebel attractive to reformers and other politicians (Beatty, 1995:47). As Beatty describes, "German liberalism saw preschool as a means of fostering noncoercive social change." It was seen as having the potential to prevent anarchy and social disorder" (Beatty, 1995:47).

For the U.S., the kindergarten movement rekindled an interest and promotion of preschool education in the wake of dwindling support for the infant schools. People from diverse political backgrounds were able to get behind the kindergarten movement since it supported both in-home and at-school

education, and moral education and character development at that (Beatty, 1995).

Unlike the German Kindergarten with its social remediation through compensatory educational agenda, kindergartens in the U.S. were considered a "voluntary supplement to upper and middle class child rearing rather than a remedial intrusion into lower class family life..." (Beatty, 1995:52). Elizabeth Peabody and Susan Blow were its primary advocates. Blow's insistence on absolute orthodoxy in implementing the Froebelian system, Beatty maintains, "shaped the discourse on the education of young children in America through the end of the 19th century" (Beatty, 1995: 53).

The first German kindergartens in the U.S. were opened by Germans in Wisconsin and Ohio and were primarily intended to help preserve the language and culture of German-Americans (Osborn, 1980:53). Edward Wiebe's Paradise of Childhood (1869), one of numerous German-American kindergarten guides published in the U.S., presented a "script" of what mothers and teachers should say and do with young children. Wiebe insisted that kindergartners should attempt to "use the same terms to avoid producing any ambiguity in the mind of the child" and that "everything must be done with a great deal of precision" as "order and regularity in all the performances were of the utmost importance" (Beatty, 1995:55).

Elizabeth Peabody's Kindergarten Guide (1863) emphasized that the kindergarten is "a natural community for young children, a 'commonwealth or republic of children' as contrasted with the school which is 'an absolute monarchy' " (Beatty, 1995:58). Unlike the rigid decorum of the public school classroom, noise and lots of physical activity, including music, movement, and play activities were permitted in the kindergarten. Child-sized furniture and outdoor gardening were also important features in Peabody's classroom.

Following an 1867 visit to Germany to study with other Froebelians, Peabody revised her Kindergarten Guide, removing sections on reading,

geometry, geography and other academic subjects which Peabody had learned were not part of Froebel's curriculum (Osborn, 1980:55). Now she proposed that only "after kindergarten exercises on blocks, sticks, peas, etc. were entirely exhausted" should reading instruction begin - that "kindergartning should be based on play, on accepting, not opposing, young children's spontaneous and natural activity" which is "genially directed to a more certainly beautiful effect than it can attain when left to itself" (Beatty, 1995:60). Moreover,

"A genuine kindergarten was characterized as much by what the children did not do as by what they did. It was a company of children who did NOT learn to read, write, and cipher; nor to study objects unconnected with their own conscious life" (Beatty, 1995:61).

Peabody perceived kindergarten as an antidote to the increasingly predominant materialism in American life. She proposed proximity with the innocence and spirituality embodied by children as one potential remedy to this phenomenon. Peabody further likened kindergartning to a spiritual calling, insisting that teachers were "the first minister of the gospel of life, after the mother, and thus should be paid like any other minister of truth and light" (Beatty, 1995: 63).

Susan Blow, interested by German kindergartens while traveling abroad, returned to her native St. Louis in 1871 where she collaborated with William Torrey Harris, superintendent of schools. Harris was greatly in favor of kindergartens, particularly in their possibility for getting young children off the streets; however, he did not support Froebel's "blurring of the lines between schoolwork and play" (Beatty, 1995:65). Others had argued that "the comparative freedom of the Kindergarten" made children unfit for regular school (Beatty, 1995: 66).

Blow and Harris' kindergarten program was based on a combination of German idealism and other philosophy in which education for citizenship and civil order, for "controlling the gushing hilarity of young children" was tantamount. They believed that the kindergartner was "as much a philosopher as a nurturer," and that kindergartens were more "a civil training ground than a playground" (Beatty, 1995:66). Harris was heavily invested in fulfilling the educational needs of children from different social classes. The American Social Science Association, chaired by Harris, reported in 1880 that "reaching the proletariat and neutralizing the seeds of perverseness and crime in their earlier growths" (Beatty, 1995:67) were among their primary objectives for kindergartens. Additionally, Harris was invested in the education of children from upper classes, asserting that these children were "often left to the home training of ignorant or weak servants," and that these children "inherited great power of will...developed caprice, wasted their patrimony and cost the State large sums to repair their excesses" (Beatty, 1995:67).

In the wake of Froebel's waning popularity in America, the kindergarten movement was taken over by young women who worked in charity kindergartens. At this moment, Blow and Peabody's focus on spiritual and moral development was replaced by attention to mental and physical development. That is, the focus was shifted from "the state of children's souls to the state of their bodies, minds and daily lives" (Beatty, 1995:71).

In response to the combined effects of rapid industrialization and urbanization, as well as increased immigration and immigrant birth rates in post Civil War America, early educational ideology became focused on young children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Free kindergarten associations funded by private wealth accumulated during the Gilded Age were opened to

help immigrant street children. Many of these children required attention to their physical needs and their mothers were perceived as needing education themselves. Educators, Beatty maintains, "began looking to science to create rationally structured educational organizations and scientific pedagogy designed to deal with the problems created by industrialization and urbanization" (Beatty, 1995: 72).

With Elizabeth Peabody's encouragement, Pauline Agassiz Shaw, having married into wealth, began financing kindergartens, lectures and classes, as well as research on young children. By 1883 she had opened 31 kindergartens in the Boston area. Her most famous was located in the North End where, "Poles, Russians, Italians, Bohemians and other working parents were forced to 'turn their children out into the streets in the morning to care for themselves' " (Beatty, 1995:74). Shaw's kindergartens got these children off the street, washed their faces, cleaned their clothes, and fed them. The teachers made home visits and held mothers' meetings in which they encouraged parents to become as involved as possible with their children's development (Beatty, 1995).

Shaw's kindergartens also became the site of some of the earliest research on young children in America, most significantly, the work of psychologist G. Stanley Hall, beginning in 1880. Hall's general comment was "I would like to see organized a work of rescue to deliver the modern kindergarten from the metaphysicians, and to give it over to the philosophical hygienists, who should make it everywhere and first of all a place of health" (Weber, 1984: 48). Hall and his followers believed that certain of Froebel's gifts and occupations "lay too great stress on sedentary activities" (Weber, 1984:48), that many of the fine motor tasks were not suited to kindergarten-aged children. He states, "when you take 4 or 5 year-old

children and set them at this fine work of weaving delicate strips of paper, it is putting the accessory before the fundamental...such activities reverse nature's processes" (Beatty, 1995:79). He proposed changing the size of the materials so that the fine motor co-ordination required would be lessened. "Small writing, small figures, fine lines and everything which puts undue strain on the delicate muscles that are not developed until later should be put away from the primary school" (Beatty, 1995:79).

Hall even went so far as to suggest that overly focusing on fine motor skills at an early age could result in permanent neurological damage or neurosis (Beatty, 1995). He asserted that "choreic symptoms" had been observed in children who used their finger muscles for too long and thus recommended that kindergarten methods involving manipulation of little pieces of paper and tooth picks not be utilized. He maintained that these resulted in "Americanitis" and could "stamp a neurotic temper" on children (Beatty, 1995:80).

Hall proposed replacing the preoccupation with Froebelian practices with data from child studies (Weber, 1984) and thus began systematic studies of kindergarten children in the Boston area (Osborn, 1980). With Haeckel's adage, "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" foremost in mind, Hall conducted his studies from the theoretical perspective that the study of children from an evolutionary perspective was essential to an understanding of human development, or, as it was then called, "the history of the race" (Beatty, 1995). Specifically, this theory of "psychic recapitulation" involved Hall's belief that young children's developmental stages were "analogous to the hunting, the cave, and the building periods of ancient cultural evolution" (Weber, 1984:50).

During Hall's studies in Germany, he had embraced the concept of "culture epochs" from pedagogues Tuickson Ziller and Wilhelm Rein which maintains that "school curricula should repeat the stages of cultural history" (Beatty, 1995:75). This ideology included the beliefs that children's play reflects elements of "the social organization of primitive tribes," and thus that children should study the Greeks, then the Romans and so on in evolutionary historical order" (Beatty, 1995:75). Accordingly, since young children were in the "cave and hunting stage" of evolution, they should be allowed large amounts of time for free play with sand, mud, clay and animals with which to "play their lies of fancy and imagination" (Weber, 1984:50).

Moreover,

The guardians of the young should strive first of all to keep out of nature's way, and to prevent harm, and should merit the proud title of defenders of the happiness and rights of children...We must overcome the fetishism of the alphabet, of the multiplication table, of grammars, of scales and...reflect that but a few generations ago...all of us were illiterate (Weber, 1984:51).

These ideas Hall developed into a theory of "genetic psychology" which was meant to "trace the biological origins of human mental development" (Beatty, 1995: 75).

Hall believed kindergarten teachers needed to be knowledgeable about children's growth rates, language development, spontaneous play, imagination and ability for self control in order to teach effectively. He moreover believed that this information should be gathered and reported in a "scientific" manner (Weber, 1984). He interviewed approximately 200 children, mostly five and six year-olds, asking them questions about the weather, the environment and other phenomena in the natural world. Hall found that the children who had

attended kindergarten demonstrated a noticeable advantage, regardless of nationality, when it came to knowledge in the selected areas. Significantly, most of the kindergarten children interviewed had attended charity kindergartens, meaning "the superior intelligence of home surroundings (could) hardly be assumed" (Beatty, 1995).

Hall blamed city life for the fact that many of the school-aged children he interviewed knew remarkably little about the natural environment. He maintained that city life was "inferior in pedagogic value to country experience," for example, city children had no idea as to the origins of milk and butter (Weber, 1994) and thus recommended that children be sent to the country to kindergarten. He believed "The best preparation parents can give their children for school is to make them acquainted with natural objects, especially with the sights and sounds of the country and to send them to good and hygienic...kindergartens" where they spent more time playing outdoors than in "doing a lot of fancy paper cutting indoors" (Beatty, 1995:77). Accordingly, Boston kindergartens during this era included windowboxes full of flowers, caterpillars turning into butterflies, branches, acorns, and in one case, a large wasp nest (Beatty, 1995).

Anne Bryan who began free kindergartens in both Louisville and Chicago in the late 1880's was instrumental in forming a Free Kindergarten Association in Louisville (Osborn, 1980). A report from this association directed attention to kindergarten's potential for preventing crime, and "combatting the poisonous atmosphere of some homes" (Beatty, 1995:81). She believed that parents' shortcomings were "as much the result of ignorance as natural depravity" and that with proper "arrangement of earliest impressions and experiences, it is possible to grow tissues and form molds for thought and feeling" (Beatty, 1995:81). She moreover believed in the primacy

of education over food in that "with the strength they gained from being given free food, but not education, the poor child could 'turn against us in anarchy and rebellion' " (Beatty, 1995:81).

Bryan did not see kindergarten as a replacement for family but perceived it as a means for indirect reform, in particular, of mothers through their children. In a somewhat patronizing tone, she states, "The kindergarten does not relieve the mother of responsibility but rather, through its transforming power over the little ones, strengthening family relations....it arouses her to a sense of duty" (Beatty, 1995:81).

As had others, Bryan criticized Froebel for the overcomprehensiveness of his system (Osborn, 1980:91). She pointed to the potential danger in teachers' perceiving his system as "a prescribed, formal line of teaching, instead of tools to be skillfully and discriminatingly used" (Beatty, 1995:82). She emphasized the importance of a child's consciousness "passing through not a passive, literal sequence, but an active, creative one" (Beatty, 1995:82). She saw the teacher's role as one of helping children with "thinking about and finding relationships for themselves" as opposed to subordinating children's interests to materials. According to Beatty, Bryan's primary contribution was in integrating themes from children's everyday lives into the Froebelian sequence of gifts and occupations; for example, the children created a play based on an actual trip to grandma's house. This novel focus, Beatty points out, from teacher-controlled curricula to child-initiated topics, from artificial naturalism to imperfect reality, represented an important and lasting shift in preschool pedagogy (Beatty, 1995).

Bryan's teaching assistant, Patty Hill Smith, allowed children to sew designs of their own choice rather than Froebel's prescribed ones and to build with the blocks as they saw fit, rather than in accordance with Froebel's

preformulated designs (Osborn, 1980). Additionally, children were allowed to choose their own themes in play, for example, going to the post office or other activities they observed in their everyday lives.

Bryan believed that "the universality of the scientific laws of psychological development cut across class barriers and thus must cut across political barriers" (Beatty, 1995:83). She asserts, "The minds of the prince and the pauper unfold in obedience to the same divine laws which, if violated, in either case must inevitably result in evil" (Beatty, 1995: 83). If children's psychological development is the same across classes, then they should be treated the same by the society in which they live, even though pedagogical methods might differ,. She states, "It is wonderful to see the extremes of society meet under the guidance of a skillful teacher to unfold and blossom...not only by the same laws and principles, but even, in some cases, under the same methods" (Beatty, 1995: 83).

Bryan's challenges to Froebelianism were reflected in the work of other educators who had come to observe her experimental classroom, among them John Dewey. In fact, Dewey used the term "sub-primary" to refer to the classes for the youngest children at his Laboratory School as an indication of his split with the Froebelian Kindergarten (Weber, 1994: 86). Dewey's specific comment on the Froebelian method was: "Nothing is more absurd than to suppose that there is no middle term between leaving a child to his own unguided fancies and likes or controlling his activities by a formal succession of dictated directions" (Weber, 1994:86). He suggested, rather, that it was the teacher's job to "fit in with the dominant mode of growth in the child," to serve as "a stimulus to bring forth more adequately what the child is already blindly struggling to do" (Beatty, 1995:86).

Dewey's convictions about early childhood education are contained in his 1897 "My Pedagogic Creed." One of the more poignant passages describe his belief that "all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:101). Dewey believed that it was through this somewhat unconscious process that the child came to "share in the intellectual and moral resources which humanity has succeeded in getting together. He becomes an inheritor of the funded capital of civilization" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:101). Additionally, "true education" was perceived as occurring exclusively through

the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of social situations in which he finds himself. Through these demands he is stimulated to act as a member of a unity, to emerge from his original narrowness of action and feeling, and to conceive of himself from the standpoint of the welfare of the group to which he belongs (Braun and Edwards, 1972:101).

Additionally,

Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race...education...is a process of living and not a preparation for future living...the school must represent present life - life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in the home, in the neighborhood or on the playground (Braun and Edwards, 1972:103).

Accordingly, children at Dewey's Laboratory School at the University of Chicago were encouraged to play games directly derived from their experiences at home with their families, e.g., cooking and washing clothes. The important criteria was that the materials with which the children worked be "real," in contrast to the objects made of "artificial materials" promoted by Froebel. Such artificial objects, Dewey maintained, encouraged "artificial symbolic representations" (Beatty, 1995: 86) and thus were not useful in any

genuine sense to children's (everyday) development and experience with things in the "real" world (Osborn, 1980:95).

Elizabeth Harrison, a Chicago kindergartner, found as many ways as possible to involve mothers in the kindergarten class. She led sessions where immigrant mothers were encouraged to tell stories of their homelands and of emigration to the U.S. Harrison believed it was possible for women of all social class and ethnic backgrounds to communicate and that kindergarten teachers stood to learn a lot from the mothers. Harrison told her teachers, "The mothers themselves will teach us many things and give flashes of insight far deeper than they realize" (Beatty, 1995:88). She maintained that this sort of communication and "mutual dependency" was the basis of democracy and "its lack the source of class conflict" (Beatty, 1995:89). The solution to social problems, Harrison held, could be found in the socialization of children in the kindergarten where "the rich man's child could play at being a worker and where all children, poor and rich could 'grasp the true sense of independence'" (Beatty, 1995:89).

In her 1890 A Study of Child Nature from the Kindergarten Standpoint, Harrison cautioned mothers against "fashionable parties," children's fancy dress and "other activities that might turn children into epicures." She recommended "homey healthy German toys rather than fancy French dolls," asserting that "in all matters of taste, simplicity is best for children" (Beatty, 1995:89). She also advocated for teaching children the "joy of unselfishness," maintaining that mothers' most important role was to train children to give up their will to others through love of others (Beatty, 1995).

Harrison's position on discipline and limit setting seems relatively progressive. She advised mothers to, while disciplining the children, reassure the child that "it was the wrongdoing, not the child, that was the problem ...that

they could still count on the everlasting arms of love" (Beatty, 1995:90). Harrison's practices of presenting children with alternative behavioral choices as a strategy for dealing with undesirable behaviors also put her more in line with contemporary childrearing ideologies. For example, instead of simply tell a child who is playing noisily "Be quiet!" the child is given the choice of either finding another place to play or being quiet in her present location.

Beginning in 1878, Kate Douglas Wiggin taught children from Irish, English, Scots, Scandinavian and French backgrounds, as well as a few Mexican-American and African-American children in San Francisco's Tar Flat Slum area (Osborn, 1980:74). Their parents were primarily rag-dealers and day laborers with a few criminals in the mix. The Public Kindergarten Society of San Francisco pointed to Silver Street's cost-effectiveness as an antidote to longstanding urban problems. This reputation was enhanced by stories like one about a child named Jack whose estranged father returned home after being shown his son's kindergarten work (Beatty, 1995:95).

Wiggin emphasized the child's need for "a place of his own" with child-sized furniture, good books, music, artwork, etc. She also believed children should be disciplined according to the "laws under which they would eventually live" and that parents generally did not have enough patience to do this effectively; thus that all mothers, not just working class, poor and immigrant mothers, were in need of kindergarten training (Beatty, 1995:96).

Nora Smith, Kate Wiggins' sister and pupil agreed with her sister's general tenets and added some of her own. Her book, The Children of the Future (1898), dealt mostly with the topic of handling "difficult" children. Temper tantrums, sullenness, lying and other behavioral problems, much to the relief of many parents, were addressed in print. Smith also believed that

upper and middle class women needed training for mothering, insisting that "there are as many shallow, weak, careless, stupid, morally abusive mothers among the rich as among the poor" (Beatty, 1995:97). Smith suggested mothers' group meetings where particular attention should be given to details of the setting - flowers for the tables, music, paintings on the walls, etc. - to give the poor mothers a few aesthetic moments (Beatty, 1995).

Thomas Charles in 1894, having visited kindergartens in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, proclaimed that kindergartens were "the solution to the great Indian problems" (Beatty, 1995:99). These schools had been opened by William Hailmann, director of government schools for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. "Cultural transformations" of Native American children were reputed to have occurred successfully in these forty schools, hence their popularity with the government. Lucie Calista Maley reported how in her Indian school kindergarten, she taught Native American children to be "more Western in their attitudes toward self, property and nature by giving them responsibility for taking care of the plants...teaching them not to kill ants....and to appreciate the beauty of animals" (Beatty, 1995:99).

In a likeminded vein, James Bruce, an advocate for kindergartens in New York City, argued that kindergartens were "a particularly effective method of Americanization because they reached children when they were very young and their natures 'still plastic' " (Beatty, 1995:105). He maintained that young children could be 'so swayed and molded as to grow up Americans, to absorb by natural processes, by normal unconscious assimilation, the tone and tendencies of our social and political structure...." that they could "breathe in the American spirit through songs and flag drills" and other "patriotic exercises" (Beatty, 1995:105).

Similarly, Kate Douglas Wiggin stated in the outset of the National Kindergarten Association's 1909 report that public kindergartens were a necessary "philanthropic agent, leading the child gently into the right habits of thought, speech and action," to "help in the absorption and amalgamation of our foreign element," and the "development of citizen-virtues, as well as those of the individual" (Beatty, 1995:106).

Because kindergarten teachers were in daily contact with immigrant families, this Americanizing potential of kindergartens became particularly salient during World War I. In fact, a 1918 U.S. Bureau of Education pamphlet instructed teachers to pay increasingly frequent visits to immigrant mothers and to attempt to educate them in civics since their husbands were perceived as a potentially dangerous new electoral power (Beatty, 1995:105).

Also during this period, it was argued by some whites that kindergarten was more important for African American children since it included manual training. Some African Americans agreed with this postulate. In fact, that the Butler Kindergarten at the Hampton Institute, had selected a vocationally oriented curriculum (Osborn, 1980:70) over Froebel's was evident to a 1907 visitor who recounted,

Children began on Monday morning by dusting the room of 'invisible dirt;' some then washed clothes with hot water and real soap while others played with Froebelian gifts. In the afternoon children worked in the garden. On Tuesday morning the girls ironed, did some paper cutting and folding, and took care of their baby dolls while the boys did janitorial work; on Wednesday the children made furniture for a new doll they had been given. On Thursday the class visited an orchard to watch a farmer planting and then made farm tools out of clay. On Friday they did housecleaning and more janitorial work (Beatty, 1995:109).

One dissenting voice came from Anna Murray, organizer of African-American kindergartens in Washington, D.C., who believed that African-American children stood to profit from the Froebelian play curriculum.

Patty Smith Hill's great contribution during her 30 years at Teachers College was in convincing many of the value of free play for early education; however, the kindergarten faculty was slowly but surely beginning to be dominated by male psychologists and administrators. At this moment, "science replaced spirituality as the authorized source of information about preschool education, and masculine model analysis replaced female intuition as the prescribed guide to interactions with young children" (Beatty, 1995:119). Hence, turf battles for control over kindergarten curriculum began. There were significant battles within the IKU as its 19 members attempted to reach some sort of consensus on what curriculum should be. Separate reports were submitted by several factions: Susan Blow for the conservatives, Patty Smith Hill for the progressives, and Lucy Wheelock and Elizabeth Harrison for liberal-conservatives. As Beatty (1995) points out, this scenario was evidence of "the new plurality in kindergarten pedagogy." Although the Progressive view predominated, a plethora of models were utilized in classrooms. For example, "concentric program" where daily/weekly themes like transportation, food production, and the home united various classroom activities, and an "industrial curriculum" popularized by John Dewey had children making "useful objects rather than symbolic designs" (Beatty, 1995:119).

Frederic Burk, Superintendent of Schools in Santa Barbara found that "when given a choice, young children did not play with Froebelian materials at all but preferred dolls, swings, bean bags and other toys" (Beatty, 1995:120). This finding helped to legitimate free play time where children could participate in whatever activity they chose - considered by some as radical - as an important element of kindergarten curriculum in some locations. Burk pointed out that the problem with Froebel's system was that "the children had not been

particularly consulted either in the choice of material or the use to be made of it" (Beatty, 1995:120) As such, children's "natural reactions to these materials" were hard to determine. Burk advised that teachers make an effort to tune into children's "intrinsic interests" and give children two free play periods per day so such interests could be observed (Beatty, 1995).

Harvard president, Charles Eliot remarked on the constructive influences the kindergartens had had on education in general. For one, it had encouraged educators to look at children as individuals, resulting in the promotion of reduced class size. Kindergartens use of "real objects for nature study" also pleased Eliot in that he felt he had missed out on this experience in his own education, learning science from a book. Eliot also praised kindergartens for their recognition that "healthy children are restless, and their attention cannot be long held to a single subject" (Beatty, 1995:128).

Beatty points out how in the early 1900's, social reform as a primary emphasis and goal for preschool education gradually moved into one of preparation for first grade. Hence, the focus on academic skills which had previously been viewed as dangerous to children's development and guilty of creating precocity now moved to center stage in the kindergarten curriculum. This shift, in part, may have resulted from a belief that lower class children, in order to be properly prepared for school, would benefit from learning academic skills rather than play and social skills early on (Beatty, 1995).

When out-of-home education for very young children in nursery schools began in the U. S. the focus was "outward toward young children and families" as opposed to the "upward toward the grades" focus kindergartens had had (Beatty, 1995:133). Where Kindergarten's emphasis had been on "culture, moral education, and socialization for voluntary participation," nursery educators were concerned with "psychology, mental hygiene, social adjustment, and habit training" (Beatty, 1995:150). Where kindergartners had "encouraged mothers to be concerned for the public good," nursery school teachers emphasized private child rearing and individual mothers' effectiveness with their children (Beatty, 1995:150). Beatty maintains that this interest in families and children was spurred on by foundation-based philanthropy, in particular, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Foundation. This foundation was heavily invested in the notion that science could be effectively utilized to solve social problems and thus donated heavily to studies of child development, parent education and child welfare. In effect, this helped to legitimate the study of young children as a viable topic for academic research (Beatty, 1995).

Like the turn-of-the-century British nursery schools which partially inspired the American nursery school, remediating family problems was a goal of early nursery programs (Beatty, 1995).

THE MONTESSORI METHOD ARRIVES IN AMERICA

The Montessori Method, begun in Rome in 1907, appeared on the early education stage in America just at a time when educators were seeking "approaches to early education that were less philosophic...and more in line with new scientific thinking" (Goffin, 1994:38). Montessori, a physician, anthropologist, mystic and educator, believed herself to be "going forth as an apostle on behalf of all the children in the world, born and as yet unborn, to

preach for their rights and liberation" (Goffin, 1994:38). She particularly saw her mission as one of freeing children from the rigid claws of early twentieth century Italian public education, which she believed repressed children's spontaneous expression "till they are almost like dead beings" (Montessori, 1912/1964:14 quoted in Goffin, 1994:39).

Montessori was in particular demand in early 20th century Rome owing to a large influx of immigrants from the countryside. Because of her previous successes in getting children who had been classified as "idiots" to perform at grade level, Montessori was put in charge of the first "Casa dei Bambini" in 1907, part of a sweeping effort to corral the children who often vandalized walls and stairwells while their parents went to work. Montessori was asked by the Good Buildings Institute to start a school for 3-7 year olds in one of its 400 buildings. Parents were seen as communal owners of the school and their rent covered part of the program cost. Parents were allowed to go at any point of the day to "watch, admire or to meditate upon the life there" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:117). However, as Braun and Edwards point out, "this benefit...[was] not conferred without a tax of care and of good will" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:117). Parents were obliged to meticulously conform to The Regulations posted by the school. Children who "present(ed) themselves unwashed or in soiled clothing" or who "show(ed) themselves to be incorrigible" were expelled from the school. (Braun and Edwards, 1972:116).

After three such schools for working class and poor children had been opened, a school for middle class children was opened in Rome in 1908. Thus, despite its initial goal of providing the less advantaged with compensatory early experiences, the Montessori Method was soon perceived as potentially beneficial to middle class children as well. The method's

widespread use and popularity, both in Italy and abroad, has been accompanied by almost as many interpretations of Montessori as there are centers and schools who claim it as their philosophical basis (Goffin, 1994).

When Montessori herself arrived in the U.S. in 1913, there were large numbers of both poor immigrants and of affluent Americans. Montessori was seen as having the possibility to "solve many of the problems of the day, social inequities of class and sex among them" (Goffin, 1994:43). She asserted that her method was derived from scientific pedagogy and thus was just what American educators were looking for at the time. However, Montessori's emphasis on children's learning to read and write was in conflict progressive educators' focus on social development, and with the notion that teaching these skills to children under the age of eight was a waste of time, if not harmful. Additionally, Montessori's idea that children's education should be founded on their spontaneous desire to learn was out of sync with the increasingly popular Freudian concept that behavior was exclusively motivated by painful stimuli, instinct or sex (Goffin, 1994).

Montessori believed that the purpose of education and of her method in particular was to "revolutionize society by creating an educational environment that responded to children's innate nature and nurtured the child's complete spiritual and psychic actualization" (Goffin, 1994: 49). Montessori focused on the individual child's development, but only to enhance that child's eventual contributions to the social collective. The ultimate goal of her educational program was the better functioning of the whole society - not the simple enhancement of individual children's development. Her method, she believed, would "assure the spiritual and intellectual well-being of children and...(thus) transform the future of civilization" (Goffin, 1994: 50).

The general shift to a scientific approach to education, for Montessori as well as many other educators, consisted primarily of moving educational ideologies and methods away from abstract philosophical bases and toward pedagogies derived from empirical, naturalistic observations of children. As mentioned previously, Montessori was not interested in getting to know children as the unique individuals they were, but more so as "member(s) of the species" (Goffin, 1994:51). This way, she could maintain that the data gained from her "naturalistic observations" were scientific, and thus could be applied to all children, not just certain individuals.

If pedagogy was to be based on empirical observations of children, then it was necessary to train teachers to conduct these observations. Thus, for Montessori, the task of training teachers primarily involved teaching them to "divest (themselves) of personality in order to become instruments of investigation" (Goffin, 1994:50) so that a rational scientific pedagogy could be derived from their observations. Bordering on the fanatical, Montessori stated, "Let us seek to implant in the soul the self-sacrificing spirit of the scientist with the reverent love of the disciple of Christ, and we shall have prepared the spirit of the teacher" (Goffin, 1994:50). In fact, Montessori asserted that teachers should be regarded as follows: "Among these almost savage people...there has come not only to teach but to live the very life they live, a gentlewoman of culture, an educator by profession, who dedicates her time and her life to helping those about her! A true missionary, a moral queen among the people, she may, if she may, if possessed of sufficient tact and heart, reap an unheard-of harvest of good from her social work" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:117). Moreover, "the mothers adore...the directress. ..They often leave sweets or flowers upon the sill of the schoolroom window, as a

silent token, reverently, almost religiously given" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:117).

Children are spiritual as well as biological creatures who were "endowed with a plan of organic development, which was expressed through their spontaneous activity." In order for this development to take place, a specifically prepared, orderly environment which "freed children's natural evolution from external obstructions" (Goffin, 1994:51) was needed. Montessori believed that between the ages of 3 and 6, having the possibility for such experience was particularly important, since "during these sensitive years, children's spontaneous activity is intrinsically motivated toward bringing their chaotic inner world into an orderly coherence, a prerequisite to the development of rational, intellectual thought" (Goffin, 1994: 51). This belief derived from Montessori's contention that children are "born in a state of physical and psychological chaos" (Goffin, 1994:53). She moreover believed that, "the child, left at liberty...ought to find in his surroundings something organized in direct relation to his internal organization which is developing itself by natural laws" (Goffin, 1994: 51). Accordingly, the prepared environment, that is, the classroom, must be designed "to focus the child's activity toward the essential task of self-formation in accordance with the inherited plan." Thus the classroom must provide the child with the materials for self-education, that is materials which correspond to the "child's emerging inner life" as determined by observation of the child's activities.

As a result of this overall experience, "the spirit, organized in this manner under the guidance of an order which corresponds to its natural order, becomes fortified, grows vigorously, and manifests itself in the equilibrium, serenity, the self-control which produces the wonderful discipline characteristic of the behavior of our children" (Goffin, 1994:51). Significantly, Montessori

believed that once this "sensitive period" was passed, these natural inclinations toward "bringing the chaotic inner world into orderly coherence" disappears (Goffin, 1994).

Although the teacher was not to intrude into the child's spontaneous activity, s/he was not to leave the children completely to their own devices. In particular, they were to discourage "ill-bred acts" and other generally inappropriate behaviors. Teachers activities were likewise never to "provoke unnatural effort" in the child as this was seen to upset the child's "natural developmental ascent." Disruptive behaviors from children, Montessori held, were indications that a teacher had not properly constructed the learning environment, and thus the the child's "innate disposition for orderly development" was being obstructed. Montessori believed that imaginative and fantasy play behaviors were also manifestations that the child was not being provided with the proper opportunities for turning inner chaos into order (Goffin, 1994).

Along similar lines, "play" was perceived as an activity lacking purpose and order whereas "work" was the desired and valued opposite: "ordered activity toward a determined end." Order in one's psychic life was assumed to represent a blossoming "evolution in inner life." Montessori conceived of her method as she did science - as "a carefully sequenced technique, not an ongoing process of discovery" (Goffin, 1994:54). Montessori believed that children's interactions with objects and materials should occur in some ordered, systematic way, not through free exploration. The ultimate goal was the child's development of sufficient self-discipline to accomplish a decided upon goal. Purposeful, self- directed activity meant that a child was exercising self-control and this reflected a development of will (Goffin, 1994).

The scientific nature of Montessori's pedagogical approach dictated that any child or teacher-initiated modifications would "annul its scientific validity" (Goffin, 1994:55). Thus materials were to be used in a very specific, unchanging way and teachers' instruction to children about how to "work" with these were likewise to be precise and unchanging.

The learning environment, like Froebel's kindergarten, included an accessible garden where children could care for plants, a large "work" room, a sitting room where children could interact, and a dining room with drawers and cupboards children could reach so they could set the tables themselves. Tableware included real china so that children could see what happened when they dropped these. Sinks were of children's height so they could wash their own hands and dishes. Tables and chairs were likewise child-sized so the children could move them themselves. Cupboards for the didactic materials were child sized so that children could choose materials as they saw fit then put these away when they were finished. Each child had a drawer for her personal possessions and the room was decorated with pictures and flowers since Montessori believed "beauty promoted concentration and refreshed the spirit" (Goffin, 1995:56).

THE DEVELOPMENTAL-INTERACTION APPROACH

The Developmental-Interactional Approach's beginnings were closely allied with John Dewey and the early 1900's progressive educational movement's focus on addressing the social problems created by industrialization. Reforms in public education were considered key in righting social wrongs. Primary among such reforms were 1. a shift to pedagogical approaches derived from scientific inquiry and 2. revising classroom practice to fit the specific needs of the populations in public schools. It was believed that a more scientific approach to early education might result in increased

professional status for teachers. As a result, an attempt was made to make Kindergarten educators' training more formalized and professional. When the experimental programs which resulted from these reforms began, information about children's development and early educational practice was nonexistent. Thus organization and dissemination of this body of knowledge was considered key by proponents of the experimental nurseries (Goffin, 1994).

One such experimental nursery was begun by Caroline Pratt who, in an attempt to attract the children of immigrant and working class families, opened a nursery at the Henry Street Settlement's Hartley House in 1913. However, parents from these groups were hesitant to enroll their children since they were, Pratt believed, afraid that they would not be adequately prepared there for entry into school. She admitted that, in the fact that she had "no intention of pushing the three R's on the children until they were ready," that these parents' fears were probably well founded (Beatty, 1995:138). The cultural rebels, artists and writers who had gathered in Greenwich Village after World War I were, however, willing to take such risks with their children's early education. Pratt's progressive program gradually evolved to become the City and Country School, still located in Greenwich Village.

Pratt resisted the formulation of any type of "system" for her program and focused, rather, on "experiences offered children" as the basis for her curriculum. She asserted that teaching was an art, that teachers were artists, and called her educational philosophy one of "creative pedagogy" (Beatty, 1995:138). She also proposed that "good teachers unleashed the creative artistry within children" and helped them to "compose and create," not simply to "appreciate and reproduce" (Beatty, 1994:138). Pratt perceived the nursery school as "a democracy in miniature" and believed its job was to "provide the

critical first step in the child's emancipation from the home"(Beatty, 1995:139).

In 1916, working with Harriet Johnson and the funding of Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Pratt helped open the Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) in New York. The nursery school the BEE opened in 1919 admitted children 18 months to three years of age and focused its research on this age group. Where Mitchell's interest lay in meeting "social and economic need," Johnson wanted to "create an educational environment that maximized the objects and events with and from which young children could play and learn" (Beatty, 1995:139).

The Bureau's primary sites for gathering data were Johnson's Nursery School - later to become the Bank Street School for Children - and Pratt's Play School - later City and County School. The Bureau's research approach was different from the existent research sites, that is, the laboratory schools run by universities and colleges. These focused on "scientific application of developmental theory to classroom settings" (Goffin, 1994:73). The Bureau's purpose, rather, was to "develop ways to create a functional relationship between research and schooling that would inform planning within the school environment" (Goffin, 1994:73) since, it was believed, "more fully developed individuals would be more capable of being caring, productive citizens who could create a force for effecting social change" (Goffin, 1994:73). Although other psychologists and educational scientists emphasized observation and documentation of children's behaviors with the ulterior goal of producing scientific knowledge about these, the BEE's purpose in observation and recording was, more simply, to inform practice (Goffin, 1994).

In keeping with the thinking of John Dewey, the BEE believed that school should be a place where "young children could be active questioners

and experimenters...free to develop their thinking and reasoning powers more fully" (Goffin, 1994:74). The general goals were 1.to "educate the whole by stimulating children's independent thinking and reasoning processes and allowing for the "creative organization of experience," 2. to effect social change, by bringing "the reality of how the world functions into the classroom curriculum", 3. to awaken children to "the advantages of a democratic society," by providing "the experience of living democratically in the social setting of the schoolroom, of being part of a cooperative structure characterized by egalitarian interpersonal relations" (quoted in Goffin, 1994: 74).

Toward the end of the 20's Mitchell began to doubt the conviction that "quantitative measurement could provide the functional indices of children's growth that could guide educational planning...." and, moreover, became fearful that "the very formulation of exact standards of normal growth might in fact distort individual variation in development and lead to the promulgation of mechanistic, uniform norms, which if applied as educational guides could deaden rather than enhance children's impulses to learn" (Antler 1982 quoted in Goffin, 1994: 74).

The early childhood educational and teacher training approach formulated by BEE became known as "the Bank Street Approach" when BEE moved to Bank Street in 1930. The graduate school of education which was eventually developed by BEE became known as Bank Street College of Education in 1950. At this moment the staff began to formulate a theoretical framework from their accumulated knowledge base. The resultant "Developmental-Interactionist" approach is primarily attributed to the work of Barbara Biber who became part of the BEE staff in 1928. A large part of her

effort in doing this was directed toward "corroborating the assumptions of psychology, arrived at independently of the field of education" in order to "provide a firmer theoretical base for practices" (Goffin, 1994: 67).

Heretofore, Biber states, the basic assumptions about children's learning which largely determined early childhood practice had derived from direct observation and teaching of children.

In 1931 the BEE formulated the Cooperative School for Student Teachers in response to requests by many experimental programs with similar philosophies and who felt a need for teachers who understood and could effectively teach in experimental programs. According to Mitchell, the aim of the Cooperative was "to help students develop a scientific attitude towards their work and towards life." This meant developing "an attitude of eager, alert observations; a constant questioning of old procedures in light of new observations; a use of the world as well as of books as a source material; an experimental open-mindedness..." (Goffin, 1994:75) Mitchell asserted, we are not interested in perpetuating any 'school of thought.' Rather we are interested in imbuing teachers with an experimental, critical and ardent approach to their work" (cited in Antler, 1982:583). As Goffin points out, these convictions made the Developmental-Interaction approach unique in its time in that it mingled "the critical intellectual thinking of the era" (Goffin, 1994:75) But this was only to be challenged by thinking in the 60's and 70's which advocated for competitive curricular and assessment models which emphasized outcome-based evaluation and meticulous program implementation (Goffin, 1994).

Goffin maintains that with the ending of World War I, social reform ideology shifted early education's focus to individual creative potential and the

educational system's responsibility in insuring its realization. Whereas the nursery had previously seen as its primary task providing classrooms "rich in possibilities for direct contact and interaction with things, people and ideas," BEE shifted to children's emotional processes and personality development and how these "condition the way children interpret their school experiences" - that is, to an interest in the "whole child," to a "cognitive-affective position" (Goffin, 1994:76).

Many traditionally black colleges in the South also began to open nursery schools. W. McKinley Menchan argued that "if black colleges were to build even higher, they had "to go further downward in order to lay a firmer foundation" (Beatty, 1995: 160). In 1930 Menchan began a program at his Alabama State Teachers College in Montgomery. A visiting scholar wrote in reference to the program that it was distinctly not "a dumping place for mothers who desire a few hours of daily freedom from the care of their young children" (Beatty, 1995:160). Laboratory nurseries were also opened at Spelman in Atlanta, Hampton Institute in Virginia and Grand View State College in Texas. Beatty asserts that Hampton's nursery program was probably as oriented toward vocational training as was its kindergarten program.

At a 1930 White House Conference on Child Health and Protection a Committee on the Education and Training of the Infant and Preschool Child was created. Data collected by the committee revealed that while middle and upper class children attended kindergartens, lower class children attended day nurseries. Additionally, a slightly higher percentage of African American children participated in kindergarten programs, probably owing to the fact that universalization of kindergarten had begun. Only 8.2% of African American

children attended kindergarten compared to 30% of white children. While 6.4% of white children attended nursery school, only 1.6% of African American children did. Preschool education had already begun to segregate and, Beatty asserts, African American parents would probably have elected for a "more educationally oriented curriculum" as opposed to the more custodial programs offered by many day nurseries. This is suggested by the fact that 13.2% of African American parents were teaching their children to read before they were five years of age while only 7.6% of white parents were doing this (Beatty, 1995).

U. S. child welfare advocates in the twenties had asserted that nursery education was needed by poor and abnormal children. However, they were not uniformly convinced of the need for nursery education for all children. Many public preschools were included in high-school home economics departments and used as labs for preparental education. Some, like Rose Alschuler's in Chicago, were linked to welfare programs, hospitals and child guidance services and were for poor children with emotional or behavioral problems (Beatty, 1995). David Snedden of Teachers College expressed the fear that universal nursery education might result in "a kind of institutional fussiness over babies" (Beatty, 1995:167) and that by the age of four or five, children would be able to do all the things children were being taught in nursery schools anyway (Beatty, 1995).

National Association of Nursery Educators (NANE) was begun in New York in 1925 by a group of 25 nursery educators, led by Patty Hill Smith. At a 1931 NANE conference it was suggested that universal nursery might stimulate the economy and provide a number of new jobs. At the 1933 NANE

conference it was announced that the U.S. Office of Education would begin a federal emergency nursery program which would create environments where

children ...under five years of age would be so normal and happy that they shall be relieved of the tensions of worry and despair which are found in many homes which are suffering financial insecurity or overcrowding due to depression (Beatty, 1995:179).

Rose Alschuler, head of the National Commission for Young Children, published a set of guidelines for the wartime nurseries. These centered on the belief that young children should be encouraged to express their feelings and would learn "good habits through experiential learning," but "not through didactic instruction" (Beatty, 1995:190). Alschuler asserted, "good manners will come quite naturally if children eat together in a calm atmosphere without pressures of any kind" (Beatty, 1995:190). Affection was also valued: "the most important thing is to see to it that children get legitimate and sufficient affectional satisfactions at home and at school." (Beatty p. 190) She moreover recommended that rather than simply telling parents what to do, teachers needed to "put themselves in parents' places and help them find ways to solve their own problems" (Beatty, 1995:190). Perhaps most importantly, Alschuler did not believe in panaceas when it came to dealing with young children, but rather, in "several methods that might be tried with equal chance of success" (Beatty, 1995:190).

Grace Landon, an educator from Teachers College reported that the emergency nurseries often experienced high teacher turnover, a teacher-child ratio of one to nineteen, inadequate space, in other words, that they "in no way even approximate a good nursery school" (Beatty, 1995:181) She asserted that "pedagogical rigidity" was inappropriate for two and three year-old children and stressed the need for "a flexible informal program" which did not utilize formal teaching techniques for music and literature. Langdon

wanted to "help teachers to think of music, books, pictures, etc. as experiences rather than as...formal periods in the day when children were supposed to be 'taught' how to enjoy these different experiences" (Beatty, 1995:182).

A 1942 article by Abigail Eliot asserted that the preschool's mission should be preventing emotional problems which might arise as a result of World War II. Ensuring young children's happiness began to take precedence over habit training and parents were advised that children need "lots of love and the opportunity to express their fears" (Beatty, 1995:186). In direct contradiction to what Watsonians had been preaching, Dorothy Baruch of Whittier College instructed mothers to "hug their children and feed them on demand" (Beatty, 1995:186). Baruch recounted a mother's saying, "...I'd been warned, 'now leave your child alone, don't touch him anymore than you have to...' " (Beatty, 1995:186)

Baruch described a kindergarten class she observed in which the children all made identical clay snowmen then were told to put these back into a communal can. She queried, "What were the children learning about originality and inventiveness which have marked American progress?....Nothing except to look down on these" (Beatty, 1995:186).

Kaiser Shipbuilding opened one of the larger industry-based child care centers. Of the 129,000 children in care in its various Portland centers in 1944, there were almost no African-American children. Lois Stolz proposes that this was because there were no African American teachers, that African American mothers preferred in-home or relative care to center care and feared that white teachers were likely to hit their children (Beatty, 1995).

Additionally, center care was often associated with an "inability to care for one's own" (Beatty, 1995).

HEAD START

In the late sixties and early seventies, the debate turned from the question of whether or not nursery school was beneficial for young children to how its educational goals were achieved and significantly, to the question of "whether or not educational purpose differed for children of different socio-economic status" (Goffin, 1994:99). In the wake of this discussion and the war between proponents of various curriculum models, as at present, daycare began to be associated with a "custodial" function while preschools and nursery schools were presumed to have a more educational focus (Goffin, 1994).

As part of Lyndon Johnson's effort to combat poverty with educational, economic and community action programs, Project Head Start was initiated in the early 60's. The philosophical underpinnings of Head Start centered on the belief that the proper preschool experience could "boost the intelligence" of children with comparably lower educational and socioeconomic prospects. As Beatty points out, the downside of such an assertion was as follows:

The notion of a critical period for optimal stimulation and early learning led to the concept of cultural deprivation, in which whatever was or was not happening to young children from lower-class and poor families was considered deficient, harmful, and in need of remediation (Beatty, 1995:193).

Interestingly only three of the thirteen committee members appointed at the project's inception were preschool educators. Beatty asserts that this was because Kindergartners, "were not perceived as part of the educational establishment and thus part of the problem, not the solution" (Beatty, 1995:195).

One particularly controversial Head Start program was sponsored by the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM) and is described extensively by Polly Greenberg in her book, The Devil Has Slippery Shoes (Beatty, 1995). A particularly salient issue concerned disciplinary measures in the school. The parents and teachers at CDGM saw discipline and self-respect as two distinct issues. They believed that self-respect was not something one could be taught but could only be acquired through a child's constructive, positive interactions with adults. These adults were particularly offended by the frequent mistreatment of many of the African American students by public school teachers. For example, one kindergarten teacher put children whose behavior was offensive in a "bad boy chair." Greenberg describes a situation in which

an ancient lady stood up and said with toothless passion, 'We Negroes in the Mississippi have a mental block. We have been so conditioned that we feel wrong when we speak up. If we don't teach the children anything else, I say let's teach them to speak their mind. Sometimes children speak by acting, doing things. Let them. This is their freedom. Never mind obedience. They'll fit in as they grow. I wouldn't want anyone shaming my grandchildren in no chair' (Beatty, 1995:196).

In a 1970 Harvard Educational Review, Head Start was accused by Stephen and Joan Baratz of being "a part of a larger 'social pathology model' that had 'led social science to establish programs to prevent deficits which are simply not there' " and of being "guided by an ethnocentric liberal ideology which denies cultural differences and thus act(ing) against the best wishes of the people it wishes to understand and eventually help" (Beatty, 1995:198).

As described previously, Montessori had produced impressive results in improving the performance and test scores of poor and working class children in Italy. These were the very outcomes sought by the War on Poverty's compensatory early educational programs in the mid to late 60's.

Thus the Montessori method was chosen as an early intervention program for poor and working class preschoolers in U.S. ; however, its initial focus on the possibilities for building communication between families, children and the school shifted to academic preparation.(Goffin, 1994:42). The method's emphasis on teaching children self control as well as teaching children how to read and write before first grade made it not only appealing to early intervention strategists but to certain groups of middle and upper class parents as well. The educational program offered by Montessori was perceived by the affluent as an effective and accessible means for Americanizing the immigrant population, that is, for "mold(ing) a new generation of children - independent, productive members of society -" while at the same time enriching their own children's education (Goffin, 1994:43).

Barbara Biber's above-described effort toward formulation of the Developmental-Interactionist approach was hastened when Head Start asked Bank Street to help design its program in 1965. Federal dollars which were allotted for experimental early childhood programs in 1967 served as a catalyst for elaboration of the Bank Street approach. Goffin points out that this sort of 60's experimentation was focused "...at the level of program conceptualization- not teacher practice" (Goffin, 1994:68). As a result, the Bank Street approach moved from being "an evolutionary approach seeking continuous input and undergoing incessant self-assessment" (Goffin, 1994:68) to a designated option for early childhood programs. Goffin maintains that perhaps throwing its hat in the program option ring was in fact a move on the part of Bank Street to "validate its longstanding approach to early childhood education for all children, regardless of socioeconomic status" (Goffin, 1994: 69).

In that it involved a merging of several theoretical perspectives, the Developmental-Interactionist approach, like other contemporary approaches, emphasized the importance of the "whole child." It attempted to "re-establish a coherent framework for a field unexpectedly fragmented by diverse and often contradictory approaches to early education" (Goffin, 1994: 69). Codification and explication of the approach were perceived as necessary measures if the Developmental-Interactionist approach was to be made more accessible and more widely disseminated. Speeding this project along was the fact that the implementation of Head Start had resulted in exponential increases in the number of children in preschool and thus a need for properly trained and qualified teachers.

The most exceptional feature of the Developmental-Interactionist approach is that it derives from multiple theoretical perspectives. The primary sources which form the basis for the Developmental-Interaction approach include educational philosophies of Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Caroline Pratt, Harriet Johnson, Susan Isaacs and John Dewey (Goffin, 1994). Specifically, the underlying principles involve "distilled conceptual guidelines for informing teacher practice, ...not particulars of implementation" (Goffin, 1994:84). Proponents of this approach had accumulated almost 60 years of classroom observations and experiences from which to draw upon when its codification was undertaken, giving it a certain advantage over more recently structured programs. Also of note was its focus on education rather than custodial, out-of-home care for very young children (Goffin, 1994). Eventually, the Developmental-Interaction approach evolved from being one in which "ongoing practice and ongoing research informed each other" to one centered on "embedding and substantiating long term practices and understandings within a comprehensive theoretical framework" (Goffin, 1994:85).

The approach essentially focuses on supporting children's progress in the developmental processes which lead to "increased competence, individuality, socialization and integration," providing a direct contrast to approaches which emphasize "discrete, concrete, behavioral achievements sequenced toward a specific accomplishment" (Goffin, 1994: 86).

In spite of its essentially experimental quality, by 1975 the Bank Street approach had been included in the mainstream of early childhood education; however, its focus on children's socioemotional development as opposed to the teaching of "preacademic skills," e.g., drilling children on colors and numbers, necessitated a defensive stance for the Bank Street approach, despite its decades of leadership in the field of early childhood education (Goffin, 1994).

The Bank Street approach was selected as the model for Head Start at its initiation in 1965, probably owing to the approach's stated commitment that education was a powerful vehicle for social reform. However, as the program progressed, the Bank Street approach was criticized by several psychologists who believed its social-emotional emphasis usurped appropriate attention to cognitive development. As one critic stated, "Parents are no longer satisfied with life adjustment schools," opening the door for a more scientific, back-to-basics educational ideology (Goffin, 1994). As Biber described this situation "...a narrow scholasticism dominated experimental programs in search of single-track solutions to the pervasive damage of poverty in early childhood" (quoted in Goffman, 1994:80). Biber summed up the problem as follows:

It is a basic tenet of the developmental-interaction approach that the growth of cognitive functions - acquiring and ordering information, judging, reasoning, problem solving, using systems of symbols - cannot be separated from the growth of personal and interpersonal processes- the

development of self- esteem and a sense of identity, internalization of impulse control, capacity for autonomous responses, relatedness to other people." (Biber & Shapiro, 1972: 61 quoted in Goffin, 1994: 83).

The developmental-interaction approach was focused on individuality, on promoting the child's sense of self as unique-a distinct, thinking feeling being capable of emotional investment with a sense of worth based on knowledge and feelings of his own competence as much as on reflections of himself in people around him (Biber 1977:430).

Biber identified other problems in justifying the developmental-interaction approach's tenets to policymakers:

Because the developmental-interaction approach has such a personalized interpretation of individual change...it cannot, by definition, present a predetermined curriculum and description of teacher strategies and still remain conceptually consistent (Goffin, 1994:81).

The above-described commitments have several implications for teacher practice. The teachers' initial goal is to build a relationship of trust with each child. If this does not exist, a child will be less likely to allow a teacher to take any significant role in his/her learning experiences. Such a relationship moreover "assures the child's developing self-concept, assures the child's identification with the teacher, and serves as a model for human interchange" (Goffin, 1994: 89). Establishing such a relationship involves listening to a child so that her individual thinking processes can be comprehended, being able to understand children's behaviors in terms of their developmental level, helping children to accomplish tasks that are perhaps just above their current level of ability and helping children with feelings of fear, confusion, anger, etc. (Biber, 1977).

Biber maintained that establishment of mutuality between teachers and children, of a quality of "knowing" between children and teachers, not only contributes to the child's sense of individuality but also helps teachers feel "buoyed up by the freshness and ebullience of children" (Braun and Edwards,

1972:319). She also points out that the possibility for this "knowing" is dependent upon "how free the teacher feels about being known to the children as a fallible, feeling human being" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:319).

Moreover, as Biber interestingly queries, "We cannot here consider the intricate question of how much this kind of connectedness with children is a function of teacher personality...upon teachers' ability to be a giving person" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:319). She additionally wonders to what extent the possibility for such teacher connectedness might be facilitated by innovative strategies in teacher preparation (Braun and Edwards, 1972).

Additionally, Biber asserts, the teacher must be able to accept that children's growth and progress will not always be regular and consistent and to likewise accept children's fears, weaknesses, guilt and anxiety. She must be able to help children with these feelings, their doubt, their shame (Braun and Edwards, 1972:320). Criticism and evaluation are to be specifically handled without sarcasm or humiliation of the child. Rather, checking and channeling of children's behavioral impulses are to be conducted in a way such that children's ego strength is augmented rather than undermined (Braun and Edwards, 1972:321).

Of significance in the above is Biber's advocacy for a change in teacher function from one which is arbitrary, role-invested and authoritative to one which is relationship dependent. That is, the focus in teacher-child relationships should be on building relationships rather than submission to power (Braun and Edwards, 1972: 320). Teacher-defined rules and regulations are to be geared to children's abilities for control and understanding at certain ages and applied with flexibility.

In terms of curriculum, Developmental-Interaction advocates for many opportunities for children to make choices and decisions about "their own

course within an established program" (Biber, 1977:432). Children are likewise given opportunities to engage in observation and comparison of different phenomena and qualities of objects (including people) in their environments in order to discern the origins and causes of these, as well as to "(organize) ...experience in terms of continuity and transformation" (Goffin, 1994:90). This involves

increasing the range and depth of children's sensitivity to the world around them...stimulating the children to more differentiated observation, to perception of contrasts, to articulation of what is perplexing and wonderful to wonder about...(Braun and Edwards, 1972:315)

Classrooms should be filled with books, easels, books, a woodworking bench, puzzles, terrarium, etc. so that children are continually engaged in activity and conversation about this. Children are free to take out chosen materials and are responsible for putting these away. Children's discussion is seen as an important part of the curriculum. Teachers, rather than posing questions designed to elicit ready-made answers, are encouraged to ask questions which require children to explore the ideas and information they currently have at their disposal and to spontaneously associate these (Braun and Edwards, 1972:316).

Activities normally follow a relatively consistent daily schedule so that children can begin to develop an understanding of temporal relations as well as an ability to predict sequences. Child-initiated, individualized activities or "free play" when children move from one activity to the next as they see fit, are punctuated with teacher-directed, large or small group, activities, e.g. "circle time" where all the children sit together for songs and books. Events like snack or lunch time where the children sit together for "conversation" and

eating provide opportunities for social development, e.g., improving communication skills and learning appropriate dining behaviors.

Biber lamented what she perceived as a separation between theory and practice where early educational ideologies are concerned. The particular problem, as identified by Goffin, is that

teachers and theoreticians/researchers as equal partners and co-informants... (promote) a relationship of dependency, where practice becomes dependent on research and theory to tell it what to do;...it encourages teachers to be recipients of others' knowledge and know-how, rather than co-creators...Theory should not be insulated from application, nor should practice be allowed to escape responsibility for articulating theoretical foundations since cross-fertilization is essential to sound progress in both spheres (Goffin, 1994:94).

THE DIRECT INSTRUCTION APPROACH

The Direct-Instruction model was developed in specific response to a search for appropriate models for early intervention. Goffin describes the Bereiter-Englemann preschool, predecessor of this model, as a "belittling protagonist" to programs like Developmental-Interaction, maintaining that the program it proposed was "catapulted to center stage by the alignment of (its) curricular premises with educational norms and societal expectations" (Goffin, 1994:98). Moskowitz asserts that this model advocated for an atmosphere where "work and play are polar opposites, in which the pleasurable interpersonal affective factors in learning are avoided while material rewards (like cookies) are permitted," an environment of "puritanical zeal in which difficult tasks are dutifully pursued, while delight in an original expression, deviation, personal view or recounting are devil's pleasure" (Moskowitz, 1968:27).

The Bereiter-Engelmann and Direct Instruction models derive from the

principles of behavioral psychology. Of the educational psychologists who developed the model, few, if any, had experience with early childhood education (Goffin, 1994:101). Taking a turn away from models built on ideologies of child development, these models turned to a more "scientific" focus on "observable stimuli and responses" (Goffin, 1994:100). Individual difference and behavioral changes are perceived as the result of the child's "learning" from events external to him. Learning is presumed to be manifest in behavioral changes "brought about by repeated experiences in (a) situation" which "cannot be explained on the basis of native response tendencies, maturation, or temporary states of the individual, e.g. fatigue, drugs, etc." (Hilgard and Bower, 1975:17) Moreover, learning theories assert that "all behavior is learned, manipulable by the environment, extinguishable, and trainable" (White, 1970:666). Thus, in this model, the child, rather than being perceived as an active participant in her learning, is seen as a passive recipient.

The model functions primarily on B. F. Skinner's behavior modification principles. This involves, most notably, reinforcement of desirable behaviors in the child's repertoire as well as "shaping" of behavior by "reinforcing behavioral variations that are in the direction of desired behaviors" (Goffin, 1994:101). Utilizing these principles as its basis, the Direct Instruction model proposes a learning environment in which children are systematically taught the skills prerequisite for reading, writing and arithmetic, as these are considered key to academic success. Weber and other members of the early childhood community have criticized the model, arguing that it assumes a perspective of children as passive and undirected (Goffin, 1994:102).

The model also is heavily invested in the concept of cultural deprivation, widely popular in the sixties. This perspective maintains that

children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are not successful in school because they have been ill-prepared by their cultural backgrounds for academic pursuits. As Horowitz and Paden state, they

worked from a deficit model which could almost be described as a dismissal model. In the area of language, for instance, they sometimes have appeared to assume that the 'disadvantaged' child has no language, that he cannot think and that he has nothing to think about (Horowitz and Paden, 1975:374).

Because their early home experience with, for example, language learning, was of a certain "inferior" nature, these children are unable to benefit from certain types of instruction - in particular, the more indirect modes of instruction commonly utilized by parents and teachers of middle class children.

The instructional modes and practices espoused by the Direct Instruction model were expected to address these deficiencies. In contrast, the Developmental Interaction approach's position that all children, regardless of socioeconomic background, require the same sort of support and nurturing where development is concerned, the Direct Instruction model's program advocated for a different educational program for children from different class backgrounds - specifically a program which pushed academic skills into the forefront of early childhood education while simultaneously pushing into the background concerns over children's "readiness" for these. Bereiter and Engelmann met with heavy criticism for this position. But for policymakers, the Direct Instruction approach's promise of objective, "scientific," quantifiable evaluation of its outcomes, i.e., testing of its participants, gave this model "an added aura of validity" and placed it in political favor (Goffin, 1994:105).

Bereiter and Engelmann's two hour program for four to six year-olds consisted of 20 minutes of direct instruction each in reading, writing and

arithmetic. Groups of five children had different teachers for each subject. Specially created songs were used to aid instruction. The other hour was devoted to "minor activities" like snack time and semi-structured activity (Goffin, 1994:107).

The Direct Instruction model had 15 goals, the first nine of which dealt with "words and constructions in ordinary speech," for example, being able to use prepositions and affirmative and negative statements correctly. The next five focused on numerical skills and reading skills like recognizing vowels and consonants. The method was fast-paced and task-oriented. Spontaneous exchanges initiated by children were discouraged by the teacher. Children's verbal responses to the teacher were often conducted en masse to save time.

Although the method was accused of being "unhealthy for children," proponents of the model maintained children experienced no negative side effects from its business-like character (Goffin, 1994:108). The five basic "moves" utilized for teaching consisted of the teacher's presenting the children with a series of statements which became progressively more complicated. These began with object identity, moved to "if-then" statements, then ended with deductive reasoning. The sequencing in this approach derived from the belief that thought is structured by language, thus children needed language and a grasp of its structural rules in order to think logically. Such skills were believed crucial to developing disadvantaged children's reasoning abilities (Goffin, 1994: 109). The instructions for reading and arithmetic were largely verbal and focused on teaching children rules through repetition and patterning of tasks which embodied the rule (Goffin, 1994:110).

Teachers' responses were premeditated and scripted since it was believed that "Slight variations can make the difference between successful learning and discouraging confusion" (Goffin, 1994:111). In contrast to the

Developmental Interaction approach, teachers of the Direct Instruction model were to utilize teaching strategies "like recipes in a cook book" and, moreover, to "stay close to the recipes" in order to avoid failure (Goffin, 1994:111).

Bereiter and Englemann discouraged the hiring of nursery school teachers for this approach since, it was believed, "they must usually unlearn a great deal before they can become effective" (Goffin, 1994:111).

This battle between the Developmental Interactionists and the Direct Instruction advocates persists to the present. Goffin characterizes this struggle as one which has "pitted developmentalists against social efficiency educators" with a consequent conflict between academic and developmental curricula. (Goffin p. 120)

Goffin points out that a good deal of the success of the Bereiter-Engelman approach derived from the timing of its arrival on the American educational scene. Specifically, this more "scientific" approach to early childhood education was particularly appealing at a time when, owing to the successful 1957 launching of Sputnik, the U.S. perceived that its technological development was progressing at a pace which did not allow it to successfully compete with the U. S. S. R.

KAMII DEVRIES

The Kamii and DeVries approach, Goffin maintains, steers early childhood education away from issues of public policy (Direct Instruction, versus Developmental Interaction) and toward "the superiority of (Piaget's) theory as a framework for early education" (Goffin, 1994:127). Kamii, like Bereiter and Engelman, advocates for "the possibility of a scientifically informed approach to early education" (Goffin, 1994:127). Kamii's attraction to Piagetian theory centers on its presentation of a "coherent explanation of

cognitive development," and thus the possibility for a "scientifically valid" approach to early childhood education (Goffin, 1994:127).

Goffin attributes the U.S.'s delayed interest in Piaget's work to "the discrepancy between his clinical research method and the scientific, statistical treatment of findings prevalent in the U.S." which included, significantly, "Piaget's persistent blending of empirical description with theoretical speculation" (Goffin, 1994:130). Before the 1960's, interest in intellectual development was limited since it was assumed that this was determined by heredity and thus relatively immutable. Piaget's theory, by contrast, asserted that intellectual growth occurred as a result of the child's interaction with the environment and "progressed in...a heirarchically organized sequence that was rooted in sensorimotor activity" (Goffin, 1994:131). Accordingly, early childhood education came to be perceived as the key to assuring the school success of disadvantaged children, and thus ultimately, the key to helping alleviate poverty.

Rheta DeVries' collaboration with Kamii, formalized in her Programs of Early Education: The Constructivist View, (1987) incorporated the stages of moral development as described by Kohlberg and the "stages of perspective-taking" described by Selman. These were combined with the Piagetian principle of development as a "progression through a sequence of universal stages of intellectual and moral development" and the principles of constructivism. The result was the Kamii-DeVries approach (Goffin, 1994:132).

Kamii and DeVries both utilize the Piagetian stages as a framework for curriculum which "promote(s) cognitive and moral development in a particular direction" (Goffin, 1994:133) DeVries believes that cognitive developmental outcomes which, according to Piaget, occur as children move from "a less

adequate to a more adequate psychological state" should serve as the basis for educational aims. The outcomes of cognitive development outlined by Piaget are considered to be "natural" and thus not "value relative objectives drawn from a 'bag of virtues' " (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972) derived from arbitrary societal values.

While DeVries believed in the need for an identifiable framework, she simultaneously wished to avoid following in the footsteps of earlier Piagetian-based educational programs which directly transformed Piagetian stages into educational practices, ones which created preschool curriculum from Piaget's experimental tasks, like conservation where the child pours liquid from one size/shape container to one of a different size and shape and is then asked if the amount of liquid has changed. Proponents of such models believed repeated performance of these tasks could boost children to the next level of cognitive development. Ironically, Piaget had asserted that before the child had undergone certain intrinsic maturation, the next level of cognitive development could not be attained. Thus he probably would have perceived the above-described practice as banging one's head against a wall. He moreover believed that the most effective learning comes when children are allowed to "follow their own interests," to explore objects (including people) in their environment as they see fit. Piaget believed that children actively "construct" knowledge through such spontaneous, self-initiated activity, not from repeated performance of adult-prescribed tasks, removed from a meaning-filled context.

Allying herself with Montessori and other previously described theorists, Kamii believed in "science" as the proper basis for early education. She states,

Education has developed over the centuries by personal opinions called philosophies, and by trial and error, and by tradition, to meet certain practical needs. To educate the young generation of their society, teachers have used their best common sense. But a professional cannot develop on the basis of common sense alone....Just as agriculture and medicine advanced with scientific research and theory, education can go forward only by raising fundamental questions once again and getting scientific answers to these questions (Kamii 1981b in Goffin, 1994:139).

What Kamii evidently fails to take into account here is the fact that the so called "scientific" principles she seeks as a basis for educational practice also derive, in the end, from the "scientist's" personal philosophy and thus ultimately, from some conscious or unconscious agenda of the "scientist."

Like Piaget, Kamii-DeVries maintains that development can neither be explained exclusively in terms of biological maturation, nor in terms of a child's interaction with the environment. Activities which engage children with objects in the environment and encourage cognitive and social development constitute the crux of the Kamii-Devries approach (Braun and Edwards, 1972:297). Kamii-DeVries advocates for hands-on learning, play, and learning-by-doing. In the interest of children's social development, the Kamii-Devries approach advocates for an active, interactive relationship between child and teacher. Delineation of two types of learning/knowledge underlie this approach: physical knowledge and logico-mathematical knowledge (Goffin, 1994:133). Physical knowledge results from a child's direct explorations with objects in the environment while logico-mathematical knowledge results from experiences which "provoke children to mentally create relationships between and among objects that do not exist directly in the object, e.g. number, which is not a physical property of an object." (Goffin, 1994:140). Children begin to understand number by, for example, concluding there are three objects, from putting three objects in relationship to one

another. Since preschoolers are usually most focused on direct exploration of objects in their environments, opportunities for physical experience are of primary importance. These experiences constitute the basis for the development of children's logico-mathematical learning, thinking and knowledge. One cannot begin to establish relationships between objects without first having various types of experience with a number of objects (Braun and Edwards, 1972: 299).

A third type of knowledge identified by Piaget is social-arbitrary knowledge which involves, broadly, "facts and conventions that have been socially accepted, such as names of objects or the ways...particular holidays are celebrated" and which children acquire through their interactions with people. Goffin explains: The content of both social-arbitrary and physical knowledge is "structured within a logico-mathematical framework" which is "formed from the mental co-ordination of understandings derived from physical and social-arbitrary knowledge" (Goffin, 1994:141).

The Kamii-DeVries approach also has an express interest in encouraging children's moral reasoning. This is implemented through advocacy of

teacher's respect for children's thinking, reduction of adult authority, alleviation of arbitrary rules, and opportunities for co-operative, caring interactions necessitating co-ordination of diverse perspectives

as well as "opportunities for children to create classroom rules and negotiate conflict with peers and teachers" (Goffin, 1994:143).

The approach's focus on physical knowledge is accomplished through opportunities for interaction with objects - like rollers and water - such that they are able to construct "relations of correspondence between actions and reactions." These "gradually evolve into causal, explanatory relations" which

constitute the basis for understanding of physics and chemistry (Goffin, 1994: 144). Kamii and DeVries have identified three types of physical knowledge:

1. activities that involve movement of objects, e.g., pulling, pushing, kicking, etc.
2. activities that involve changes in objects, e.g. cooking or mixing paints,
- and 3. activities that defy neat categorization but share elements of the first two types of activity, like floating or sinking objects (Goffin, 1994:144). The criteria for good physical knowledge-producing activities are, broadly, ones which

enhance the possibility that children will be able to construct relationships among their actions and an object's reactions and specifically, ones for which children can, through explorations, produce reactions on their own which the children may vary, and which have reactions children can directly observe and immediately (Goffin, 1994:144).

Other important features of the Kamii-DeVries approach include group games designed to promote social interaction and understanding with the ulterior goal of encouraging children's autonomy and cooperation (Goffin, 1994:144). Such games are intended to help children become sociomoral individuals, to "develop autonomous feelings of obligation about relations with others that are not just dictates accepted from adults" but rather reflect "an internal system of personal convictions" (Goffin, 1994:145). Beliefs and behaviors are meant to be self rather than other-regulated, in the interest of children's formulating an autonomous system. Other socioemotional objectives as specified by Kamii include

1. the ability to respect the feelings and rights of other children
2. the ability to listen to others and exchange opinions, that is, "decentering" which leads to the coordination of different points of view
3. the ability to listen to adults, cooperate with them and use them as a source of friendship, guidance and information
4. to be busily doing things with initiative, enthusiasm and excitement
5. to be curious...exploring

things to figure out how they work...experimenting with cause-effect relationships...asking questions 6. to have the self-confidence [to] figure things out on one's own 7. not [looking] for the one 'correct' answer the adult wants, but [coming] up with many different ways of doing the same thing (Kamii in Braun and Edwards, 1972:298).

The group games utilized by Kamii-DeVries involve "interactions during which children play together according to conventional rules that specify how players relate to each other..." for example, Hide and Seek where there is an interactive, collaborative, and oppositional relationship between 'hider' and 'seeker' " (Goffin, 1994:145). In that the games require children to voluntarily submit to certain rules, group games are expected to encourage autonomy. Additionally, children learn that rules are based on a desire to maintain certain relations with others. Group games involve interaction with peers, meaning adult coercion is not present. This is meant to allow opportunities for autonomous cooperation, inspired by children's "interest in playing with others" (Goffin, 1994:145).

With relationship to the development of mathematical concepts, the Kamii-DeVries approach adopts the Piagetian notion that "the child's construction of number and the development of logic progress in a coordinated fashion" (Goffin, 1994:145), and thus, promotion of children's cognitive development - through other means than direct instruction - automatically promotes their construction of number concepts; for example, through meaningful, "in context" daily classroom activities - e.g., pouring water from one container to another which is twice its size in the water table - and group games. Other activities which require children to utilize number in a meaningful context, including counting the number of times they stir the cake batter or counting the number of crackers they have selected for snack, are

perceived as most effective for establishing the relationship of number to things in the real world. Only after children have experienced number in this concrete, empirical way can abstract symbols for these - numbers - be introduced.

Kamii maintains that logico-mathematical knowledge is "structured from the child's own coordinated actions and the results of these actions" (Braun and Edwards, 1994:300). Where in physical knowledge the specific properties of objects are all-important, in logico-mathematical knowledge, the relationship between objects is of primary importance. Moreover, these relationships do not reside within the objects, nor are they introduced by external reality, but are created by the child herself (Braun and Edwards, 1972).

Piaget identifies three types of logico-mathematical knowledge: classification, seriation and number. When the child classifies she introduces relationships of similarity or difference between objects, e.g., putting all the red pens together in a group and all the blue pens in another group. Seriation involves the child comparing differences, e.g. arranging the plastic animals in order of size. Number involves the child's focusing on relationships of equivalence, of "more" and of "less" (Braun and Edwards, 1972).

Representational knowledge involves the child's ability to "represent things and ideas in imitation and sociodramatic play, e.g. making the sound of a horn while pretending to drive a car, or using a block as if it were a car" (Braun and Edwards, 1972:302). Representation also involves the child's developing ability to "represent things and communicate ideas through arbitrary signs, e.g., traffic signs and language" (Braun and Edwards, 1972: 302).

Kamii and DeVries believe one of the strengths of their program is its provision of "a scientific theory that can contribute greater precision to teacher

behaviors" (Goffin, 1994:141). The teacher's role in the Kamii-DeVries classroom is fourfold: evaluator, stimulator, organizer, collaborator. Teachers are expected to have broad knowledge of children and development to be able to effectively assess a child's level in thinking abilities. With this information, the teacher provides the child with appropriate materials and activities to encourage her development in the cognitive areas with which she appears to be preoccupied (Goffin, 1994:147).

Chapter 4

The Lower East Side Early Head Start

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THE LOWER EAST SIDE EARLY HEAD START

The Lower East Side Early Head Start serves 0-3 year old children who reside in the housing project in which it is located. The majority of the children are Puerto Rican and Dominican. The other children at the school are African-American and Chinese. Many of the children's parents are unemployed or participating in welfare-to-work programs. Several of the mothers do volunteer work in the classrooms as part of these programs. Some are employed by the city and work within the housing project doing secretarial, maintenance and other work. Others are employed outside the project as cashiers, mechanics, and retail salespeople.

There are three classrooms, and infant room, a one's room and a two's room. There are eight children in each classroom with two teachers each. There is usually a parent volunteer and/or a Web worker in each classroom.

Although the building in which the school is located has a distinctively institutional look, the rooms occupied by the Early Head Start Program have been nicely renovated and have a well-kept, colorful, child-friendly look. The equipment is relatively new, mostly from Community Playthings (a company which makes intelligently designed, well-constructed furniture for children). Cubbies with children's special toys from home and sets of extra clothes line one wall of each classroom. Although the classrooms are relatively small, each classroom has a large piece of equipment for gross motor activity. Children can climb up carpet steps to a platform-type area, look out at the rest of the classroom through the plastic panels surrounding the platform, then slide down the attached slide. Other equipment includes a pretend kitchen with child-sized appliances, pots, pans, dishes and plastic food, a cozy corner with books and a mattress covered with pillows, a block area and a

manipulatives area with wooden cars and trucks. In the infant room this area contains soft blocks, squeeze toys, "activity boxes," and rattle-like toys for shaking. The one's classroom and the two's classroom have water tables.

Teachers constantly wipe the tabletops, chairs and other surfaces so that the rooms always look clean and neat. Infant room teachers endlessly wash toys that children routinely put in their mouths.

Children can arrive at the program at 8:00. Parents or relatives bring the children to school. A breakfast, usually of cereal and milk, is offered. Children then spend the morning in "free play" in the various areas named above, art activities, water table play, and going to one of the numerous playgrounds in the area. A well-balanced lunch is served by the program at 12:00. As children finish their lunches, cots are brought out from the storage closets. Children lie down with their sheets and a book and listen to soothing music. The children generally nap until about two. As each child individually awakens, she goes to the table for a snack, usually cookies or yogurt. When finished, the children have free play until their parents arrive for pick-up at 2:50. Generally the children like to take turns going up and down the slide, read books, or play in the child-sized kitchen. Children are picked up by parents or relatives and rarely, by a babysitter.

TEACHERS AT LESEHS - BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES

Ana

Ana was the assistant teacher in the one year-old's classroom at LESEHS when this study first began, but then moved to the Infant Room as head teacher when Janine left the school. Ana had recently completed her BA, which made her newly eligible for this position. She dropped out of high school and eventually college but then managed to finish her associates degree. For the last two years she has been going to school after work and

running home at lunchtime to do the cooking and the cleaning. Ana says she went back to school because she "didn't want to always be the assistant teacher and have jobs that don't pay so well." She has a 19 year-old daughter whom she says "is doing good...she's working," a 14 year-old son whom she says she has to remind to do his homework each day and an eight year-old daughter in the fourth grade. As far as her other training for this work goes, Ana says she found the year of workshops helpful at the beginning of the training.

Ana is Puerto Rican. When she was small her mother, moved here to New York to work, bringing her two oldest daughters with her. She has 11 children and Ana is the fifth. These two daughters got married and left home, so Ana's mother sent for her. The youngest child, born after Ana's mother's arrival in New York, is a deaf mute and the mother wanted someone to help with this child. When her mother had initially left, Ana had been sent to live with her grandparents on a farm in Puerto Rico where she was very happy, felt very loved and wanted to stay. She says she enjoyed caring for the animals on the farm. She despised life in New York City. In an effort to get herself sent back to her grandparents, Ana behaved as badly as she could. Her efforts were successful. Ana says her mother was "very emotionally cruel" but explains she believes her cruelty resulted from having been beaten by Ana's father. She describes how her mother has continued to be excessively cruel and sarcastic with all of her children. Ana "just avoids her at all costs" but her two brothers live with her mother because they are both separated from their wives and can't afford to live elsewhere. Two of Ana's siblings died as adults - one brother and one sister. She hinted the brother's death was connected to drug use.

Ana warned her 19 year-old daughter to stay away from her grandmother. She says some days her mother "just gets so angry." Ana says her mother "abused us by spanking us." As an important part of Ana's work with young children, she describes how "When I get mad at kids, I don't do this... I want to do the same for the children here as my grandparents did for me - save them from abuse." She says her grandparents' method for disciplining her and her siblings was to pull their ears. When she came to New York on her own she found her brothers and lived with them and their families. She reports that she "got up in the middle of the night and took care of my nephews."

Ethan

Ethan is the head teacher in the one year-olds' classroom at LESEHS. His educational background and training is actually for working with older children. He had only worked with elementary school-aged children before this except when he taught 3-5's classes at the Children's Museum. He has been at LESEHS since it began so he profited from the year's worth of workshops arranged by the director for the staff.

Ethan reports that he grew up outside Philadelphia in a middle class family of Italian descent. He is one of three boys and describes his family as very close and affectionate. The neighborhood in which he grew up had a "very close knit feeling of community." Ethan says he feels very lucky to have grown up in such a supportive, loving environment and believes that this experience was crucial to his sense of well-being as an adult. What he wants more than anything for the children he works with is for them to experience the same "feeling of support and closeness."

Lillian

Lillian is a 55 year-old Peruvian woman who came here at age 28 with her husband. She has been working in the Infant Room at the Lower East Side Early Head Start (LESEHS) Program since it opened in 1998. She is perpetually warm and giving in her interaction with both adults and babies. When her 8:00 am -3:30 pm workday ends, she goes home to cook and clean for her husband, adolescent daughter, her older daughter's three year-old, and two other toddlers, one she recently adopted from Peru. Some days she runs the family errands before returning home. For example, one afternoon after an interview she was headed to midtown to purchase a trombone for her adolescent daughter who was just beginning lessons. She reports that she sometimes does not finish her housework before 1:00 or 2:00 a. m. She also has a 25 year old and an 18 year old and wants to buy a house for her family. She is looking for a two-story house where they could all live together. has two granddaughters, one two and one nine months they live with her and want to play with her when she goes home.

Although Lillian speaks English relatively well, she is often self-conscious about her English speaking ability and struggles to find the right word. As many bilingual speakers are often present at the LESEHS, she usually resorts to asking someone else to translate certain words from Spanish.

Lillian's only educational background with reference to early childhood education came from the year's worth of workshops and staff development provided by the LESEHS. Now there are monthly staff development meetings which she finds useful and enjoyable. She says "When you you

read you learn alot more and that's better." But Lillian believes that only limited care and educational goals can be accomplished with the children, owing to certain common parent characteristics and practices she has observed.

Marly

Marly is the assistant teacher in the two's classroom. She is energetic, outgoing, warm and articulate. Marly is in her early 30's and identifies herself as Puerto Rican and grew up in the housing project in which LESEHS is located. She was an important figure in the housing project in which the LESEHS is located. In fact, the educational director, Janine, calls Marly "the mayor" because everyone they pass when walking on the streets knows her. In fact Marly found and was offered a lease on an apartment in a nearby neighborhood that was much larger and less expensive than the one she occupied in the neighborhood but she decided not to take it. In talking it over with a coworker she expounded, "Who will I talk to? Which grocery store would I go to? I wouldn't know where anything was!"

Although she became engaged in the first months of the study, two years later she still had not "set a date" and was questioning whether marriage was the right choice for her. Even though she grew up in the community, like Janine the middle class, white married teacher in her early 40's, Marly was teased and questioned by mothers of children at LESEHS as to why she had no children at her age. Although this appeared to pose a problem of trust between mothers and teacher in Janine's case, it did not appear to create obstacles between the mothers and Marly.

Marly was completing a BS in education at Audrey Cohen College at the time of her interview. She was very enthusiastic about her studies and

about the college itself. She brought me materials about the school's origins and general philosophy. This included a significant focus on encouraging students to critically evaluate the research materials they read in class as well as their early childhood classroom experiences.

Two years into the study Marly revealed that she was looking into both Masters in Early Childhood Education programs and alternative job possibilities. Several months later she began looking at stewardess training programs and eventually decided to accept a job in business administration. She said that although she loved working with young children, there was "never any money in it" and she was eager to improve her personal economic situation. Two months after having accepted to business administration position, Marly called the school and asked if she could have her job back. Because she had left abruptly without giving proper notice, the administration did not offer her a job.

Janine

Janine is the educational director of the Lower East Side Early Head Start Program (LESEHS) and the head teacher in the Infant Room. She describes herself as middle class and of Irish, French and German descent. Having spent her childhood "all over Europe," she attended several international schools and also lived in Westchester County, N.Y. Although she has been married for six years she has no children, a factor which she says calls her credibility as an child caregiver and educator into question with some of the Hispanic families at the center. She has a Masters in Early Childhood Education from Sarah Lawrence College. Before moving to New

York a few years ago she initiated a progressive, literature based literacy program for second graders in Boston. Although she says this was controversial for some parents, most parents, colleagues and superiors considered her program exceptional. Janine had several careers before coming to early childhood education, including printmaking and (ask her again) She has been at the LESEHS since the program began.

Jonilla

Jonilla is an energetic, vivacious woman in her mid-twenties from the Phillipines who spent most of her childhood in New Jersey. Jonilla reports that owing to the fact that both her parents worked, she and her sister were "latchkey kids," and thus encouraged to be independent early on. She says that this "goes against" Filipino culture in that children, especially girls, are normally encouraged to demonstrate, subservience, obedience to parents and to remain largely dependent upon them throughout childhood and even adolescence.

Jonilla has been at LESEHS since its opening and in fact commutes one and one half hours, each way, to get to the school every day.

Jonilla graduated from Northeastern where she took a lot of Early Childhood Education and psychology courses. She believes she profited significantly from her formal training, as well as from her internship at John Hancock's back-up care facility which she described as "wonderful."

Jonilla believes that the most important characteristics a preschool teacher can have, "the tricks of the trade" are patience and a sense of humor. She demonstrates both qualities consistently throughout the day. Jonilla seems genuinely amused and intrigued by all the various activities and behaviors - both difficult and nondifficult - of the two year-olds in her

classroom. During two years of observation, she never once lost her temper or appeared anything but cheerful. She appears to have a very deep appreciation for the imaginations and explorations of the children. She seems to see each child as an individual and is "tuned into" and delighted by that child's unique personality and behavior. Thus she has a sense of, for example, why a particular child behaves aggressively in certain situations which allows her to understand why they yell "No!" at each other or otherwise assert themselves. Unlike many teachers, she can even quietly laugh at such scenes.

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CONFLICTS IN PHILOSOPHY AT LOWER EAST SIDE EARLY HEAD START

Teachers at LESEHS described several ideological commitments with reference to early childhood education which have brought them into conflict with other teachers, parents and with administrators. These ideological commitments center broadly on the following questions: 1. Should children be encouraged to be autonomous and self-directed in their play or should their learning be more focused on attending to what teachers and other adults demand of them? 2. What role should parents play in the early childhood program? How much should their ideas about early education and childrearing be taken into consideration by the school, particularly when these ideas present ideological conflicts with the educational program at school?

1. ENCOURAGEMENT OF AUTONOMY AND SELF-DIRECTED PLAY VS ATTENTION TO TEACHER DIRECTION

Significant differences of opinion existed between parents and teachers about the encouragement of autonomy in young children. Some firmly believe children should be encouraged to freely explore, to be self-motivated learners. Others believe that it is more important for young children to learn to attend to the directives of teachers, parents and other adults.

Marly, with reference to this issue states "I believe what is most important is letting the child explore the environment...letting the child explore the world." In fact she perceives the most important part of her job as a teacher to be "tuning in to the unique learning styles of each child." Marly says she has come to these commitments through her teacher training program at Audrey Cohen College, as well as through the year's worth of workshops provided by LESEHS before the school opened. In these settings, Marly was exposed to the Bank Street (Developmental-Interaction)

and City and Country (Carolyn Pratt's) early educational philosophies. As explained in Chapter 3, both philosophies place great value in the encouragement of autonomy and self-direction in young children. This emphasis "made sense" to Marly and she adopted it in her classroom practice with young children; however, when it came to "trying to explain [this component of] the Bank Street and City and Country philosophies to parents from the neighborhood" Marly said this was "quite a task!" Additionally, she describes how "Learning these philosophies was hard for me and the parents of the community." [as noted previously, Marly grew up in the housing project in which LESEHS is located] She laughs and shakes her head, "You just can't apply that to this community!"

Further elaborating, Marly notes that the Bank Street and City and Country approach's encouragement of self-assertion in children is not easily swallowed by the the LESEHS community. She describes how one evening she went out with one of LESEHS' social workers and her family, whom Marly describes as "white and middle class." When some salsa music came on, the social worker's little girl got up and danced around the floor of the restaurant. Shaking her head and smiling, Marly says, "If you were a child from this community, you just wouldn't do that in a restaurant. The parents would tell them to sit down and eat...if they danced they would have gotten a reprimand."

Guadalupe Valdes' Con Respeto discusses this issue in her observations of Mexican-American families and the pervading dynamics in parent-child interactions. She describes how when she and her assistant went to visit the Ornelas family, it was clear that the young children in the family were accustomed to deferring to adult needs and conversation. Three

of the family children aged six, five and four sat quietly as Valdes talked to the mother, Carmen. Valdes reports that this scenario was repeated many times in the study she conducted of ten families. She states,

The rules appeared to be clear. Children did not misbehave, clamor for attention, or take advantage of the fact that their mother had company to misbehave...or fight with brothers and sisters. They responded to a raised eyebrow or to a nod that meant 'go away' or 'leave the room,' or 'take your brother and change him (Valdes 1996:116).

Valdes points out the contrast in this scene and that witnessed in many middle class white American households where children are often the center of attention, interrupting adult conversations to express their needs, or going about their play in a way that is disruptive to adult interaction.

Respeto, which Vales explains is based on parents' status and position, figured heavily into child-adult interactions. For example, children were expected not to awaken their mother if she was sleeping. Children who did not conform to such behavioral expectations were considered rude. Children who clung to their mothers were labeled "ninos molestos," (bothersome children) and "mothers who gave signs of catering to such behaviors were chastised by family members...for not teaching them better" (Valdes, 1996:121).

Study mothers who witnessed Anglo mothers pleading with children to comply with their demands were highly critical of such scenarios. Children who "talked back" to parents were reminded by the parent, "We are not equals, you and I." As Valdes states, "there were no pretenses about running democratic households...parents...considered that they knew what to do and...they had a right to 'make' their children do what they were told" (Valdes, 1996:121).

In a related vein, a Chinese mother in Siu's (1994) study describes a scene with an American substitute teacher:

In some cases, the teachers seem afraid of reprimanding children who misbehave because they are scared the parents might sue them. One time while the sub was telling a story, some children were allowed to fool around and pay no attention. One child even took the teacher's chair and walked around the room with it on his head! (Siu, 1994:30)

This mother made it abundantly clear that such behavior would never have been tolerated by a teacher from her own culture.

Fuller, Eggers-Pierola, Holloway, Liang and Rambaud (1996) discuss this issue in their study of four Latina mothers' perspectives of preschool care and education as compared to home care. All the mothers in the study discussed how "basic building blocks of socialization are established within the home, often centering on respect for adult authority and sensitivity to others" (Fuller et al, 1996:415). What is most emphasized is respect for others. In fact for one interviewed mother, the primary motivation for sending her child to preschool was for the child to learn social skills - most notably, social skills that focus on being courteous, considerate and aware of others. Early education for their very young children should focus on "learning to get along with other children, developing respect for adult authorities, and learning the ropes of a formal school setting" (Fuller et al, 1996:415). One of the mothers summarized these goals as follows: "It's true that the child has to go to school and has to get used to a big group of students and know other people. In [the preschool] she has to share toys...she is courteous, she is taught everything" (Fuller et al, 1996:415). Thus, as Fuller et al conclude, "What might be seen in middle-class North American terms as conformity is perceived in this culture as social competence and respect" (Fuller et al, 1996:415).

In apparent contradiction to both Fuller et al and Marly's above assertions, Marly states a belief that the parents in the community value and teach independence and individuality to their children in the same way as the administration at the school does. However, once Marly and the women in Fuller and Holloway's study defined their concept of the development of independence, the two seemingly opposed goals of respect for authority versus the development of independence appear less incongruent. Marly describes this value for independence as follows:

There is an understanding that children, at some point, will get up and get a job and that they will pull their load and make their share of the family income. They learn to go to work early whereas upper class children are given money by their parents.

Mothers in Fuller's study also believed that the development of independence involved formal schooling. Although mothers' value for formal schooling centered on the fact that it teaches children respect for authority, how to follow routines and the rules by which the school operates, the ultimate value for such knowledge was that it was considered essential to preparing children for "real school" - for facilitating their learning to read and write. This was likewise considered significant for children's acquiring independence. (Fuller et al, 1996: 415).

Jonilla also expressed her belief that it is particularly important that she help the children in her classroom with independence since, "I know that when they leave this classroom they will need to know how to work independently because they don't get a lot of help and support in their subsequent schooling experiences." This, Jonilla says, she has learned by simply being in the neighborhood for three years. She has heard from the parents and the other

community members that the local public schools do not come anywhere close to providing the young children she has taught with the individualized attention that they get at LESEHS.

It appears what Jonilla is trying to accomplish - without defining it in these terms - is to provide the children in her classroom with cultural capital. That is to say, she is attempting to develop in them the (middle class white) skill, or, in Bourdieu's term, "habitus," of working and exploring independently. Jonilla believes that without this skill, these children will be unable to succeed in their subsequent school experiences.

Interestingly, Jonilla remarks that encouraging independence in children "goes against" her Filipina background. She states that although Filipinos generally discourage too much independence in children, owing to the fact that both of her parents worked, she and her sister were "latchkey kids" in New Jersey, so, in fact, it was necessary that she and her sister learn to be independent.

Many mothers in Fuller and Holloway's study defined independence in a child as "being a leader not a follower" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:107). They wanted their children to be "self-reliant members of the community, not dependent on anyone else to get ahead economically." Some mothers expressed a desire for their children to be "savvy loners who did not tangle with the wrong people." And, from another mom, "I want him to be...secure with himself, a loner. I think that it's better to be happy alone...Not alone but on his own. Like he doesn't have to follow every kid around" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:111). This statement appears ironic in view of previous statements made by this mother in which she indicated a strong value for instilling in children an orientation toward family, community and relationships

with others. However, many of the statements of this nature are made against a backdrop of significant gang activity taking place in the communities where the families live. One mother's statement, "...You can't be a follower. You need to be a leader," reflects her fears around her son joining the "wrong crowd." But as Holloway and Fuller explain, "Black mothers worried about losing their children to the streets and the defiant peer groups that dominate them" (Holloway and Fuller, 1997:112).

This encouragement of independence in children was recognized by one mother as a distinct departure from the standards by which she was raised in El Salvador. Of this situation she states,

The most important thing is to teach them to survive here, so they can be independent...because we...Latina mothers, we perhaps protect our children too much...we have to leave them on their own...so they can survive" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:108).

As another seeming departure from more traditional models of childrearing, one mother appeared to endorse her daughter's growing self-assertiveness. Although the child had been taught, in keeping with the values of her parents' culture, the importance of sharing, she would sometimes yell at her brothers, "Leave me alone or I'll slap you!" While such behavior was in conflict with the standards set forth by the mother's culture, ("She's real bossy..I think it's mostly trying to be in control of every situation...") the mother expressed proudly, "...she will protect herself...she's smart as a whip. I'm so happy, she'll be going places with her life" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:115).

Although most mothers did not want their children to be completely socialized in what they perceived as the "American" way, several expressed a value for having their children be bicultural - that is - in "taking the best from each world" with reference to early childhood socialization. A mother from El Salvador states,

Learning another culture teaches one a lot...when you have two cultures, you can take the best from each and leave behind the worst...There's many people who can't adapt. They think they can survive with only our [Latino] culture...The truth is you can't. You have to grab something from here also. If not, you are lost (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:112).

She elaborates, with reference to her daughter,

...our culture is fairly conservative, it implies much respect. And you have your children educated in a certain way. But in the preschool they don't want to pay attention...they're in another model, they see other things, and so they adapt themselves to that...it's difficult to impose these rules. Maybe a little less strict. But we try to treat our children the same over there...because they want to be like the Americans (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:13).

As Holloway and Fuller point out, this mother was "appropriating, interpreting, and adjusting the cultural models of socialization that stem from each world" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:113). The majority of the women in Fuller and Holloway's study indicated a desire to allow their children more opportunities to express themselves and enjoy more freedom than they had as children (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:113).

Issues of encouraging autonomy and individualism as opposed to a more communal orientation in children were repeatedly raised in Wrigley's study of private caregivers in three communities. The Latina and Caribbean private caregivers interviewed were very surprised by how their American middle class employers raise their children, finding the children overly indulged, spoiled and bad-mannered (Wrigley, 1995:105). As Wrigley discusses,

Parents may think that encouraging children to know what they want and to feel free to ask for it will make them self-motivated, confident and articulate adults. But caregivers may see these children as intolerably demanding (Wrigley 1995:105).

One Salvadoran caregiver was annoyed by her employer's willingness to let his child use four tea cups, according to her changing preferences.

Wrigley asserts that while the father's actions might have represented an effort to encourage his daughter to develop her own tastes and opinions, for the caregiver this represented "indulgence run amok" (Wrigley, 1995:102).

As Wrigley points out with reference to the immigrant caregivers, these women have been

...raised in harsher worlds than the children in their charge, where disciplined effort to help their families counted for more than academic success...indulging of children has direct costs...It is more work to take care of children whose opinions must be consulted (Wrigley p. 103).

In sharp contrast to the above-mentioned caregivers' reactions to their American employers' childrearing practices, one 49 year-old Mexican mother of four admired her employer's childrearing ideas, stating that Latino parents don't allow children to

...be freely be themselves. We hold them back; it is as if we tie them with a rope. Here they let their children bloom, their will, their artistic talents or whatever. This is good because you are forming an individual who will have broad capacities. [In Mexico] you couldn't even express yourself because your mother and father would silence you (Wrigley, 1995:107-8).

A brief digression follows concerning an important question raised here: although the Latina women in Fuller et al's study, as well as the parents at LESEHS, discourage young children from being too self-assertive in their behaviors - explorations, interactions with people and materials - they also express a desire for their children to be successful students. The questions raised are as follows: Are these two goals mutually exclusive? Can one be "obedient," i.e., learn to defer to adult needs and expectations at an early age, and still learn to engage in the kind of self-motivated, independent work it takes to be successful in later schooling? Does one learning experience preclude the other? Moreover, is being an independent thinker/learner

prerequisite to success in ALL school settings? Do some schools favor obedience and compliance over self-motivation?

In fact, the Chancellor's district in New York City uses exclusively the Direct Instructional Model described in Chapter 3 and is currently pushing other "script-based" learning models (private conversation with Beverly Falk, February 2002). As previously explained, this approach dictates that both teachers and students must strictly adhere to the "script" for learning specific lessons. Straying from this script in order to allow students to ask questions, as well as allowing teachers to spontaneously respond - in their own words - to such questions, is heartily discouraged. In fact, this is seen a fertile ground for "error" in teaching. It is difficult to imagine that a student who is educated - perhaps "trained" is a more apt term - in such a program would be able to do the sort of questioning and imaginative thinking required by higher educational programs, not to mention high status, high paying professions.

Ethan likewise commented on the issue of neighborhood parents encouraging or discouraging autonomy in their children. He states,

When I walk through the neighborhood, sometimes I see 5 year-olds in strollers with pacifiers...I wonder why this is going on. Is it because it makes it easier for the parents? or because they want to encourage dependence?

Mollie, a Puerto Rican assistant teacher says with reference to this question, "It's because they need to get places quickly and have the child stay calm so they can get their business done."

Teachers additionally commented on an important component of a general philosophy that endorses autonomy and initiative in children, namely, providing opportunities for "free play" and self-directed exploration for children. With reference to this issue Ethan asserts,

The kids need a positive role model... to show them that's it's okay to express themselves because they aren't encouraged to do this at home. The parents tend to be 'very strict' and order the kids around and don't encourage the kids to explore.

Ethan specifically complained that he believes his assistant teacher, Ana, (who is Puerto Rican and from the neighborhood) is overly directive of the children's play. "She can never just leave them alone....she's always telling them what to play with...she never encourages them to simply explore on their own."

Marly discussed other ways in which the school's philosophy differed from the parents' when it came to issues of "free play" and child-directed exploration: The City and Country philosophy includes a heavy focus on allowing children to build all the materials they wish to use in their play from blocks. So, for example, rather than providing the children with child-sized kitchen furniture to use in their pretend play, the children are expected to build refrigerators, stoves, etc. themselves from blocks. Of this Marly remarks, "The parents and I would think, 'Why blocks? We didn't have that in Kindergarten! Building and 'inventing skills' weren't a focus when we were coming up in this neighborhood." She adds, " The concept that interaction (between children and adults and children and other children) is curriculum for very young children is very foreign to most of these parents. "

Marly discusses difficulties she has encountered when attempting to relay information about early childhood development and education to neighborhood parents. She frequently goes to conferences where she learns about research on certain topics. She wishes to share both this information and the child development material she learned in her teacher training

program with the parents. However, of this situation, she says, "Sometimes it hurts parents' feelings when you try to give them child development information." Marly believes she has discovered a particularly useful tactic for doing this: representing the pertinent information as someone else's - an expert's - idea. This way, she says, "I can distance myself from it and not seem like I'm trying to be personally authoritative."

She describes one success she had after attending a music and movement workshop where they discussed how fetuses respond to music and movement. They learned how "putting headphones on a pregnant belly can help develop a baby's musical tastes." This she was able to share with the mothers in her program with little resistance.

2. PARENTS ROLE AND PLACE IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Teachers also expressed a number of different philosophical perspectives with reference to the role and place of parents in the preschool setting.

Ana expressed comfortably, confidently and boldly her belief that she is fully within her rights, in fact that it is her responsibility as something of an "expert," to tell parents how to best care for their infants and young children. On several occasions she was very direct in telling - mostly the Chinese parents - how they should handle their children's eating, napping and other behaviors. Once as she was cleaning the room at the end of the day, scurrying from one spot to another, she shouted orders across the room to a Chinese mother: "Don't feed him all the time....feed him once every three hours!" She periodically made eye contact with this mother. When the mom left, Ana turned to me and said "I know they don't do what I ask them to at

home." Another teacher later expressed her doubt that the mother understood any English at all.

Ana says she knows the Chinese parents constantly carry their children around at home. She believes the Chinese parents are especially overprotective of boy children but not so much of girl children. She says that where a Chinese girl might be briefly left to cry in the crib, a boy is picked up and soothed immediately. Although she has told several of the Chinese parents, "Don't carry the baby around all the time at home!" she says, "I know they do this anyway." However, in one Chinese mother's defense, Ana explains that she believes this mother holds her son a lot because they live in a two-family home and they don't want the child's crying to bother the neighbors. "They never let him cry for a second." Ana says at naptime, she and the other teachers rock and rock this particular child and just as he's about to fall asleep he wakes up.

Marly states she does not believe that the Chinese families at the LESEHS hold the same values for independence and individuality in children as the Hispanic families do. She describes how a Chinese child's mother argued that her child "won't learn independence" since in their culture, they encourage group activities and orientation. The mother has in fact told Marly that at home, the child is always with someone, usually being held. As a result, the child expects to constantly be held at school.

Kim and Choi (1995) and Ho (1986) have discussed childrearing beliefs and practices in "Confucian Heritage Cultures" (Ho, 1986:285) as compared

to those in the U.S. They maintain that in Confucianism, the emphasis on human relationships became dominant. As Kim and Choi point out

Confucious did not consider individuals as independent entities. They are linked to others in a web of interrelatedness. Family is considered as the prototype for all relationships...social relationships are nothing more than an expansion of this family relationship (Kim and Choi, 1995:238).

Additionally, although the father is the symbolic head of the family,

it is the mother who cultivates the relational mode, who is the central person in the child's life...The relational mode...is depicted by a porous boundary between persons that allows thoughts, ideas, and emotions to flow freely without any impediments...It emphasizes oneness and bonding of persons (Kim and Choi, 1995:238).

More frequent holding and other bodily contact with infants appears as a somewhat natural, logical feature in a culture with the above-described perspective of the mother-child relationship.

Ho (1986) asserts that traditionally, Chinese parents view young children as "...passive, dependent creatures who are to be cared for and whose needs are to be met with little delay or interference; training cannot be expected to accomplish much for them" (Ho, 1986:290). Moreover,

Although little or no systematic attempt is made to develop the child's cognitive skills, overriding importance is attached to the mastery of impulse control. Although passive oral needs are typically met without hesitation, active or exploratory demands tend to be thwarted, even during infancy and early childhood (Ho, 1986:290).

Tobin, Wu and Davidson (1989) have discussed how the move to the single-child family as the typical household in China has had significant implications for childrearing practices and early educational practice.

Chinese parents, teachers and administrator, and child development experts fear that children in single-child families are spoiled by their parents and grandparents and this leads to many undesirable outcomes. Chinese say that a child indulged by as many as six doting adults is likely to come to think of himself as 'the little sun.' This problem is also called

the '4-2-1' syndrome" : four grandparents and two parents pouring their attention onto one spoiled child (Tobin, Wu and Davidson, 1989:86).

Moreover,

A few spoiled children are a nuisance; a whole generation of spoiled children could threaten China's modernization movement, reverse the gains of the past 30 years, and undermine the values of a society based on the principles of collectivity, selflessness and comradeship (Tobin, Wu and Davidson, 1989: 86).

The main concern centers on how single children, at risk for becoming "spoiled" and overindulged, will learn a sense of social responsibility. If their are no siblings in the household with whom a child is obligated to learn to share, accommodate and otherwise cooperate with, the question of how single children will learn these social skills looms large. As Tobin, Wu and Davidson note, "Child development experts worry that children growing up without siblings will be lonely, self-centered, and unsociable as adults" (Tobin, Wu and Davidson, 1989:89).

Ho refers to this situation as the "precious child syndrome" (Ho, 1986: 302). He states,

...children are now valued, especially within the family, more so than ever before. Children seem to enjoy priority in the allocation of limited material resources. Chinese society has shown unmistakable signs of becoming less age centered and more child centered. Often child is the center of attention, whose needs and interest are to be met above all else. What be called a precious-child syndrome may be readily observed (Ho, 1986:302).

Naturally, the preschool setting is viewed as a potential site for addressing this issue. There children will encounter other children in groups, forcing them to learn the above-listed social skills.

Interestingly, Siu found that Chinese parents, like the Hispanic parents mentioned above, expressed a desire for their children to "grow up to be self-reliant, considerate and financially secure" (Siu, 1994:25). As was the case

with the Hispanic parents in Valdes' study, as well as the parents at LESEHS, self-reliance in children is a goal in that it increases the chances that they will become financially independent and able to eventually contribute to the support of the rest of the family. Self-reliance is not, as is generally the case with many middle class American parents, viewed as desirable in its possibility to encourage creativity and initiative in children.

However, the Chinese-American parents in Siu's study were open to certain more American ideas about dealing with young children. In fact one child, Ivan, was sent at two months of age to a daycare center with American children specifically so he could "...mingle with non-Chinese children to learn their ways" (Siu, 1994:26). This was seen as important for Ivan's adjustment to school later on.

Ivan's mother expressed particular admiration for some Western parenting practices: "I think there is something very good about how the [old foreigners] raise their kids - they pay attention, listen to their kids, and are patient. They won't tell their kids, 'don't bother me' and they try to answer their questions. [Their] children are not like us in the old days, you know, not having communication with our parents. So I try to be a better parent. I don't dismiss Ivan's questions, how is he to learn? Only the other hand, I don't like unruly children" (Siu, 1994: 27).

Thus Ivan's mother has compromised her more traditional perspective of children and the childrearing guideline stipulating that children should always defer to adult agenda - including not asking too many questions of them. Instead she sees her child's questions as an attempt to gain educational information, not as a ploy for annoying her.

Ana says she has a problem getting through to the Chinese parents.

Q

I can't feel close to them because of the language barrier. With one kid I was still doing separation for four months. I have meetings with the mother and she agrees to all the recommendations but I think maybe she doesn't really understand or doesn't express her feelings about it. I asked the parents to sit in one day and observe but I don't think I can get a real sense of the person - even with a translator.

[At the beginning of this study there was only one Chinese family at LESEHS. One year into the study the number of Chinese children in the classrooms began to steadily grow. Two years into this study, a Chinese woman was hired to take Ethan's place. She did a considerable amount of translation for the Chinese parents and Hispanic teachers in all three classrooms at pick up and drop off time. However, she quit after about six months.]

In general, Ana believes it is a positive thing that she has "open contact" with the parents in the classroom. She says "If they stay too long at the end of the day, I throw them out and they don't get insulted." During classroom observations, many of the Spanish speaking parents who are mostly Dominican and Puerto Rican stayed and chatted with each other and the teachers, usually in Spanish. These are the only parents Ana had to "throw out." The Chinese parents more often picked up their children, chatted briefly (and with difficulty unless the Chinese-speaking teacher was handy) with the teachers about the child's day, then left. Thus Ana was never obliged to "throw them out" of the classroom. Perhaps she was comfortable telling the Spanish-speaking parents it was time to leave because of the shared language, and with some of them, cultural background.

In stark contrast to Ana's formidable self-assuredness in foisting her opinions about childcare practices on parents, Janine, the educational

director/head teacher in the infant room, described a much more delicate and circuitous approach in her dealings with parents. She states, "It took me a lot of time to nurture relationships with parents and other workers, most of whom are Hispanic. It takes patience if you are minority (she is white and middle class)... you have to make it happen, make your own overtures."

Janine says, "Parents were automatically prejudiced against me because I don't have children." Her Masters degree in Early Childhood Education from Sarah Lawrence College was meaningless to these parents in the face of her childlessness. Moreover, she describes how some of her co-workers shared this attitude, but "there were a few of the Hispanic workers who accepted that I didn't have children - one in particular who is in her early thirties and does not have children either...Parents don't trust you or how you care for their kids... maybe one out of eight did."

Thus from the outset, Janine believed it was part of her job to carefully coax these parents into believing that, despite the fact she was not a mother, she still knew something about childrearing. Otherwise, any viable working relationship with these parents could never be forged.

Janine and Ana describe very different attitudes toward dealing with parents. Ana never questioned the appropriateness of expressing to parents expediently and directly her opinions about their parenting practices and skills. Janine, on the other hand, reported "handling parents with kid gloves." First she gingerly and meticulously nurtured a relationship with them, "winning them over" to the belief that she was qualified to take care of their children. If she witnessed parenting practices which were in significant conflict with her own ideas about appropriate practice, she was very careful and roundabout when it came to addressing these. As stated above, from the start, being of the

"minority culture" at LESEHS and having no children of her own were two strikes against Janine from the start. Ana believed she "a good relationship" with the Spanish-speaking parents, regardless of their country of origin, but said it was "hard to feel close to" the Chinese parents.

In fact, Marly's attitude toward dealing with parents appears as something of a compromise position between Ana's and Janine's approaches. That is, she states her belief in the importance of imparting child development information to parents but at the same time in the importance of taking into account and respecting parents' existent ideas about childrearing.

Like Janine, Ethan reports that parents at the school have also said to him "You're not a parent yet!" at times when he has recommended alternative ways for them to interact with their children. For example, an 18 month-old boy in Ethan's class began to call other children "bitch;" moreover, he used the word in appropriate contexts, e.g., when another child had upset him, indicating that he had some basic understanding of its meaning. Ethan informed the mother of this situation and suggested that she refrain from using such words in her son's presence. The mother was offended by this apparent criticism of her parenting practices.

One day at arrival time Ethan informed this same mother that her son had scratched another child the day before. He asked that she cut her son's nails. The mother then sat down and began to chew and tear the child's nails off with her teeth. The child's fingers began to bleed. Ethan was horrified into speechlessness for several minutes, then asked the mother to stop. She did and stormed out.

Ethan describes how this challenge to his authority based on the fact that he is not yet a parent has made for some particularly unsavory and difficult scenes for him. He states, "The parents will sometimes slap the kids hands and bottoms at the school in front of the teachers. This makes me extremely uncomfortable since I am a firmly opposed to corporal punishment."

The problem is compounded by the fact that, according to Ethan, the school has no definitive policy which makes it clear to entering parents that the school does not allow parents to physically punish their children at school. This puts Ethan in an awkward position: if he "reprimands" a parent for such behavior, he fears the parent will take offense, interpreting this as personal criticism of his or her parenting ideas and skills. It may come as unwelcome advice which they may believe he - as the child's teacher, and one who is not a parent - has no business giving. On the other hand, if the school had a well-publicized policy informing parents that they may not hit their children while on school property, Ethan notes, it would be clear that this "reprimand" is coming from the school administration, not him as an individual. This would give him "a leg to stand on" in his efforts to prevent parents' slapping children at school.

Lillian identified conflicts of a more general nature between her own and parents' ideas about what appropriate early childcare and parenting involves. She described in exasperated, almost disgusted tones, her surprise in finding out that many of the moms at the center "can't cook at their age!" She says that when she got married in Peru she knew how to do this and many other domestic tasks. Lillian's own mother taught her how to sew and crochet when she was an adolescent. She expounds, " Here no one has time for that kind of thing...when girls get married they don't know how to do

anything - can't cook or clean and have no idea." She was disturbed that "People don't cook for their children anymore they just buy fast food." She believes this is detrimental to family life and mother-child relationships.

Marly appears more sympathetic to the situation of parents at LESEHS. Rather than criticizing them as Lillian does, she instead seeks explanations for their less-than-ideal parenting habits and behaviors, for example, their obligation to negotiate the welfare system, to obtain health care and housing for themselves and their children. One wonders if her more compassionate attitude derives from her growing up in the projects or because she's Puerto Rican and not Peruvian.

Lillian also described in an outdone tone how the mother of a one year-old who has been identified as in need of early intervention services for emotional and learning difficulties had not made any effort to get her child the recommended services. Lillian is frustrated with what she perceives as this mother's lack of concern over her child's well-being.

Also in conflict with her ideas about what appropriate parenting involves, Lillian notes that in her native Peru, "The mommies stay home with the babies and play with the kids and cook for them and they go to church together...they go to movies at the church." She explains that (much like some extended families here) grandmother or sister might stay home and take care of the children but "there are no babysitters in Peru - the family is very close." When they go to the supermarket everyone goes together. Lillian says that her mother is old and sick but they would never put her in nursing home.

In the study of Latina mothers described earlier, Fuller, Eggers-Pierola, Holloway, Liang and Rambaud (1996) discuss similar findings about attitudes

toward "closeness" within the family. They report that many interviewed mothers hesitate to put their children in preschool because they fear that the caregivers will not show them the warmth that they and their family members do. Fuller et al suggest that this contributes to the fact that "considerably lower proportion of Latino parents...select a formal preschool or childcare center for their 3-5 year old" (Fuller et al, 1996: 403).

The interviewed mothers believed that it was important for parents and teachers to share a commitment to children's development. (Fuller et p. 414) One mother believed that a nonLatina caregiver in her child's school was generally not available to build the sort of bond she had previously had with a Latina caregiver the year before. She commented "Parents are not welcome there...it is a depressing place around there for parents" (Fuller et al, 1996: 414).

Also discussed was "comprimiso" in which "the parent shares a commitment with the teacher...to the child's socialization," one which must be "manifested through warm personal links" (Fuller et al, 1996: 414). Another mother discussed how the Latina teachers at her child's school seem warmer and more caring than the teachers at her daughter's kindergarten. She described the white staff as "cold and rough," asserting that this is the case "because they are Americans" (Fuller et al, 1996:414). A third mother expressed alarm at the lack of gentleness demonstrated when her daughter's teacher had pulled her shirt in an effort to correct her behavior. This appears ironic in that it is typically minorities who are accused of being more harsh, physical disciplinarians, not middle class white teachers.

Fuller et al additionally found that "The quality of the relationship between the mother and provider is a salient indicator of how the mothers believe the childcare staff members behave with their children" (Fuller et al,

1996: 414). Teachers who are not available to parents are assumed to lack concern for the children's overall socialization. Such a teacher was interpreted as being disinterested in a child's "life beyond the boundaries of the classroom" Fuller et al, 1996: 414).

Perhaps the significant number of Latino children at LESEHS derives from the fact that there is at least one, and in some cases two or more, Spanish-speaking caregiver or volunteer in each classroom. Parents might feel assured that their children will be shown the warmth their own relatives would show them. Also, the fact that many of the caregivers are Spanish-speaking means that parents - particularly those who do not speak any English - can forge a satisfactory relationship with the caregivers, so that they do not experience the feeling of alienation and rejection that the mothers in Fuller et al's study did.

In fact, Ethan reported that what he sees as the "biggest cultural obstacle" he has encountered in working at the LESEHS - the fact that he doesn't speak Spanish. He believes "the language difference poses a big barrier" between the parents and himself. He estimates that 70% of the "clashes" between him and parents would disappear if he spoke Spanish. He is dependent on Ana, his assistant teacher, to translate for him and this has often been awkward since, as described elsewhere, she and he "have not always gotten along."

Interestingly, in describing his more general philosophical views about early childhood care and education, Ethan indicated a belief that the children in the LESEHS are significantly lacking "an experience of closeness and community." He states that he, himself, was raised in a "close and loving family...I had a great childhood with lots of family and friends...I had two brothers and we were all close... there was a real community feeling in the

neighborhood." Ethan wants to create this experience for the kids he works with, to "impart this experience to others."

Oddly, as previously noted, a sense of community has been described as highly valued by the Hispanic and Chinese populations with whom Ethan works. The questions that come to mind are: Why does Ethan believe the LESEHS children have no experience of community? Is this based on his experience with and interaction with the parents and children at school? Does he simply assume this is a feature that always goes lacking in poor and working populations? Does the Latino community in which LESEHS is located present an exception to Latino communities described in existent research literature? Is there a discrepancy between Ethan's perception of the community and the families' attitudes toward community? That is, has Ethan adopted a "deficit model" of the groups of parents with whom he works at LESEHS? This is clearly suggested by the following:

Ethan states a belief that the work with parents in this community is particularly important and this is where he feels he can be the most useful. He is convinced that the work the teachers at the LESEHS do with parents will directly affect the children in a positive way, improving their prospects for success in school. In fact, Ethan implies in his remark, "the value for educational workers is so poor and it should be better valued because of WHAT WE ARE GIVING TO THE COMMUNITY" that his impartation of things to the disadvantaged population with whom he works is his most important function as a preschool teacher.

Ethan reports he is trying to "give the kids new experiences - like taking them on field trips to museums, or the seaport, places where their parents wouldn't normally take them." He believes "Otherwise the kids just generally go from home to school and no where else...the parents rarely take

them outside the neighborhood." It was unclear if Ethan was aware that this schedule might be directly tied to parents' economic constrictions and not so much to their ignorance about the value of visiting museums or other educational sites.

Ethan states it is his impression that interaction between children and adults other than their parents is somewhat forbidden in the LESEHS community. Consequently, he thinks it's a good thing that he and the other teachers are there, encouraging children to have significant relationships with adults other than their parents and grandparents. Again, he appears to feel it is his responsibility to model appropriate relationships, etc. for this community; however it was unclear how much he actually knew about the existent ones.

Ethan believes that some of the Hispanic little girls have become more attached to him than to Ana and that this has been an issue for some parents - and, he believed - for Ana as well.

Finally, Ethan expressed a belief in the importance of children having opportunities to interact with other children from their own age groups. He says "They get the chance to do this at school but otherwise, in this community, children don't have PLAYDATES." Considerations like the following did not appear to have occurred to him: to have a playdate the mother or a babysitter would have to take the child to another child's house and stay - this would mean that the mother could not attend to her household chores or attend to other children. If there were a babysitter or caregiver involved, this might be possible but most of the mothers in this community are on their own during the day, as far as responsibility for children goes. From this perspective, it seems safe to assert that playdates are primarily a middle class phenomena - they require leisure time on the part of the caregiving

parent, or a large enough income to pay a private caregiver to take the child to playdates.

CONFLICTS OVER PRACTICE AT LOWER EAST SIDE EARLY HEAD START

As was the case with broader philosophical notions about the care and education of very young children, there were significant differences between teachers', administrators' and parents' beliefs about some of the more practical aspects of early care and education. Conflicts over early educational practice could be broadly grouped into the following categories: 1. teachers' disagreement with parents' limit setting and disciplinary techniques 2. differences in opinion between parents and teachers, between teachers, and between teachers, administrators and parents, with reference to regulation of infant and toddler bodily functions, including feeding, napping, and diaper changing 3. differences in ideas of teachers and administrators as to appropriate curricular materials 4. differences between teachers, and between teachers and administrators with regard to appropriate interactional styles with children 5. teachers' problems with certain administrative policies 6. differences in ideas as to how subordinates - including assistant teachers, student teachers and parent volunteers - should be treated by superiors, i.e., head teachers and administrators.

LIMIT SETTING AND DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

One of the more frequently discussed sources of conflict centered on discipline and limit setting. Marly described how in her formal schooling and at workshops at LESEHS, she learned that, according to the Developmental-Interaction (Bank Street) approach, the City and Country approach (a Bank Street derivative), and "Developmentally Appropriate Practice," (DAP hereafter) it is important to clarify for children the rationale behind one's limit setting or disciplinary measures. For example, if a child is biting another child, rather than simply exclaiming "Don't bite!" it is important to explain "If

you bite her that will hurt her." In this way, the teacher helps the child not only to begin to comprehend basic rules for appropriate social behavior, but also to begin to grasp the relationship between her actions (the biting) and the consequences of her action, i.e., the other child's experiencing pain and beginning to cry. Developmental theory maintains that before a certain age, children are unaware of these sorts of relationships, owing to what Piaget terms an "egocentric" level of thinking. That is to say, they are functioning at a cognitive level which does not allow them to put themselves in the position of another, to take another's perspective.

Marly subscribes to this position and its practical implications for classroom practice, that is to say, she makes a point of explaining why it is "okay" or "not okay" for a child to engage in a particular behavior. She reports, however, that this is not a common parental practice. As an example, she explains how if a parent in that community were watching a child climb in a dangerous place, the parent would say to the child "If you fall, that's on you" as opposed to talking about why it might not be safe to climb on a particular piece of playground equipment in a certain way. Marly says alternatively, a parent might say "You better not climb on that!" in a threatening tone, but again without explaining the rationale behind this.

Interestingly, Jonilla expressed some irritation with Marly's usual tone of voice when setting limits for children. Of herself, Jonilla states, "I try to use a simple, calm voice even though other teachers don't do that. I get annoyed when Marly yells across the room at the kids instead of going over to them ." Jonilla reports that at the end of their two and one half years of working together, Marly seemed to become more aware of this as she commented, "I sound like a drill sergeant."

With reference to her student teachers and volunteers, Jonilla reports that they "say alot of NO's." Some of them are picking up on her way of handling aggression or other negative behaviors and beginning to explain prohibitions to children. Again, in contradiction to what Marly said about her own classroom practice, Jonilla states Marly "even started to do that" (explain prohibitions to children) just before she left LESEHS.

Like Marly, Lillian also expressed objections to parents' limit setting styles. She describes in a highly disapproving tone how one mother hits her daughters all the time, even in front of the LESEHS staff. She asserts, "You don't need to hit." She says when she looks at the children, they can feel "Your eyes talk to me...the children can read my face...they know if it's an angry face...Only the face talks...if the mommy is angry the baby gets angry." [if the mother acts out her anger toward the child, the child simply gets angry also.] Lillian says that if a child isn't going down at nap time she can say "GO TO SLEEP" with a serious face.

When asked about her policies for limit setting or disciplining children in the Infant Room, Ana says when she observes a child doing something objectionable, she says "UH OH that's a NONO...When they start hitting I teach them 'nice-nice.' They learn how to say 'nice' through repetition... that's the only way they can learn. Then when they go to hit someone they say 'nice, nice' and pat them on the head instead."

Janine found this technique somewhat inappropriate. "Nice" she explained, is a very vague and subjective term. What's "nice" for someone is not always "nice" for someone else. Moreover, the term is too broad for little children to comprehend. If one says to the child "be gentle" or "please don't hit," then the small child is more likely to comprehend the behavioral demand being made upon her.

Janine was also bothered by Ana's use of the term "no-no." Appending such a label to a behavior creates an extra conceptual step for little children. "We don't hit" or "it's not okay to bite" is much more concrete and direct, thus easier for the small child to grasp.

Ana says when she worked in the one year-old's room she disciplined differently. "When they get to be older I tell the children to sit down somewhere and read a book to calm down. There was one child who ran out of the room all the time. I would tell him 'you're not listening, sit down or sit in your cubby.' "

Again, Janine found this troublesome. Specifically, why should one's cubby - or any particular location in the classroom or school - be associated with punishment? the place one goes when one has "been bad?" In the worst case scenario, children can develop aversions to locations associated with teachers' disapproval of their behavior and with punishment and thus begin to avoid these locations.

Ana said she found some of Ethan's techniques for disciplining children disturbing. She particularly didn't like it when Ethan used a "safe hold," i.e., physically restraining in a firm hold. This technique is supposed to have an effect similar to swaddling of infants in Native American cultures. It is intended to calm the child by helping her restrict any flailing or other overly excited movements. With some children the approach has been shown to be highly effective; for others it exacerbates the child's excitement, frustration or aggression, making matters worse. Of this, Ana says, "I don't like kids being held down by force...the teacher should explain to them why they can't do certain things...holding them down makes things worse. You should give them a choice of doing something different - like with Luis - I want him to know he's safe here - you can't fight rage with rage."

Jonilla has her own ways of setting limits or "disciplining" the children. She says when they are doing something objectionable, she first "redirects" them and gives a warning. For example, "if you don't stop grabbing, you're going to have to sit down." Then she sits down with them and explains why they can't do whatever it is: "You can't take that toy away from her because she was working with it first."

Marly describes her disagreement with some of the verbal interactional styles she has heard parents utilize with their children: "Taking the time to answer children's questions is a completely foreign idea." She says that often when she is walking through the neighborhood or at pick-up or drop-off time at the center, she overhears children, particularly two year-olds, engaged in a desperate effort to make sense of the world, frequently asking parents questions, particularly "why" questions. For example, "Why doesn't Celia have a brother? Why is that person in a wheelchair? Why do the snails have feelers?" And on a more practical level, "Why can't we stay at school and play more? Why can't I have another cookie? Why can't Ian come home with us?"

Marly says a frequent response to the first, more abstract set of questions is "I don't know. Why do you ask me these things?" and to the latter set, "because I said so." Marly wondered aloud why the Hispanic parents from her neighborhood are like that. She says when she goes into the West Village and other "middle class white" neighborhoods, she sees "parents paying careful, close attention to their children's conversations, taking them to the library, and generally tuning into the child's needs...it's more interactive than one-sided." Parents appeared to devote quite a bit of thought

to answering the child's questions accurately and in terms the child could understand. When asked why she thought this happened in the West Village and not in the projects, she smiled and thought for a minute. "I think these parents are just so busy trying to get the basic necessities of life - housing, medical care, food - that when a child asks a question that takes time to answer, it's just one more burden on the parent - one more thing to take up their energy....They don't have time to sit down and figure out how to answer the question. Also, that's the way we were all raised. 'Because I said so' is what our parents said to us, so that's what they say to their children."

One of Wrigley's (1995) Guatemalan interviewees commented on this apparent difference between working class and middle class verbal interactional styles with children. This caregiver noted her employer's style of conversation: "They include their children in their conversations and we don't do that" (Wrigley, 1995:107). Despite this approval of their middle class employers' patient strategies in handling their children, many of the caregivers in Wrigley's study did not believe these could be equally applied in their own situations since "dealing with children who had their own ideas and who wanted to join in adult conversations took work and patience, it helped if the parents were not tired and did not have many competing demands" (Wrigley, 1995:108). The employer parents could afford to be tolerant and attentive because, as they never did physical work like the caregivers and their husbands and who went home to additional (physical) housework and their own children's demands, the employer parents were never as exhausted (Wrigley p. 108).

Ana, taking opposition to the above-described attitudes of many of the working class Hispanic parents of LESEHS, and to practices traditionally attributed to Hispanic working class parents in research literature, states her belief that "talking to children is the most important thing." She expressed particular annoyance with both parents and other teachers at LESEHS whom she says "stand over the children and talk down to them rather than getting down on the children's eye level. She says they "don't speak to children in full sentences... they believe the children are too young to understand full sentences and languages other than their parents'."

Lillian similarly complained, "The mommies don't have the patience for the babies to talk and to listen." Consequently, Lillian believes it is an important part of her job to tell parents to "talk slowly and sweetly to the babies." However, she notes that most of the time, the mothers still don't adjust their speech patterns when they talk to their babies. Lillian additionally notes that the mothers say curse words in front of the babies, thinking it doesn't matter and that the children don't understand or pick up on these words.

PARENTS VS TEACHERS' IDEAS ABOUT INFANT, FEEDING, NAPPING, AND CARRYING HABITS

Ana describes how she struggles with parents over feeding practices. She tries very hard to keep the children on a regular feeding schedule because she believes that this is important; however, for a number of reasons, the parents never "follow through on this at home," even though they agreed to try to do this. Ana says that consequently, when the infants return after the weekend, they have not been on a regular feeding schedule

for the past two days and this is disruptive for the schedule in the Infant Room.

Ana also discussed how most infants eat only a small amount of food. "In some cultures parents make them finish it all whether they want it or not - having a chubby, healthy baby is considered good in Hispanic culture - otherwise the child is considered unhealthy and the parents are considered negligent."

Ana describes how after she had her own children, she "talked to the doctor and read alot...I changed my own mind about children's eating habits and decided they shouldn't be force fed" as some of the Hispanic parents at the LESEHS seem to.

Lillian also experiences problems arising from parental practices with regard to infant feeding, carrying and napping. With reference to parents at LESEHS, she states, "They don't know a lot about feeding babies or nutrition." According to Lillian, the Chinese mothers continually feed their children with the bottle and she believes that children should be on a more regular schedule of eating every 3-4 hours. Although they give solid food at the school Lillian believes that at home the infants only get milk. Consequently, when the babies come back from the weekend, "they won't eat the baby food because they haven't been doing this all weekend." The infants have also been "fed on demand" and are therefore unwilling to conform to the school's feeding schedule. Lillian tries to explain to the parents that the home and school need to work together. Although the parents appear to agree, Lillian says they don't in practice.

Older Children and Eating/Feeding Issues

Jonilla describes issues related to the older (two year-olds) children's eating habits which are a bit particular to the community. She says that she

encourages them to eat but doesn't force them to eat. This is difficult for her since she knows "they probably don't get much nutrition at home and for some of them, this might be the only good meal they get during the day." Jonilla additionally reports that some of the other teachers "make a game out of getting the children to eat," ("Here comes the train, open the tunnel wide") but this strikes Jonilla as inappropriate.

Although Jonilla says that sometimes she believes it is important to "teach these kids manners" she says she "emphasizes manners at some times and not at others." Following the guidelines of Developmentally Appropriate Practice, she never withholds food for a "please" or "thank you" or for other behavioral compliances. The rationale behind this derives from research literature which suggests that establishing behavioral contingencies based on the awarding or withholding of food with young children provides fertile ground for eating disorders later on. Manners were not emphasized in Jonilla's own home culture but she explains that she was "a very quiet child" so her parents seemed unwilling to force her to speak unnecessarily.

As mentioned previously, Ana also complains that the Chinese parents carry their children around all the time - and this creates a problem for her. Since the Chinese infants are used to be held and rocked (by a person, not a swing) to sleep, Ana says "They can't fall asleep at naptime...one of them keeps all the other children awake." Lillian adds, with reference to several of the Chinese mothers in the Infant Room, "They use too much arm...they carry the babies around too much... if you hold the baby all the time you can't cook and clean."

In a similar vein one (middle class American) employer in Wrigley's study was surprised by her Guatemalan caregiver's method for feeding her own baby. Having moved in with the employer, the caregiver was observed to simply position the baby so that he could hold his own bottle, then go about her duties. The employer, believing in the importance of babies being held when they are fed, suggested to her caregiver that she could take the time to do this. The employer reported, "She tells me that this how it's done in Guatemala. She wouldn't hold her children...There are too many things to do and her attitude was 'if I hold him he gets used to it, and over time he expects it, some day I may not be able to do it, so why train him that way? ' " (Wrigley, 1995:109).

Interestingly, Janine says she has tried to get the infants on a napping schedule and, more importantly, to get the other teachers in the Infant Room to support her in this effort. She wants the infants to be put down for nap around noon and for the room to be dark and quiet. This way she believes the infants will all get in "a good solid nap for at least one and one half hours. " However, if she leaves for lunch during this time, invariably she comes back to find her two coworkers and her Web worker holding babies who have awakened briefly. Janine thinks that this happens because the other workers believe that if babies begin to cry, they should be picked up rather than soothed back to sleep while still in the crib. Moreover, the caregivers are usually talking at a normal volume rather than whispering.

Ethan and other teachers from LESEHS reported other significant disagreement between parents and the school with reference to childrearing practice. They described at length one situation which occurred with one of the families. One day Cassandra, a 13 month-old Puerto Rican child who

had been at LESEHS for about one year, was being picked up by her grandmother. The grandmother saw Ethan changing Cassandra's diaper. She was very upset: "In our culture, men don't change diapers." This she said to Ana, the assistant, in Spanish. Ana explained to them in Spanish, "We all change diapers here, both men and women...." but the mother and grandmother did not like this, asserting, "You can't trust men!" Cassandra then did not appear at school for the next five days. When she did, the mother was confronted. In fact Cassandra had fallen and hit her head on the same day in which the diaper-changing incident occurred and the grandmother had been apprised of this. When Cassandra returned, her mother maintained that Cassandra had been out because of her head. But, Ethan reported, "eventually, it was clear that it was because they had seen me changing her diaper." In fact, Ethan later found out that the mother did not even tell her husband about the event as she was afraid of what his reaction would be.

Ana, who is also Puerto Rican reported how, along related lines, little girls sitting on men's laps is also a "No No." This is extremely hard to uphold in a toddler class since very young children are typically very affectionate and often seek out teachers' laps to sit in.

LESEHS staff responses to this incident were varied. The director reportedly said "If they can't accept the school's policies, then let them find another school." But Ethan was willing to compromise and let only Ana change Cassandra's diaper.

Ethan said he had never had this problem before, even though he had worked with many Hispanic families during his time at the center. He speculated that this was probably because all the families got to know him and like him very much before they found out he was changing their girlchildren's

diapers; so once they found out, nothing was said - they accepted the different standard of preschool versus home.

When asked for possible explanations as to this event, Ethan commented that when the center first opened, "the parent population was slightly older...now the parents are, on the whole, much younger and many still live with their parents." Ethan believes that these younger parents are still very much "under the influence of their own parents" when it comes to ideas about childrearing and that "the parents in their late twenties and thirties are more independent thinkers when it comes to child development."

Citing other problematic situations in dealing with the younger parent population, Jonilla describes how "with some of the 19 and 20 year-old parents, parent-teacher conferences only last abouts five minutes...they don't know what to ask!"

Marly also brought up the diaper-changing incident when asked about conflicting ideas over childcare practice. What was particularly interesting about Marly's perspective was her insistence that the grandmother's position was "not sexist or ethnicist." As mentioned previously, comparatively speaking, Marly had a substantial amount of formal education in early childhood under her belt. No doubt, Developmentally Appropriate Practice on such matters would assert that all qualified teachers, be they men or women, should participate in diaper changing. Although Marly had been exposed to such ideology and the reasoning behind it, she chose not to accept this. Instead, she maintained the position of the culture in which she was raised: men don't change diapers. In so doing, Marly appears to assert that certain cultural ideologies and their resultant childrearing practices take precedence over issues of Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

In fact, in defense of her position, Marly offered the somewhat ironic argument that according to Developmentally Appropriate Practice, early care and educational settings should strive to duplicate the child's home experiences as much as possible.

APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS

Ana is particularly bothered by what she perceives as a predominantly material, consumerist orientation the parents with whom she works have toward caring for children. She states that, like herself as a first time parent, "They want to give their children all the things they didn't have, so the kids have Nike sneakers, and everything...they place too much importance on material things even when there's not enough food at home." She says she wants to "work on educating the parents...teaching them its not the best idea to give their kids EVERYTHING."

This calls to mind one Mexican caregiver in Wrigley's study who noted the contrast between her own culture's childrearing practices and those of her employers. She states, "We let our children watch whatever they want on TV. We let them eat candy and not take naps; they don't. They buy their children lots of instructive toys. When my kids were little, I didn't do this. I bought them the toys that they wanted" (Wrigley, 1995:107). As Wrigley notes, sometimes caregivers "take a step out of their own culture and like what they see" (Wrigley, 1995:107).

Ana has several important beliefs arising from her own childhood experience as to the materials children should be given to play and work with. When she was growing up on her grandparents farm in Puerto Rico. "We had no money so my grandparents couldn't buy us toys... I had a little house I

decorated right under the house. I made a kitchen with a sink, tables and chairs...a bedroom." Ana says she made a bed and a doll with her "found objects." She also made a little shower by putting a nail in a can with water. She could release the water so it made a shower. Ana also made a hammock with two pieces of rope. She states,

I believe the simpler the better... except that when my son was seven or eight I felt I had to buy him Power Rangers because of the peer pressure. With kids though I think wooden spoons and pots and pans are the best. I give them lots of choices here - if the children are bored I put blocks in containers - little Rubbermaid containers with wooden blocks for shaking.

Ethan expressed his belief that some of the director's other guidelines for choosing classroom materials created a somewhat "austere" environment. He reports that they have "spiced up the classroom" since the first director left by getting some additional toys for waterplay, colored soft blocks, more dolls, and farm animals.

In general, Ethan thinks "things should be more colorful than they are here...kids lose interest too quickly because the toys aren't interesting." Before they were not allowed to have small plastic farm animals in the block area for building zoos, farms, etc. Although teachers who mentioned this guideline believed there was an ideological basis for it in the director's mind, none seemed to understand what this basis was. One teacher believed that the rationale was that children should build and create all their play materials for themselves and that giving them "prefabricated" animals or other materials conflicted with this goal. In fact, this idea - having children, as much as possible, construct the materials they need for their play - is congruent with the City and Country philosophy in which children are expected to build everything from blocks of various sizes. So, for example, rather than buying

child-sized kitchen furniture - stoves, refrigerators and sinks- children build these out of blocks.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN TEACHERS OVER INTERACTIONAL STYLES WITH CHILDREN

Teacher-directed vs child-directed play

Ana vehemently disagrees with the director's assertion that one should "let children be" and not direct their play. She says she can't bear to "just observe the children" as the director has instructed her to do. On observation, Ana is quite loud and highly directive of children's play. Ethan says "...it's like she can't leave the kids alone! she can never simply wait to see what they want to do." Ana says she believes "the child won't learn anything unless the teacher directs her" so she "teaches them how to look at books and play with the plates. If I don't read to them they aren't going to do it." Ironically, as Ana was making this statement, an infant was flipping through the pages of a book, on her own, a few feet away. She expounds, "They have to have a model to imitate."

There is an apparent irony here in Ana's adamant promotion of teacher direction of infant play and her belief that children should be given the simplest, most basic materials possible. As previously described, she asserts that materials selected for children should encourage their creativity and use of imagination, as well as independent play on the part of the children, she simultaneously maintains that teachers have to demonstrate to children how to work with materials, "...otherwise they won't know what to do with the materials."

Ana was frequently observed putting on very loud salsa music at the end of the day. The children had awakened from nap and some were usually still groggy when she did this. She would dance around to the music, shouting and singing in the process. One of the babies cried, apparently from fear of the volume, but most of the babies usually stared, making it difficult to interpret their reactions.

Deirdre, the student teacher who worked both at the Children's Center and LESEHS, reported she witnessed a similar practice in the daycare facility at the LESEHS. She found this quite annoying: "Sometimes the teachers sing and dance with the kids or sometimes they just blast the radio or tapes and dance and scream - the babies just watch. They seem stunned."

Lillian had some critical remarks to make about Ethan's interactional style with the children. She says she doesn't like it when he "rough houses with the kids." She says certain children were gentle and even timid when she had them in the infant room. When they go to the next classroom and Ethan jokingly plays rough and loud with them, "they become that way." Lillian says he's "too harsh" and "the kids get angry." Lillian believes they are angry to begin with because of home life issues. "Roughing them up is the exact wrong way to treat them...I see them change very fast. They are always trying to come back into my classroom, even when they have moved up to the two's classroom...They keep coming back in and wanting to stay." Lillian believes this to be an indication that they miss the more gentle atmosphere in the Infant Room.

With reference to Ethan's "roughness," Lillian states, "when babies see, they learn." Thus she believes that Ethan's own rough-and-tumble interactional style with the boys in his classroom is, at least in part, the cause

of some of the excessive aggression Ethan witnesses in his classroom and expressly laments. (see below)

Lillian describes how her own two boys used to punch her daughter, so she believes boys are somewhat naturally rough. Her daughter's cousins hit her but she (the daughter) "has become very tough." Her second daughter is different - she beats up the boys.

TEACHER DISAGREEMENT WITH ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE:

Ethan was particularly bothered by some administrative practices and decisions which he believed negatively affected the children. He complains he "hasn't felt much like a teacher there because kids get transitioned to the next age group constantly. This gives me very little time to establish meaningful relationships with the children." Ethan moreover believes -as do many developmental theorists - that such a relationship must be established in order for a child to learn. Ethan was not sure why the administration promoted children from one classroom to the next so quickly, except perhaps to make space for new children in the Infant Room.

This speedy transitioning, Ethan belived, had other negative consequences for the children. He had asked that the children who come from the Infant Room be walking when they come into his classroom. "If they aren't, they get mowed over by the rest of the kids."

Ethan describes one situation where this request being ignored had paritucularly disturbing results. A child with multiple physical and cognitive disabilities and who was unable to sit up on her own, let alone stand and walk like the other children in his classroom, was promoted to his class. This meant she needed someone to hold her full time or she was at risk for being trampled underfoot. Additionally, significant amounts of various therapies had

been prescribed for this child, yet adequate staff to carry these out had yet to materialize. Evidently, Ethan and Ana, as their hands were full with "policing" responsibilities, were not in a position to hold the child, let alone to assure that her therapeutic activities were implemented each day.

Ethan believed that the administrators dragged their heels in getting the proper services and placement for this child and this created an enormous amount of stress for Ana and him day to day, moment to moment. For this he was very angry and frustrated. Finally, Ethan says he had to "lay down the law," insisting that the child be put back in the infant room. Here, in principle, there were adequate pairs of hands to hold the child, but still no staff properly trained to implement the therapies. Eventually the child was placed in a therapeutic nursery setting.

Ethan believes that the LESEHS classrooms are understaffed in general. He describes how for the entire year, he had a group which was primarily boys with special emotional and cognitive needs. "There was a lot of violence and aggression and I felt like it took all my time to deal with this." Since he only had one assistant most of the year, the aggression could not be properly addressed. This Ethan found very frustrating. He says he felt like he was "police teaching" (exclusively attempting to keep violence and aggression under control). His strategy was to separate them and "watch them like hawks" but since the aggressive behavior was perpetual, it was difficult for this to really work. "It was impossible for only two teachers to try to re-engage them and give them other things to do to distract them....other kids get bad examples of behavior from one kid and all of them have started to imitate that kid, possibly because he gets all the attention. For example, one child bangs his spoon on the lunch table and the rest follow suit." To make matters worse, "Other kids start to feel afraid of the aggressive kids and

start being aggressive in return. Sometimes Robby and Kevin start beating on Steven together and they are only one year-old!"

Ethan says that for awhile he began to feel like the only word he spoke while teaching was "No" and consequently, "I started to feel like I didn't like being a teacher... five out of eight of the kids in my classroom needed early intervention and I have no training for this. None of the other staff is trained to deal with these children's special needs." Ethan asked for workshops to help him with these children, but to no avail. Eventually he took it upon himself to ask some of the therapists who work individually with the children what he could do to help them in the classroom and this was somewhat helpful.

Finally, each of the five boys with difficulties in this classroom got therapies and special instruction; however, Ethan doesn't believe these therapies were begun in a timely fashion, so he is not sure these will be as effective as they might have been had they been begun sooner.

Ethan says his educational background did not prepare him to deal with these situations. "Most of the things I do here I learn from experience, slowly figuring out what to do." Ethan says that some of the workshops that staff members were required to attend for the year before the school opened were helpful as far as telling them how to use the space, what toys to use, how to use water play, etc. But, Ethan notes, although a block area is usually considered a mainstay in an early childhood classroom, he can't have blocks in his classroom because the kids hit each other with them.

Ethan described other disagreements with certain of the administration's educational policies. For example, the teachers are not allowed to display the children's artwork on the walls. The reason given to them for this was that it's a public housing building and as such, sticking things on the walls is prohibited. However, certain teachers have reported that there used to be another childcare center in the rooms LESEHS now occupies and that those teachers were allowed to put children's paintings on the wall. This left Ethan as well as some of the other teachers believing that this was simply the director's personal preference and she was unwilling to admit this.

As a final complaint about administrative practices Ethan and other teachers described problems arising from student teachers' lack of training or orientation. Ethan states, "They just stick them in the classroom with no instruction whatsoever so its like having extra kids sometime...this makes alot of extra work for the teachers." He and other teachers note that they are obliged to give a fair amount of instruction to the student teachers and still take care of eight one year-olds with special difficulties. This creates additional stress for Ethan, Ana, and Jonilla.

Janine expressed particular annoyance with the fact that the administration did nothing to improve an additional problematic phenomenon. She, Ethan, Ana and Lillian all describe how when several Web workers are present in the classroom on a given day, "They sit around and talk to each other and then they don't help out with kids or do any cleaning!" Janine believed that the administration should take a more active role in at least minimally training and supervising parent volunteers and Web workers but

because the administration does not do this, additional work is created for teachers who are already taking care of eight infants or toddlers.

TREATMENT OF SUBORDINATES

Janine was bothered by the fact that Ethan, the head teacher in the one year-olds room, barely helped Ana, his assistant teacher for one and one half years, with the daily, more mundane classroom tasks. For example, after naptime when there is a lot to be done - cots to be put away, snacks to be given, daily reports to be sent home filled out - Ethan frequently exits the room, leaving Ana to do most of this work. Ana talks to Janine about this situation but won't talk to Ethan about it, although she is furious.

Janine encourages her to confront Ethan directly. Although Ana says she will, she doesn't. What usually happens, Janine reports, is that Ana "blows up" and everyone "gets caught in the fallout of her anger... She takes it out on everyone else then everyone jumps through hoops to help her."

Janine gets equally frustrated with Ethan's overall attitude toward work with the one year-olds in his classes, describing him as "uninvested, passive and not happy...he doesn't enjoy doing the work but won't take sick days to job hunt." Her feeling is that the last thing the children in this center need is a teacher who is not particularly tuned into their specific educational needs.

Ethan reports that when he and Ana began working together, "...she took offense to every little criticism... If I suggested interacting with the children in a different way, she categorically did not like to be corrected." When he and Ana began working together, Ethan says there was a lot of

tension and numerous uncomfortable incidents. He finds that, as mentioned previously, Ana is overly directive with the children when they are trying to explore and play on their own. It bothers him that she is always selecting an activity for a child rather than letting a child decide what she wants to play with on her own. Once when Ana was doing this, Ethan said to her "just let (the child) play." Ana was obviously angry that he had said this and particularly angry that Ethan said this to her within earshot of a parent. She later told him she believed that this undoubtedly lowered the parents' view of her, making his action particularly insulting.

Treatment of Student Teachers

At present Ethan has two high school students in his class who came from an afterschool program in which Ethan teaches two evenings per week. Ethan says he "already has a working relationship with them" and this means he can "tell them what to do" and not have to worry about "attitude" or resentment since they already trust and respect him. Ethan asserts that, on the whole, the boys established a good rapport with the children, even though one student is from the Dominican Republic and doesn't speak English at all.

Ethan described a situation which occurred one day on the playground. The student teacher who speaks no English reached up and caught a pigeon. Of this situation, Ethan says, "I didn't quite know what to do...the bird was flapping and the kids were fascinated and wanted to touch the bird." He wondered if this - catching birds with one's bare hands - was a common pastime in the Dominican Republic. He did not want to make the boy feel as if he had done something "bad" or wrong in catching the bird but since he was afraid the bird had lice, he decided to tell the boy to let it go.

Ethan says he "role models for the Latino boys about how to be affectionate with the kids." Oddly, at the same time he reports that they were quite affectionate to begin with. He says they pick up the kids and hug them, particularly when the children are playing in the sprinkler and believes that this might be attributed to the fact that most of them have younger siblings with whom they are in the habit of being affectionate.

Ethan says the male student teachers also need to be encouraged to expand the children's language. He tells them to talk to the kids when they are putting them down for nap - "to use this time as individual talk time."

As discussed previously with reference to the parents at LESEHS, Ethan appears to be assuming a "cultural deficit" model of these boys. That is to say he appears to assume they do not understand the importance of being affectionate with children, even though he himself said the boys displayed affection for them without his asking.

Problems with Parent Volunteers and Web workers

In a related vein, Janine describes problems she has encountered when parents function as volunteers or Web workers (women in welfare-to-work programs) in the classroom. She says particular difficulties arise over the fact that, "They tell other parents how badly their children behaved and the other parents get really upset." She describes how she was obliged to implement a "gag order" policy in which parent volunteers were told they were not allowed to discuss classroom dynamics - or at least children's undesirable behaviors - with other parents.

Janine says other difficulties have arisen from the fact that the parents seem to believe that "...since they are parents their parenting ideas should be automatically honored....so it's difficult to comment on or 'correct' their

interactions with the children when you see them doing things that aren't developmentally appropriate."

Presenting a somewhat alternative perspective, Jonilla says she is generally "...glad that parents are included in the LESEHS classrooms" but that sometimes "it depends on the parent and the child." For example, one of the children's mother works in the one year-old (Ethan's) classroom next to Jonilla's class. She was first a Web worker, then became a substitute teacher. Jonilla reports that this mother "comes in constantly to be with her son, who has a speech delay and possibly other problems." Jonilla believes this is distracting for the child and other children in her room - not to mention that Ethan is left alone with eight children at these times - and thus has tried to encourage her to stay in the other room. She comments "you have to set some boundaries."

Jonilla reports that Cecilia, the mother of another child in the class "does pretty well as a volunteer...she doesn't have to be told alot but when she is, she takes it pretty well." Jonilla says she instructs her somewhat about how to interact with the children. She says Cecelia, like the Web workers Janine describes, tended to "watch the kids from a distance alot instead of being with them and interacting with them" when she first began working with her. However, Cecelia was able to "pick up the routine (of working more closely with the children) quite quickly."

Chapter 5

The Children's Center

THE CHILDREN'S CENTER

The Children's Center is located in an affluent community in lower Manhattan. Families at the Children's Center are almost exclusively middle and upper middle class and white. There is a heavy international presence, mostly European. One teacher reported that two years ago, six of the ten children in her class were European, Scandinavian, Israeli or Asian. Although the school has funding for some ACD (publicly funded childcare) slots, these are rarely utilized. There are usually one or two Asians in each classroom and very few African Americans. Although one four year-olds class had four African-American children at one point, this was unusual. Generally there may be one African American child per class. Most parents work in professional fields, including investment banking, law, fashion design, architecture, real estate, theater and film.

There are seven classrooms altogether. There are 20 children in the three classrooms for four and five year-olds, 18 children in the three classes for the three year-olds and 10 children in the two's class. There are two teachers in each classroom and, on average, one or two student teachers each day. Three of the teachers for the older children are Montessori trained. The other teachers attended various programs, including Bank Street, New York University and City College of New York.

The spacious classrooms are divided into "work areas," usually sectioned off by free-standing shelves or other furniture. Part of the refinished wooden floors are exposed in each classroom and part of the floor is covered with rugs in areas where children generally sit and work. In most classrooms the walls are covered by children's original art work. In one Montessori

classroom the teacher leaves the walls bare. Most classrooms have a pet or two, either a hamster, snails, birds, or guinea pigs.

Older children (fours, fives and some threes) come from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and have lunch and nap at school. Younger children (twos and threes) come for half-day sessions, either from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm or from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. One and sometimes both parents usually bring the child to school. Although most children are picked up by private caregivers, only a few private caregivers bring children at arrival time. When children arrive they generally have "free play" or "work" time (the Montessori teachers' term) for 40 minutes to one hour, depending on the ages of the children. Children can utilize the "work areas" as they want. Classrooms generally include a block area, dramatic play area, "sensory table" for sand and water play, art area, and a cozy corner with books, manipulatives (trains, Legos, peg boards) area.

Because three of the head teachers in the older children's rooms are Montessori trained, their classrooms are arranged a bit differently. Specifically designed Montessori "works," e.g., graded wooden cylinders in a frame, same sized pitchers for pouring, a series of pink blocks for making a tower, are located on individual shelves. Montessori teachers' classrooms do not include a dramatic play area. (This will be discussed in detail in the "conflicts" section for this school.)

Next children either go to "gym time" or for older groups, to the nearby park. "Meeting time" or "circle time" generally takes place for each group mid to late morning. During meeting children sit in a circle to sing songs, discuss the day's events and concerns, and read a book together. Children then have snack, then another free play session. For younger children the day usually ends here, with parents or private caregivers arriving around 11:50 to pick them up. Older children continue with lunch - brought from home - nap, then

another "free play" and/or "gym" session before they are picked up at 3:00 pm. Two days per week the music teacher comes to do a one half hour session with each group. Several of the classes do a "cooking project" once per week during the usual "free play" time.

TEACHERS AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER - BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES

Millicent is a Jamaican woman in her mid thirties. She was recently married and has no children. Millicent has been a teacher at the Children's Center for over ten years. She did her student teaching at the Children's Center when she was an undergraduate at the Borough of Manhattan Community College's Early Childhood Education Certification Program. Eventually completed a BA in education at Brooklyn College and a Masters in Early Childhood Education from City College. Millicent has also had Montessori training (where how long?). She says that although she learned alot from her student teaching years, her first two years of teaching were very difficult. Millicent describes how part of the problem was that she encountered some mildly racist feelings in her first years. But she says "I got that under control...I made the sure the parents to the message that I knew what I was doing...so all that seems to have faded now."

Many times during her interviews Millicent referred to her West Indian background, asserting that it has heavily influenced her ideas about early childhood education. She believes that the comparatively more structured childrearing practices she grew up with are preferable to some of the more lax parenting styles she has encountered in the U.S. She states, "I come from a culture where you are told everything - you're told how to think, how to

behave, so I believe I mix together my home culture and my formal training when it comes to deciding how to be with young children." She adds, "I set limits from day one."

Priscilla

Priscilla is a 47 year-old woman who worked at the Children's Center for five years. She started out teaching the younger two year-olds but after two years was moved to the next age group.

Before Priscilla became a preschool teacher she had several different jobs. She worked as a salesperson at Sotheby's, having obtained a degree in art history during her undergraduate career. She also sold real estate in Manhattan during the 1970's real estate boom. Finding the real estate work highly lucrative but also somewhat "sleazy" and "without soul," Priscilla set about finding work that might be more meaningful. She began teaching at preschool on the Upper East Side which served almost exclusively upper middle class white families. At the same time she began the Early Childhood Masters Program at Marymount Manhattan College.

Priscilla worked part-time at the Upper East Side preschool for five years before coming to the Children's Center. During her masters program she reports she did fieldwork with different age groups of children. She enjoyed working with preschoolers the most and particularly enjoyed designing an art curriculum for them. She reports having conducted one particular project, the goal of which was to help children understand what it was like for Michelangelo to have painted the Sistine Chapel. She taped paper to the underside of a rectangular table, then had the children lie on their backs on a makeshift dolly, roll themselves under the table and paint. Priscilla says one logistical problem she encountered was that the paint sometimes

dripped in the children's faces. She also allowed children to paint a la Jackson Pollock, placing paper on the floor for them and letting them fling the paint all over it. Other projects included dot painting to familiarize with some of the Impressionist techniques.

Priscilla grew up in a professional family with three sisters. She is the second child. Her father's business required that the family move from Chicago to Seattle and eventually to Long Island. Priscilla reports she is "not very close" to her mother or her sisters. They speak on the phone somewhat regularly but she does not see them often.

Richard

Richard is a 50 year-old Kenyan man who has taught at the Children's Center for over 10 years. He grew up in a small village in Kenya with 21 brothers of whom he is one of the oldest. Richard reports that the village in which he grew up had no cars. Richard says when he was young he wanted to be either a teacher or a police officer. After he saw the police brutalizing someone, he decided to be a teacher.

He moved to the U.S. with his wife and first daughter when he was in his late 20's. It has taken him almost 20 years to get a green card but he is in the final steps of this process. He hasn't been back to visit his parents or numerous siblings, of which he is the oldest. The younger boys in the family, he says, think of him as "some type of Santa Claus" - a mythical creature whom everyone says exists but whom no one has actually seen. Richard currently lives in the East Village with his wife who also works and two daughters who are now teenagers.

When he got married in Kenya the townspeople gave him an enormous celebration. He and his wife had no money but he was friends with the people

who work for Pepsi Cola in Kenya, so they gave him a huge fest. All 300 people in his village were invited. Others brought contributions to the wedding feast as well.

Richard attended Borough of Manhattan Community College's two year program in Early Childhood Education, then got a Masters in Early Childhood Education from City College of New York.

When I scheduled the interview with Richard, I briefly described to him the general sort of questions I would be asking him, as I had done with other interviewees. Richard showed up at the interview with several legal pad pages full of notes he had prepared.

Loretta

Loretta is a 26 year-old woman who had just begun working in the two's classroom when the study began. Loretta is married without children and had moved to New York City from the Ithaca area. Her undergraduate degree was in music, but she had had significant experience working in Ithaca with infants and toddlers. The center where she had previously worked devoted a large percentage of its funds to professional development for its staff. Loretta said that in addition to regular staff development sessions at the center, teachers were constantly provided with opportunities to attend conferences and workshops outside the school. She reported that the center in Ithaca was "well run," that all teachers who worked there had qualifications in keeping with the Board of Health guidelines and a "healthy working knowledge" of infant toddler developmental issues. Loretta was quite shocked, on her arrival at the Children's Center, of the evident lack of educational background of some of the early childhood educators, particularly on learning of the large sums parents paid in tuition.

Loretta grew up in a middle class white community in upstate New York. She reports that she and her brother were often cared for by babysitters until they reached adolescence since both her parents worked - her mother as a chemist and her father as....

Jill

Jill was a student teacher at the Children's Center in the Spring of 1999. She was a participant in Borough of Manhattan Community College's program for training mature women to work in childcare settings. The other women who had come from this program to work in the Center in the past were primarily in their sixties and from the Caribbean working class backgrounds. Jill "stuck out" somewhat in this group as she was white, middle class and in her early fifties. She had been working as a free lance writer for Dance Magazine for several years and continued to do this while she worked at the Center and in her subsequent childcare job.

Deirdre

Deirdre was a student teacher at the Children's Center in the two year-old's group. She refers to herself as Hispanic although she says her mother is Irish. Her Puerto Rican father was "not much in the picture" but Deirdre says she was "raised among Hispanics." She elaborates, "culturally, we were Hispanic....the food, the neighborhood, my friends and my mother's friends..." She finds her name, Deirdre Suarez somewhat amusing. "Have you ever met a Puerto Rican girl named Deirdre?" she quips.

Gabrielle

Gabrielle is a 40 year-old woman who teaches the youngest group at the Children's Center, the two year-olds. She grew up in a middle class white family with four children. With reference to this experience states, "It was difficult to get much individual attention....I think this might have been some of my motivation for working with very young children (and give them lots of individual attention). Gabrielle had a career as a professional musician before getting involved in teaching. She states that her part-time work as a music teacher for two and three year-old children got her interested in early development and education. She asserts this is why she got a Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education from Teachers College.

Gabrielle does not have children of her own, a situation, she believes "Keeps me interested in the work" and "gives me enough energy to keep doing this exhausting work day after day." She says that parents at the Children's Center occasionally inquire about her personal life, but after she had worked at the center for several years, parents never seemed to believe that since she didn't have children that she was incapable of being a good preschool teacher. On the contrary, she explains "They come to me and ask me for advice about every tiny thing to do with their children...a few of them can't seem to make a decision without my input! It's very flattering."

CONFLICTS IN PHILOSOPHY AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER

As was the case with the teachers at LESEHS, teachers at the Children's Center reported that the majority of their philosophical conflicts with one another and with the administration center on 1. encouragement of autonomy in children as opposed to attention to adult direction 2. appropriate sources of curriculum 3. beliefs about the importance of (in)flexibility in teaching styles and techniques

1. ENCOURAGING AUTONOMY IN CHILDREN

Aligning himself with many other teachers at the Children's Center and LESEHS with reference to the issue of encouraging autonomy in children, Richard states, "I want the kids to feel free...to feel they belong here... and they should be free from anxiety and free to work."

Like Richard, Millicent states she believes that the most important mission she has in teaching young children is "to make the kids as independent as possible." She explains, "I come from a culture [Jamaican] where you are told everything - you're told how to think, how to behave...so I believe I mix together my home culture and my formal training when it comes to deciding how to be with young children."

She elaborates on how she goes about this: "I used to do a lot of writing for them but now if they can't write something [a word they want to use and don't know how to spell] I just say 'find another word.' "

Of note here is that Millicent never seems to question the appropriateness of teaching basic reading and writing skills to four year-olds. As was made apparent in the history chapter, this has been a continual subject of debate beginning in the early 19th century. Millicent appears to be either unaware of research which supports waiting until children reach school age to teach these skills, or she has chosen to ignore this body of literature.

Millicent expands, "If children have confidence then they can do a lot given the opportunity. I make them clean up the messes they make. If they spill things, THEY clean it up." Thus for Millicent, a significant piece of encouraging autonomy in children involves getting them to clean up the messes they make. Her tone in discussing this seemed to imply that it is of primary importance to her that she not be bothered with this task; for other teachers and in other developmental theories, maintain children's learning to clean up after themselves is valued for its potential to encourage independence in children.

Like Gabrielle and others, Millicent notes that encouraging young children to clean up after themselves has been a "bone of contention" where the student teachers are concerned. As other teachers have noted with reference to student teachers, " They always want to clean up for them." Interestingly, many of the student teachers in both Millicent's and Gabrielle's class who do this are Hispanic. These teachers present an exception to Valdes'(1996) and Fuller and Holloway's (1997) research findings as described in Chapter 8 that within many Hispanic families, children are expected to take as much responsibility for themselves as early as possible. Private Latina caregivers interviewed in Wrigley's study were "angered by seeing children sit idle" and "surprised that the children had no responsibilities..." (Wrigley, 1995:108)

Further describing her efforts to encourage children to be independent, Millicent describes,

I set up my room so the children can be in control. We have lots of brooms and sponges and soap and garbage cans so they can clean up by themselves I don't mind if they spill things because that's what they do but they have to clean it up...it's their environment.

In sum, Millicent's definition of encouraging independence and autonomy centers heavily on children's cleaning up and on her refusing to tell children how to spell words they want to use in their writing. The net effect seems to read "Don't bother me."

Interestingly, a parent whose child had attended the Children's Center many years ago spontaneously related a similar description of the woman who had been her child's classroom teacher. She reported that this teacher, who was eventually promoted to an administrative position, was "never in the classroom....there was a young British student teacher there at the time and Martha [who was Montessori certified] always left her on her own with all 20 children. Fortunately, the student teacher was lovely and quite competent but I always got the feeling Martha just wasn't interested in the children."

Millicent moreover described how she has "lots of rules" for her classroom. She asserts,

I like a quiet classroom where the kids are working ; there are lots of rules in the classroom for behavior but I let them do alot on their own in the gym. I set limits from day one. I start with the Montessori work rugs and tell the children exactly what the rules are about working with them.

(Montessori work rugs are rectangular, about three feet by two. Children spread them on the floor then put their "work" on top of the rug. The rug is meant to delineate that child's work space. If another child approaches and attempts to "invade" the area of the rug, the working child is encouraged to say "that's my work!")

Millicent continues, "I go through this everyday, religiously, with them. By Halloween, they 'get it.' I also tell them 'Don't run in the classroom... we use our words...we have a calm class, etc.' " When they go to the gym, Millicent says she tells them, "Don't take your shoes off if you can't put them

back on yourself!" This rule is slightly tempered with "we will tell you which one goes on which foot but you still have to put them on yourself."

Here again, this apparent abundance of rules seems geared toward keeping the children at a comfortable distance from the adults. Montessori herself could in fact be considered a proponent of such teacher behavior. As described in Chapter 3, Montessori based her claim to the scientificity of her method on the fact that she instructed teachers to be "objective observers" of children in a "carefully prepared environment." She further encouraged them to "divest (themselves) of personality in order to become instruments of investigation" (Montessori, 1912:13 quoted in Goffin, 1994:50).

Another Montessori-trained teacher at the Children's Center maintained that during her training it was suggested that teachers wear black so that they could "fade into the background" of the classroom, and have "as little interaction as possible" with the children.

2. APPROPRIATE SOURCES OF CURRICULUM

Richard believes that experience has been his best teacher. He expresses the belief that curriculum should come from children's interests, rather than from what adults believe they should be interested and engaged in. He states, "I mostly base what I do on watching the children. I ask 'What do they do?' I see what they say to each other and that's how I decide what to do for curriculum." For example, he once heard some child using the expression "mad as a cow" and he "built on it," expanding it for use in many curricular areas.

As explained in Chapter 3, this "child-centered" approach to curriculum is congruent with the ideologies of the Developmental-Interaction and other approaches to early childhood education. These approaches, which are closely derived from the teachings of John Dewey, Jean Piaget and others,

maintain that the task of curriculum design primarily involves tuning into children's interests - into the substance of the concrete experiences which make up children's day to day lives. For example, very young children are often fascinated by the routines in which they see the adults around them engaged; thus the rationale for the "housekeeping area" in the classroom where children can dress up like the adults they know, pretend to make coffee and meals for each other, pretend to do laundry, etc.

This approach puts Richard somewhat in opposition to the rest of the school which is - to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the classroom teacher - Montessori based. In spite of Montessori's assertion that children are spiritual as well as biological creatures, "endowed with a plan of organic development...expressed through their spontaneous activity," the design of Montessori's "works" (materials for children to work with) could not be more discouraging of spontaneous activity from children. For the most part, these materials exclusively allow for one specific response on the part of the child. For example, one "work" consist of a series of wooden cylinders which gradually increase in size and a box with a series of holes which correspond to the size of the cylnders. Obviously, the chlid's only choice of interaction is to fit the cylinders into the corresponding hole.

Similarly, another "work" consists of two small pitches, one with liquid inside. The child is expected to pour the liquid back and forth between the two pitchers, the ultimate goal being to develop fine motor skills. When the child has mastered this activity with one particular size pitcher, she is given a pair of smaller pitchers to practice upon, in order to further improve fine motor coordination. Again, the child is offered no choice of response to the material. There is no possibility for creativity or independence on the part of the child in deciding what his/her interaction with the material will be. The child is not

offered what Sally Lubeck terms "transformational materials" like sand, water and clay, which allow multiple possibilities for children's manipulations and interactions.

Ironically, Lubeck (1985) has asserted that material which invites activity of such a rote nature is characteristic of curriculum designed for minority and low income children. The clientele at the Children's Center is anything but minority and low income. Interestingly, the middle and upper middle class white parents at the Children's Center did not hesitate to endorse the Montessori activities which invite only rote, uncreative responses on the part of children. This appears to contradict research literature describing middle class white parents' educational aspirations for their young children.

Specifically, Carol Joffe's study of parents of nursery school children in Berkeley asserted that middle class white parents tend to subscribe more heartily to a play-based curriculum than a skills-oriented one (Joffe, 1977).

3. BELIEFS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF (IN)FLEXIBILITY IN TEACHING STYLES AND TECHNIQUES: willingness to "think on one's feet - outside the box" of teacher training textbooks

Apparently adopting the polar opposite approach to Millicent's, Priscilla states that an overall goal for her as a teacher has been to provide an experience for children "totally dissimilar to my own experience in school." She went to Catholic school where things were "very structured." Priscilla says was particularly upset by her teachers' intolerance and rigidity when it came to art work. As she complains, "They don't let you go outside the line for drawing." Thus Priscilla has taken particular joy in providing the children she has worked with with opportunities to "go outside the line," not only in working with art materials, but also in other educational areas as well.

She reports having conducted one special project, the goal of which was to help children understand what it was like for Michelangelo to have painted the Sistine Chapel. She taped paper to the underside of a rectangular table, then had the children lie on their backs on a moving dolly, roll themselves under the table and paint. Priscilla says one logistical problem she encountered was that the paint sometimes dripped in the children's faces. She also allowed children to paint a la Jackson Pollock, placing paper on the floor for them and letting them fling the paint all over it. Other projects included dot painting to familiarize the children with some of the Impressionist techniques.

Priscilla and Richard were co-teachers for two years and, somewhat predictably, Priscilla reports she tremendously enjoyed teaching with Richard. She says he was her "best companion," especially after working with the "self-righteous, authoritarian" teachers. She and Richard were very creative together. Priscilla describes how they "would stay for hours after work everyday brainstorming and figuring out novel projects to do with the children."

Priscilla reports that although she got all A's in her Masters program, she found what she learned in her textbooks, "not humanistic." She found "sticking to the textbook boring and uninspired." She describes a specific intolerance for other preschool teachers who categorically refuse to "go outside the line." She has worked with several other teachers during her career as a preschool teacher. While working in the Upper East Side program, she co-taught with a woman named Nancy, whom Priscilla describes as having "a cookie cutter formula" for working with children and who "couldn't work with anyone who wasn't the same as she." Priscilla expounds, "She didn't have a creative bone in her body!" The classroom was impeccably neat at all times, a feature which bothered Priscilla. She states, "Clearly, the

children were not being allowed to explore as freely as three year-olds tend to...the kids were afraid of her...there was no joy, no risk, no epiphanic moments." Nancy insisted to Priscilla that "the kids need to know you're in charge" and adopted a highly authoritarian demeanor with them. Priscilla says the children used to say "I don't like the way you talk to me!" to Nancy.

In a similar vein, Priscilla describes her most recent co-teacher, Ameila, as "authoritarian and inflexible" in her ideas about and dealings with children. For example, one child in their class, Orion, was particularly resistant to teacher instruction, especially when he told what to do in an overly directive manner. He despised being told to stand in line. Priscilla says she was able to use humor with Orion in situations like this, with a fair amount of success. Amelia, on the other hand, would simply yell "Stand in line!" over and over again in progressively louder tones. Usually, an impasse would be reached between Amelia and Orion with both parties completely frustrated.

With reference to this scenario, Priscilla comments, "Some teachers always refer directly back to the textbook...they don't think for themselves...they can't think on their feet about how best to handle a specific situation with an individual child...They command, 'sit in the circle, get in line, etc.' and have no idea how to use creativity and humor to help the child co-operate." Amelia criticized Priscilla for what she considered too much flexibility in situations like the one with Orion, asserting that Priscilla was "becoming too familiar" with the children.

This type of disagreement over how "familiar" one should be with children was an issue which was frequently raised at the Children's Center. Gabrielle and Loretta, who worked with the youngest children at the school, were accustomed to having children sit in their laps, touch them, ask to be

picked up, and come to hug them good-bye at the end of each session. Teachers who were more Montessori oriented found this constant physical contact and affection inappropriate. When the children arrived and departed, they shook the children's hands, much like one would treat an adult. Some of these teachers did touch children in a "natural," appropriately affectionate way at different moments, for example, when children came to ask for their help. Others, like Dahlia, seemed to avoid physical contact with the children at all costs. Thus teachers' level of comfort where physical contact with children was concerned appeared to be an individual matter, a function of the specific personality of each teacher. Educational ideology did not seem to be the primary determinant at work here.

Priscilla believed that Amelia's attitude ("you're being too familiar with the kids") reflected a certain "fearfulness," that is, that Amelia was AFRAID to think for herself, to "think outside the box" about how to interact with children. Priscilla attributed this to Amelia's age (21) and lack of experience. Priscilla states that in general, Amelia was not very introspective and not in the habit of reflecting upon what she did with the children in the classroom or why.

Richard raised these issues when asked how he uses his formal educational training in his work with young children. He stated, "It's like reading a map...when you get in the car and you make detours...the teacher education program is a map but you have to be flexible with it and be able to make detours - you find out that some of the streets on the maps are one way streets and the map doesn't tell you that."

Richard found that some of the ideas promoted in his teacher education program are "old." He states, "some of the teaching ideas are

obviously from people who have never set foot in a classroom...they don't talk about situations like what if you have 10 kids pooping at once?"

Richard described an episode in which Dalia, his co-teacher for a year, appeared to adhere to her teaching principles in a perhaps too rigid fashion. A child, Jim, came into school extremely upset and crying one morning. The mother informed Richard and his co-teacher, Dalia, that Jim had come in without having had breakfast. Richard suggested that perhaps some juice and crackers might help Jim calm down but Dalia insisted that snack time was at 10 a.m. and that Jim must wait until that time to eat. Richard says Jim's mother "pitched a fit...she started swearing at Dalia." Richard very calmly gave Jim some juice and a cracker at which point Dalia became really angry and started yelling at Richard "You didn't support me!"

With reference to the event, Richard states, "I'm not rigid. As a teacher you have to find a place between two standards, you have to compromise, find a middle ground between following the rules directly and doing whatever a parent or child is asking. You have to figure out the best thing to do."

Richard reports that after this incident, he began putting snack out on a side table at the beginning of the day so children can go and get what they want when they are hungry; however, he puts a picture of a certain number of crackers or whatever the snack is for that day and the children are supposed to only take that amount.

Jill did her student teaching at the Children's Center, then moved on to a job in a daycare center for mostly middle class children in lower Manhattan. With reference to differences in general philosophies about early childcare and education, Jill discussed certain notions espoused at the daycare center,

comparing them to those at the Children's Center. She says that in general, the focus of the teachers she worked with at the Children's Center is much more on the children, their needs, and their interests. She describes how the teachers at the Daycare Center often put their own needs first. For example, if the teachers are eating breakfast at arrival time (even though they have been instructed not to do this), they often finish their breakfast before they begin to interact with the children who have arrived. These teachers also frequently insist on completing a conversation with another adult before acknowledging a child who is addressing them. Jill explains, "the teachers sometimes become so involved in conversations with one another that they ignore the children..." However, on reflection, Jill states, "...but this chatty part makes for a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom that might not exist otherwise..." and, moreover, "...having caregivers sitting around and talking and not being overly focused on the children might not be such a bad thing." She saw this as "a different way to be" with children in care, than what she learned was "correct" in her teacher training courses and in her student teaching at The Children's Center - one that is perhaps not so detrimental as she initially believed, "even though it's not Developmentally Appropriate Practice." She elaborates, "There is less of a 'we're here to cater to the children' feeling." She noticed that the children at The Children's Center seemed to "feel entitled to constantly ask for things." For example, they would ask a teacher, regardless of what the teacher was doing, "Will you read this to me?" Jill sometimes wondered at the Children's Center "Is this kid ordering me around or simply asking for help he needs?" Jill believes this might be a common feature in "upscale schools where children seem to have such a sense of entitlement" as opposed to schools like the Daycare Center where it is the teachers who have such a sense of entitlement.

CONFLICTS OVER PRACTICE AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER

The most significant conflicts described by teachers at the Children's Center concerned 1. how much one should encourage autonomy as opposed to adherence to teacher direction in children 2. appropriate limit setting strategies, including the language one should use when setting limits 3. how food should be served to children 4. appropriate treatment of co-teachers and subordinates, including appropriate forms of confrontation 5. disagreements with administrative policy and practice 6. what role and rights the parents should have/how teachers should interact with parents 7. appropriate curriculum and materials 8. how to help children (or not) deal with their emotions

1. ENCOURAGING AUTONOMY VS ADHERENCE TO TEACHER DIRECTION

Millicent says that as part of her efforts to encourage autonomy in children, when conflicts arise between children in the classroom, she "tries to do less." She "sits back" and allows to the children to get as far as they can on their own in resolving the conflict. For example, if two children want to work with the same item, instead of deciding herself who should get the item, she lets the children try to figure this out. The children she works with are four and five year-olds, so their verbal skills are, for the most part, at a level which allows them to talk things through. Verbal ability notwithstanding, physical fights still erupt.

Millicent also believes that children should be encouraged to solve their own emotional problems. She often leaves children who are upset (but not in conflict with another child) to figure out what to do to help themselves.

When parents have observed such scenarios, they have sometimes interpreted Millicent's behavior as indifferent and sometimes cruel. Millicent described one situation in which parents who were dropping off their children were disturbed upon observing that a child was crying in one corner of the room. Millicent was far away from the child, conspicuously making no effort to comfort the child. Millicent maintained, "I wanted the child to come and ask for comfort." The observing parent, however, believed that Millicent was simply being cold.

On another occasion, Millicent asked a child with some sort of developmental delay to hand out the plates at snack time. The child, owing to his delay, was unable to negotiate some aspect of this task and was consequently standing still, apparently confused and uncomfortable. A parent who observed this scenario later asked Millicent "Why didn't you help him?" Millicent responded she was trying to "let him figure it out for himself;" however, the parent was of the opinion that the nature of the child's developmental delay would not allow him to figure out how to accomplish the task on his own. She thus believed Millicent was being cruel to let him stand there frustrated and confused.

Millicent and other teachers report having had particular difficulty with many student teachers when it comes to encouraging autonomy in children - specifically in getting student teachers to let children get as far as they can on their own in performing a specific task. Millicent, Gabrielle, and Loretta each describe how student teachers observing children doing artwork frequently draw objects on the children's paper. Even when these teachers have explained that the child needs to be given total control over her artwork, many student teachers seem unable to resist adding to children's work.

In a similar vein, Millicent and other teachers report how it is often appears difficult for many student teachers to allow the children to clean up after themselves. Gabrielle detailed how she had frequently explained to the student teachers the importance of young children's beginning to take responsibility for their work materials, and thus the significance of encouraging them to clean up after themselves. However, day after day, certain student teachers continued to put toys back on the shelves, without asking the children to assist.

Jona, a Filipina student teacher in Gabrielle's classroom commented on The Center teachers' focus on encouraging children to be autonomous. She states, "parents in the Philipines usually do everything for their children," so the idea of getting a child to do as much as she can before helping in a task was new to Jona. When asked, "What is your attitude toward this idea?" Jona responded "This way makes more sense...a child can learn to be independent. For example, my two year-old sister...she's still very...my parents do everything for her. She's not developing as quickly as these kids." Thus Jona saw having children take responsibility for themselves in cleaning up and other activities as positively contributing to children's overall development.

2. APPROPRIATE LIMIT SETTING PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES

Loretta, who worked with Millicent's group while she was on vacation, states that there are SO many rules in Millicent's classroom that the children are afraid to initiate any sort of activity on their own. Loretta described how her first day substituting for Millicent, children whom she (Loretta) had had in her classroom the year before, and whom she knew to be feisty, confident children, appeared timid and inhibited. They gathered quietly near Loretta and

asked in what she described as almost fearful voices, "Is it okay if we take out the paints?" Apparently, the many rules stipulating what children are and are not allowed to do has gotten in the way of Millicent's stated goal of encouraging children to be independent.

Dalia, a teacher who worked at the Children's Center for two years then moved to California, was reported to have had similar ideas and practices. Richard reported how once Dalia left a child crying in the middle of a very long staircase because the child was afraid to come down on his own. When questioned about this, Dalia asserted that Montessori emphasizes the importance of children's independence and self-sufficiency. She maintained that if she had helped the child he would not become independent. Loretta's interpretation of this scenario was that Dalia "might have had sadistic tendencies and was using a distorted interpretation of Montessori principle that one should allow children to be autonomous - to do all they can on their own - as a shield from behind which to both hide and express these tendencies. The administration apparently did nothing to address this, although Richard maintains they were made aware of this occurrence.

Certain of Richard's limit setting/disciplinary tactics were particularly objectionable to Gabrielle and Loretta. During meetings or at other times of the day, Richard tells the children stories from his native Kenya, many with parable-like structures and all with lessons in morality embedded. Sometimes when children are engaging in objectionable behaviors, Richard attempts to control these with features from the stories. For example, Loretta reported how one day she was monitoring nap time and the children were exceptionally fidgety. One of the student teachers told them, "If you don't get

on your cots and go to sleep Richard is going to come and make you fly away!" Apparently Richard had told them a story in which badly behaved persons were made to "fly away and never be seen again!" Loretta believed this was particularly inappropriate to tell three year-old children whose grasp of the difference between the real and the fantastical is comparatively lacking. Thus it is possible they might become fearful that they could actually be made to "fly away and never be seen again."

Valdes discusses a similar strategy utilized by families in her study where "teaching children lessons" was most often accomplished through "consejos" or "spontaneous homilies designed to influence behaviors and attitudes" (Valdes, 1996:125). These were the major source of children's "educacion," which for these families included not only school learning but moral values and manners as well. Teaching children how to behave around other people and what is "good" were given primary importance. Mothers also expressed the belief that children needed to be told the same thing repeatedly in order for them to be effectively absorbed.

Consejos were utilized from the time children were very young, but selected with the child's age in mind. These usually were "embedded in moral tales." Valdes describes one tale told by a grandmother who decided her granddaughter was becoming a gossip. Within the tale, a little girl who is always telling everyone everything. One day her grandmother found some money on the street which was a great relief since the grandmother was very poor. The child told everyone she encountered and that night, someone broke into the house and robbed the grandmother.

The Language of Limit Setting

An important issue which was raised during several teacher interviews involved the type of language teachers consider appropriate to use with young children when setting limits.

With reference to discipline and limit setting in the classroom, Richard himself describes the several approaches he uses as follows: At times he tells the child, "You are going to make me carry your body out of the classroom" which, he says, is his effort to help the child establish a relationship between their behavior and its consequences. Richard believes by saying "You are going to make me..." or "You are making my body angry at yours," the child will comprehend that it is her actions which are bringing about his (Richard's) disciplinary or limit setting action, e.g., taking the child out of the classroom. He often says, "You don't want to listen to me so you can listen to yourself," then isolates them from the rest of the children and teachers.

Richard believes that in limit setting situations like this it important for him to use short sentences, to "talk to them the way they talk." He says he tries to "create a vocabulary for children by listening to what they say to you," for example, "don't treat my body that way" or "now I can't talk to you because I am very angry."

Ramona, one of the student teachers from Gabrielle's classroom, was particularly impressed by the limit setting techniques utilized by Gabrielle and her co-teacher, Loretta. She brought this up when asked if there was any difference between the way she was raised and the way children at the Center are dealt with. Ramona describes her experiences taking care of her two

year-old nephew, "At a certain age children should be able to understand the difference between right and wrong and the kids we teach (18 months to 2.5 years) fall within this age range. In my culture (she is African American and Puerto Rican), kids get 'popped' for doing things that are 'wrong' since we believe they should understand what's right and wrong." Ramona says she tried the Center's disciplinary method of explaining to the child why he couldn't do certain things and he "stayed out of trouble for awhile." In general, she believed this approach "worked better and improved my relationship with my nephew." She states she feels she has "learned things to take home."

Additionally, one of her cooperating teachers, Gabrielle, had explained to Ramona that the teachers don't make children say "I'm sorry" when they have done something offensive to another child. What Gabrielle told her, in essence, was that children of the class' age group do not yet feel empathy for others. According to Piaget (Crain, 2000), Erwin (1998), and others, these children are in an "egocentric" phase in which they are, owing to their level of cognitive development, unable to put themselves in another's place or see things from anyone else's perspective. Accordingly, they are not capable of feeling "sorry" or remorseful for an act which has made another child unhappy or caused pain, e.g., grabbing a toy away from another child or biting another child. Thus in forcing a child at this "pre-empathic" level of development to say "I'm sorry" the teacher risks having a child learn to say "I'm sorry" in rote manner with no real meaning for him. That is, the child is unable to make a connection between the emotion - a feeling of remorse - and the verbal convention, "I'm sorry." The ultimate danger of this practice is that children come to believe that saying "sorry" absolves one of and exempts one from

any blame or responsibility when they have in some way harmed another. In the worst scenario, one sees children running about the classroom, grabbing and hitting, then mechanically spouting "sorry" when confronted for these offenses. Ramona says that she witnessed this very situation with her nephew. She says, "He obviously believes that saying 'sorry' will make things better." Thus she has instituted the practice of some of the Center teachers of simply trying to help the child begin to make connections between her own actions and another child's distress. For example, when a child has bitten another child, the teacher might say to the child who did the biting, "Look at Molly's face....she's crying...it hurt her when you bit her...we don't bite other people...that hurts" and perhaps show the child the bite mark. Gabrielle explained that in this way, the child is encouraged to see relationships of cause - her own act of biting - and effect - the other child's crying - which Piaget and others have asserted are not yet in place in most two year-olds' thought processes.

With reference to language and limit setting strategies, Millicent says that when one child does something unkind to another, she gets the offended child to say "This hurt my feelings." She then asks the offender, "How would you feel if someone did this to you? Please don't do that...that's NOT NICE!"

She asserts that this is one way she encourages children to develop their language skills. (But is it really since she's telling them exactly what to say and not really asking them questions that would require language expansion)

Like Janine at LESEHS, Loretta comments that she is strictly opposed to using the word "nice" in this way since "nice" is a very general term. " 'Nice' is very broad....you need to explain to kids specifically, what you mean by 'be nice.' Does that mean 'Stop hitting on the head with the block, that hurts?' Or does it mean, 'If you tell that child she can't come into the cozy corner with the rest of you it might hurt her feelings?' Children need to know exactly what you mean by 'nice.' Loretta even expressed this particular objection at a staff meeting she conducted on the importance of critically evaluating one's choices of terminology when dealing with young children. Apparently Richard was not interested or convinced by her reasoning. Additionally, after the meeting, Loretta heard rumors that other teachers had been overheard saying that they believed her assertions were "eccentric and obsessive."

3. SERVING FOOD TO CHILDREN AND CHILDREN'S EATING HABITS

With reference to snack procedures, Millicent says, "I let them have 'individual snack' (the snack foods are a table at the side of the room so that children can go and take snack when they are hungry as opposed to having the whole group have snack at a specified time) so that they can do this on their own." At last, it seemed Millicent stumbled onto a practice in which children could truly take some control over their classroom lives. But then Millicent went on to say, "they read the menu," a card placed next to the food with a picture of the number of crackers, bananas, etc. each child is allowed to take for snack.

Thus there is a certain irony in this practice: putting out snack so children can eat when they feel hungry - the ultimate goal being that they learn to tune into their own bodies and take care of their own bodily needs - but

then telling them exactly how much food they can take. This seems to defeat the purpose of helping children learn self-regulatory skills, i.e., to know when they are hungry, then to figure out how much food they need to satisfy that hunger. The teacher's message is, in effect, "I want you to learn to know when you are hungry; however, it is I who will decide how much food you can have."

Millicent was confronted with these very issues during a staff meeting. Her defense was that she was utilizing snack as an opportunity to teach children counting skills. Loretta wryly asked her "Do you count your peas at dinner?"

Deirdre, a student teacher from The Children's Center also discussed issues related to feeding young children and children's eating habits. By uncanny coincidence, Deirdre ended up working in a daycare center located in the same building as LESEHS and run by the same administration. Although she did not work directly with the LESEHS teachers interviewed in the study, she worked at the daycare center located in the same building as the Early Head Start program. When asked if there were any contrasts between the practices at the Children's Center and the daycare center, Deirdre reported the following:

"They don't offer the kids snack they make them take it - if kids say they 'want to scrape' [their plates into the garbage can] the teachers try to get them to eat more, but they don't force them." The teachers do this, Deirdre points out, because they know that the families don't have quite enough food at home, thus "it's important for the kids to eat what is given to them (for free) at school."

4. TREATMENT OF CO-WORKERS AND SUBORDINATES

Co-workers

Priscilla reported how on a few occasions she told Richard in very direct terms that certain habits of his annoyed her. For example, Richard's indirect, meandering, sometimes metaphorical style of communicating became an obstacle on parent-teacher conference days when they were obliged to get through 20 conferences in one day. Priscilla told him, "You can't go on an on....you have to notice when the parents' eyes are glazing over...we have to get through all of these conferences so you have to pay attention to time and not keep talking..." When asked how Richard responded to this direct criticism, Priscilla said he appeared hurt at first, but then he made a point of keeping the conferences on schedule the next day. This was probably attributable, at least in part, to the fact that Priscilla and Richard both described their existent working relationship as exceptional.

Priscilla described significant conflict which arose between her most recent co-teacher, Amelia, and herself over communication issues. Amelia was much younger than Priscilla and her only qualifications were that she had worked in an afterschool program with older children in the Bronx for one year - she had no educational background in early childhood. Once Richard came to Priscilla to tell her that Amelia, sitting at lunch with several other teachers, had boasted that it was she, Amelia, who had managed to establish a sense of order in their difficult classroom. She moreover expressed to the assembled group that she didn't like working with Priscilla, that she didn't like

the messy projects she did with the children. When Richard and two other teachers reported the above conversation to Priscilla, she confronted Amelia directly, saying "If you had a problem with the art activities, why didn't you come to me first and tell me?" Amelia replied "I thought you would become defensive," to which Priscilla responded, "Why didn't you at least take the risk and come and talk to me first?"

Priscilla reports that her solicitation of open expression of opinions from Amelia set off a string of criticisms. Amelia told her "I don't like it that you talk to the parents so much...I think you spend too much time talking to them and I feel left alone!" Priscilla says that the parent she spent the most time talking to was, in fact, a very difficult parent who was, in effect, destroying her child's self esteem. Priscilla believed these brief opportunities she had to speak to the mother at drop off and pick up time were crucial to the child's well-being. However, she agreed to speak less with the parent to accommodate Amelia. She additionally offered Amelia the opportunity to lead art projects of her own design.

Priscilla has had problems with other co-teachers at the center. She taught with an older woman, Galen, whom she described as basically "not there." She reports that Galen smoked a fair amount of marijuana throughout her adult life and attributed Galen's "spaced out" manner to this. However, knowing this did not assuage Priscilla's vexation with Galen. She describes how the two of them had a particularly difficult group of children to deal with. There were 22 children and of these, at least 25% of the class had significant behavioral problems. Priscilla describes how once four of these children were just behind Galen, exposing themselves to one another. Galen sat quietly interacting one-on-one with a quiet, "easy" child. Priscilla was obliged to shout across the room "Galen, look what they're doing! Look what they're

doing!" to get her to notice. Priscilla says that at the beginning of the schoolyear she never would have considered yelling across the classroom at another teacher, but after several months of comparable incidents, she was at her wit's end trying to keep a modicum of safety and control in the classroom. With the same directness she had used with Richard, Priscilla told Galen, "you're not here, you need to be here."

Richard, with reference to difficulties with other teachers, says he has often found himself in "power struggles with new teachers who come in and think they know everything - but they don't." He says "I know because I've been teaching so long... they try to make children be what they aren't... they try to tell you about the road you have already traveled 1,000 times. I try to tell them 'that's not a good street' (again referring to his teacher-training-as-roadmap metaphor)... you don't understand what the parents are talking about but I do!"

Loretta was particularly insulted by this attitude when she began at the Center and worked briefly with Richard. She says that one of the first days she entered the classroom, Richard sat her down and said, "I'm going to tell you a story," then proceeded to tell her somewhat metaphorically, about young teachers who come in thinking they "know everything but don't." Loretta, having worked with toddlers for three years already and having a significant educational background in early childhood, was highly offended. When she informed Richard she had been teaching for that long, he was surprised (but did not apologize). Loretta believes that because she looks so much younger than she is (26), Richard believed she was a student teacher or a summer intern. Apparently, no one in the administration had bothered to introduce him to her or inform him of her credentials. This was the beginning of a very poor working relationship.

Student Teachers

With reference to student teachers, Millicent expounds, "Assistants come in thinking they know everything but I tell them 'This is the way I do it.' It took a long time for me to realize that I could do this and that we can learn from each other..." Millicent seems to have contradicted herself here - if she's telling them "this is the way I do it," then she's not expecting to learn anything from them or even ask them what they think.

Deirdre, the woman who did her student teaching at the Children's Center, then worked in the daycare center connected to LESEHS commented on the treatment she received from different cooperating teachers at the Children's Center. She says she "never felt she was disrespected by Gabrielle," but she did feel a bit disrespected by Jonna, another co-operating teacher. She reports, "Gabrielle treats me as if I'm at the same level...she shows respect and consideration for the way I do things with the children and how I handle other classroom responsibilities." Deirdre could "take care of business" on her own when working with Gabrielle. She didn't need to be told what needed to be done in the classroom next. But Jonna didn't seem to notice this. She constantly instructed Deirdre way in advance of the classroom routine, e.g., tell Deirdre to start preparing the children's snack one half hour before snack time. When left on her own, Deirdre would readily do this in plenty of time for snack, without having to be reminded. Deirdre says this "felt disrespectful" because she actually knew what to do when and always took initiative. Jonna's actions made her feel like "you should know what to do and you're not doing it." Deirdre notes that it "felt like there was something else going on" with Jonna, that Jonna had to "put her in her place."

Deirdre says this made her feel treated her as if she were a "step down" from the teachers.

5. TEACHER DISAGREEMENT WITH ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE

Many teachers described their frustration with and sometimes anger over what they perceived as administrative incompetence. For example, Priscilla was somewhat outdone with the administration for "ever having hired such a person as Galen." When asked how a person who was so obviously not qualified for work with young children - if one functions with the assumption that the most important feature of the early childhood classroom is that it should be safe - could have been hired, Priscilla explained that the director "just likes to hire nice folks," often with little consideration as to their qualifications as early childhood educators. When Priscilla first went to the director with her complaints about Galen, the director's response was "I know sweetie, I'm sorry." In somewhat desperate tones, Priscilla described to the director that the classroom dynamic was becoming more and more violent as the children with behavior problems - as well as those without - sensed the lack of appropriate adult supervision. Young children with feelings of insecurity and anxiety over feeling "not safe" or over feeling that they, not the adults who take care of them, are in charge of their situation, more often than not "act out" these feelings through progressively more aggressive and violent behaviors. This was what Priscilla sensed was happening in her classroom as any semblance of order gradually deteriorated and the classroom dynamic spiraled further out of control.

Finally, when a child pushed the child in front of him down a very large flight of stairs and almost knocked the whole line of children down the stairs, domino-style, Priscilla went again to the director. This time she told the

director in no uncertain terms that she "could not guarantee the safety of the children in the classroom." She told her that sooner or later, the school would no doubt have a liability suit on its hands if something was not done. A new teacher was finally hired.

The new teacher, Henrietta, had a Masters degree from Bank Street College of Education in Early Childhood Education. Henrietta was in her later forties and had a small career as an actress. She had gotten into early childhood education through a group who finds actors work when they are not acting. Participants were frequently placed in educational settings. Henrietta reported that she enjoyed working in the early childhood placements and when her acting career was clearly "not taking off," she decided to get an advanced degree in this field. For the first few days, Priscilla says things went "okay." However, Henrietta then began to "yell at the kids" in progressively louder tones. On one occasion she shouted, "I'm the teacher, I'm the authority! You are going to obey! You children have a lot to learn! You have no manners!" Priscilla began to be concerned, as she believed Henrietta's tone was highly inappropriate for young children. Priscilla additionally believed that this indicated Henrietta's ignorance about child development. According to Piaget and other theorists, although three year-olds (the age of the children in the class) understand requests for them to say "please" or "excuse me," they are not usually able to place such behaviors into the more generalized, abstract category of "manners."

At worst, Priscilla suspected that it was more likely the case that Henrietta's behavior was a reflection of a general, deeply seated anger which had nothing to do with the children's behavior. She alerted the director to her concerns but was told that Henrietta should be given additional time to get into a more appropriate mode. A few days later, the director who was within

earshot of Priscilla's classroom overheard Henrietta becoming progressively angrier and angrier and clearly losing control of herself as children ignored her demands that they "behave." The director was so frightened by the tone that she asked another administrator to join her in requesting that this woman leave the premises immediately. The locks on the front door to the school were then changed. Evidently, Henrietta's anger was of great concern; however, somehow, she had been allowed to work with the children for a full two weeks.

Priscilla was highly disturbed by the fact that the administration had managed to hire someone who was so extremely unsuited for work with young children. As a result, she lost confidence in the administration's ability to function competently and effectively, a situation which made her feel "unsafe" and uneasy in her workplace. She quit at the end of the school year.

Priscilla was also outdone with the director's decision to put all five children in the school with the most significant behavioral difficulties into her class. The director told her, "I know you can do the best for them," which Priscilla found patronizing and believed to be a smoke screen for this unprofessional move. Priscilla asserted that some of these five children needed to be in a therapeutic nursery setting but the director, wanting to stay on good terms with the children's parents, would not recommend this. Priscilla says she spent much of the year in tears, feeling frustrated and ineffective. Her decision to quit at the end of the school year came in part from her feeling horribly "burnt out" from trying to cope with the collection of children with special difficulties, with only incompetent assistant teachers to help her.

In fact, Priscilla learned that she was not the first teacher to endure this experience. Several teachers who had been at the school longer than

Priscilla recounted to her how this had been a common occurrence in years past: one teacher was given all the children with the most difficulties, then told this was done owing to his or her "excellent teaching skills." As was the case with Priscilla, the usual outcome was that such teachers became frustrated and exhausted, then quit.

Priscilla had one success in dealing with the children with behavioral problems which, she reports, came only a result of her own initiative, not the administration's. One of the other classrooms had only five children in its afternoon session, so Priscilla convinced the director and the child's mother that it would be in the child's best interest to attend this session, rather than be with 20 children in her classroom. The smaller class size, the quieter environment and the increased one-on-one attention the child would get, Priscilla explained, would all combine to help the child gain more self-control. Up to this point, the child was persistently hitting, biting and grabbing from other children. He also used very foul language. Priscilla was shocked that a four year-old would even know such words, let alone be able to use them appropriately. However, she knew the child spent a lot of time with his older male cousins who apparently teach him these words. Priscilla overheard him threaten another child with "I'm going to cut your face off!" She was distressed to learn that, unfortunately, the child's mother told him when he was moved to the other class because, "Priscilla doesn't want you."

Richard describes a conflict between the school's director and himself over one practice that he says is particularly important for him in dealing with young children. He states, " I try to get children to love the school by welcoming each child each morning; this also gives me a 'pulse' on the kids and the class and how things are going to go for the day. I get down on their

level... on my knees and greet each child individually. This way I can find out what sort of mood the children are in - find out if something happened at home the night before or in the morning before school; this acknowledges them as individuals...I make them feel welcome and like they are a part of the school...this lessens the anxiety of arriving at school. Some children need separation help and I give this to them."

The school's director objects to Richard's welcoming ritual and tells him he is wasting time even though Richard has told her that if he doesn't do this, the whole day can go awry. Some teachers have suggested that he go around to each child after the child is already working in the classroom, but he says this is too late - "It's not the same as greeting them when they first arrive." Richard says It "makes no sense" to him when someone tells him not to kneel down to the children's level at arrival time. He says "Twenty-five percent of the children have issues and talking to them when they first get there gives me a good picture of the day."

Richard has other complaints about some of the administrations activities. He describes how once he and Priscilla had a child in their class with some obvious developmental difficulties. The child was sent for a comprehensive evaluation which meant the parents were not entirely unaware of the school's concerns about their daughter. Richard and his co-teacher had expressed these concerns in a parent-teacher conference in recent months. One day in the middle of the morning, Martha, the director of the Center handed Richard and Priscilla the results of the comprehensive evaluation and told them the mother had been called in for a lunch time conference on THAT DAY. Richard had no opportunity to review the report. At lunch, the director and head of school both joined Richard and Priscilla for the meeting, so that,

in effect, the child's mother was outnumbered four to one. The director began the conference by informing the child's mother that her child needed to be in a special school the following year. No one had informed Richard and Priscilla that this would be said. Priscilla described the situation as "horrible." She said the mother, who up to this point had trusted her completely, looked at her somewhat desperately, apparently on the verge of tears. She and Richard both felt as if they had completely betrayed this woman. They also felt "completely trapped" themselves as it would have been awkward to say at that moment that they disagreed with the director's assertion. Moreover, when they had a chance to read the results of the comprehensive evaluation, they did not agree with the director's recommendation. They believed that the child's problems were described in the report as considerably less severe than the director had maintained. Following the meeting, Richard and Priscilla made their feelings known to the director, but they felt their relationship with the parent had been destroyed forever. Priscilla told the director she believed her treatment of the parents to be not only unjust but unprofessional and that her only option to redeem herself would be to "give the parents whatever they want!" In what the teachers describe as uncharacteristic behavior, the director actually took their advice and allowed the child, with the help of several therapists, to stay at the Center for the following year.

With reference to this same situation, Richard reported that the school psychologist's initial assessment of the child was "all screwed up." He said that she asked the child to draw a circle, a task Richard had seen the child accomplish on many occasions. However, the child was quite shy and additionally, had no existing relationship with the psychologist. Not surprisingly, she refused to draw a circle. The psychologist assumed the child was unable to draw a circle and did not repeat her request or ask one of

the teachers with whom the child was more familiar to ask her to do this. When the psychologist left, Richard asked the child to draw a picture of her family. The child complied. As her picture contained the heads of all her five family members, she had successfully drawn as many circles. Richard showed these to the psychologist who seemed "surprised." However, he states he believes it is "really dangerous" to let the psychologist to continue to evaluate children and draw such conclusions.

6. DIFFERENCES IN IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO DEAL WITH PARENTS

Gabrielle reports an incident in which a significant difference of opinion between Henrietta and herself was apparent with reference to how teachers should interact with parents. Henrietta once substitute taught in Gabrielle's classroom. At arrival time, trays of paint, brushes and paper were on the art project table for children to utilize if they wished. One of the children sat down and began to dip her fingers in the paint and then paint with her fingers. The child's father, who only brought the child to school on rare occasions, told the child "Don't use your fingers, use the brush." Henrietta, who had not yet been introduced to the parent, shot over to the parent and said, "Actually, it's a good experience for them to paint with their fingers. It's important to let them explore the materials the way they want to."

Although in principle, Gabrielle agreed that children should be allowed to explore as they see fit, as long it does not in some way hurt or disturb other children's work, she was livid that Henrietta had felt entitled to speak to the parent in this way. She believes "it takes time and effort to establish a constructive rapport with parents and only after this has been accomplished is it appropriate to discuss parenting and childrearing issues with parents." Moreover, Gabrielle believes that pouncing on parental practices with an "I'm

the early childhood expert" attitude is highly inappropriate. She states that having the parent express one value to a child and the teacher express the opposite, rather than confusing the child as some believe, provides an opportunity for the child to learn to discriminate between different adult perspectives; e.g., "it's okay with Gabrielle if I paint with my fingers but daddy prefers that I use the brush." To Gabrielle, this is simply preparing the child for "life in the real world," since the child will sooner or later be presented with the reality that different people have different preferences, expectations and demands. Gabrielle considered Henrietta's sense of entitlement in dictating to the parent how he should interact with his own child presumptuous.

7. DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM

One incident involving teacher disagreement about appropriate curriculum occurred when, as mentioned above, Amelia told a group of teachers in somewhat subversive tones that she thought it was inappropriate for children to be allowed to make messes - particularly those like the ones Priscilla allowed them to make while working with papier mache and plaster. Priscilla reported how when she attempted to show children how to mix paints together to get certain predecided upon colors, Amelia became angry, insisting that the children should be allowed to create "fantasy" colors. When asked what her educational (or any other) rationale behind this wish was, Amelia had none.

Part of the problem appeared to lie in the fact that Amelia had no early childhood educational background while Priscilla had a Masters degree in this field. Additionally, where Priscilla appeared to be highly reflective when it came to curriculum and materials, Amelia apparently was not.

Richard describes how in contrast to other teachers, he uses the everyday events in children's lives as a source of curriculum. Other teachers at the Center do curriculum planning in isolation from the children, identifying themes and activities that they believe will be fun and interesting, but which are not necessarily related to what is going on in the children's lives. He says that his above-described practice of getting down on his knees to greet each child each morning serves this purpose: " I get new ideas to share with them at meeting...I talk about the colors they are wearing, etc...It's important to stand in front of someone and really see them - many times we stand in front of people but we don't see them... we don't really have contact...it creates another level difficult after they're already in the classroom...I try to say something special to each child."

Sally, a teacher of 3-4's, took an opposing approach. She was frequently observed "doing units" on such topics as "The Planets" or "Telling Time," subject areas which require a level of abstract and conceptual thinking which Piaget and others assert are not yet possible for children in this age group.

Along similar lines, Kelly chose to build a curriculum around the presidential election for a group of 3-4 year-olds. As Loretta pointed out with reference to this, "What do presidential elections have to do with the lives of three year-olds? They have no concept of politics or political parties or politicians - they have no direct experience with any of these issues. How can they make sense of this? Why doesn't she start with the children's daily lives and interests?"

8. DEALING WITH CHILDREN'S EMOTIONS

With reference to helping children deal with anger and other difficult emotions, Richard has had several ideas he has implemented in the classroom over the years. One year he had the children make play dough and fill small zip lock bags with it. The children were told that when they got angry, instead of hitting another child or in some other way harming someone, they could get their aggressions out by squeezing the bag of play dough. The teachers in the classroom also had play dough bags. Richard reports that his shorthand way of alerting a child to the fact that he was becoming angry with her was his saying "Don't make me squeeze my bag!"

Further along the lines of helping children to deal with their feelings of anger, Richard reports he teaches them "use your words not your hands if you are angry." If children are kicking other children or screaming at one another in anger, he tells them "This is not a kicking school...this is not a screaming school, there are special schools for kicking and screaming: If you want to learn to scream you go to opera school...if you want to kick you go to karate school." In fact, Richard and his current co-teacher, Lana, led a workshop in which they explained to other teachers how they had collected advertisements for karate schools, boxing schools and opera schools and posted them on the classroom bulletin board. When children scream, hit or kick, they lead them to the bulletin board and tell them to choose a school for this type of behavior.

Loretta was extremely annoyed by this practice. As she explained, "This approach doesn't address the important thing... it doesn't help you or them understand why they are kicking or screaming pushing or wrestling... If you don't get to the source of the aggression, then you're not really helping children to understand their emotions and how to deal them in a socially appropriate way. Directing children to look at ads for schools puts an

unnecessary obstacle, and extra step in this process...it diverts children's attention away from their feelings...it's just a 'cute,' useless tactic that amuses the adults."

Additionally Gabrielle was particularly distressed to overhear Richard telling a child who was having difficulty at separation time, "This is not a crying school." She explained, "He was refusing to deal with the fact that the child was profoundly upset about his mother leaving for work...moreover, he was giving the child the message that it's not okay to cry when you're feeling sad...in fact that it's even not okay for him to be feeling sad in the first place...that he should be ashamed of crying and feeling sad. I believe it's our job to teach them the opposite, to help them tune into what they are feeling...to help them express these feelings so they don't 'go underground' and resurface as aggression or other negative behaviors...then EVERYONE is in trouble - the child, other children in the class and the teacher. Richard just wanted to get the child to stop crying as quickly as possible because it was annoying him and that's not good preschool teaching. People who work with very young children need to be patient and flexible. If a child's being upset interrupts your schedule then too bad, that's part of working with really young kids...you stop and figure out how to help the child. That means classroom schedules need to be designed so this can happen...so there's some flexibility in the schedule. Don't misunderstand me to say that teachers should never set limits for children's behavior or make any demands on them, but in a situation when a child is genuinely, painfully upset, that's not the time to be making demands on her."

Richard says he has also been getting ideas about dealing with children's negative behaviors from a book which advocates for using "you" messages and "I" messages. Using "I" messages puts the focus on how a

child's action makes him as the teacher feel, how what the child is doing affects him. For example, when the kids are talking when he is reading them a book at circle time he says "I spent a long time picking out this book for you and you don't seem to be enjoying it" or "I was happy to find this book and now you aren't listening to it."

Thus ironically, although Richard makes a point of focusing on his own feelings and emotions in conversations with children, he does not appear to be interested in theirs.

Interestingly, in another point in the interview Richard stated, "I don't want to be focused on academic (Montessori) materials - I prefer to work on emotional issues." One specific example Richard cited with reference to helping children with feelings, is that he writes a lot of notes with the children. For example, he has assisted children in writing notes to parents with messages like "I'm angry at you because you didn't want me to bring my truck to school."

Further, in describing how he teaches children "love for peace," Richard explained, "I do this by talking to them about other children's feelings. For example, if a child is having a particularly difficult morning, I will try to help that child and other children figure out why she is upset. I will ask the child 'Are you sad because Mom had to go to work?' " Richard says that he believes in doing this he "creates a safety blanket for them." He says "it's not 'dry cut' how to be with them" when they are sad or angry, but that he wants to make them feel it's okay to talk about these feelings.

Also with reference to helping children deal with emotional issues, Richard states it is important to teach children "love for others." He says there are frequent discussions about "things we can't do without friends." For

example, when children are building with blocks he points out, " You wouldn't do this by yourself - you can build with blocks you can talk to yourself all the time... you can't have a friendship without a friend... take care of them and 'be nice' to them so they won't run away from you...if you take things away from them they will run away from you." So he tries to explain the rules and guidelines for friendships based to children in this way. He points out what will happen (the friendship will end) if a child violates these guidelines.

Richard generally states, "I want the kids to feel free...to feel they belong here... and they should be free from anxiety and free to work." He asserts that working with children takes lots of patience, that sometimes understanding children's behaviors involves putting oneself in the child's position. For example, "sometimes they talk with a loud voice but I understand that kids talk in loud voices because adults are so big they fear they won't be understood... grown ups are five times the size of grownups."

Richard says he teaches children responsibility for their actions. He tells them "if you did something, don't blame others." He also requires them to clean up after themselves, to wait for a turn and to take care of others by reminding their friends of the rules. Richard says he gives them the responsibility for not hurting others but also "for not hurting themselves. I explain to them, 'your body can break - if you do that, your body might break.' If children are doing things in the gym or elsewhere which might result in injury, he asks them, " Have you ever seen someone with a cast? Have you seen this? It's because they broke their body." Richard explains that he tries to help children establish cause and effect relationships by stating, "If you move this way, your body will break... this person with the cast moved that way and their body broke."

In addition to teaching children respect for other children's physical well-being, Richard says he teaches respect for others' work, respect for the classroom materials books, blocks, and writing materials.
[issues of teaching children to read and write too early]

Jill was a student teacher in Gabrielle and Loretta's classroom. She was a participant in a program (now defunct) at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) where older women (over 50) are trained to work in early childhood settings. Jill found her work at the Children's Center fascinating and this motivated her to go to Teacher's College for graduate work. In the meantime, after her student teaching experience was over, she had a job in a daycare center in lower Manhattan where she was the only white teacher. Her co-workers were African American and Hispanic and had all worked at the daycare center for a number of years. Jill's experience at the daycare center was vastly different from her experience teaching at the Children's Center. She described the differences at length.

Jill was hired to function in a very part-time position, arriving at 8:30 a.m. with the classroom's assistant teacher, then leaving at 10:30 when the head teacher arrived. Of this situation, Jill says "when the other teachers arrived, they expected me to leave immediately...they are very firm about when it's time to go...it's not that they didn't want me there, but for them, when your shift is over you go, you don't stick around and hang out...they say 'protect yourself, get out of there'. " This was somewhat controversial for Jill since she said she often wanted to "hang out" - to spend some time when she wasn't in charge of the children's safety so she could observe them in a relaxed manner.

Jill reports that when Bernice, the aid, and Allison, the head teacher, arrive "they spend a long time talking showing each other things they have bought shopping, etc they sit down and have a long conversation and eat breakfast, even though this is technically 'against the rules'... they ignore the kids."

This last practice bothers Jill a lot, not only because she learned in her program and student teaching that teachers' primary focus should be the children, but also it just "bugs" her. However, Jill says she "feels weird to say anything" since she's the assistant, not to mention the only teacher who has not been there for years and years.

Jill additionally describes how teachers from other rooms come by at various points in the morning to chat with the teachers in her room. At these times, the teachers ignore the children as they become completely engaged in their conversations.

Jill reports that at arrival time, "the kids dribble in and Cathy is sitting and eating her breakfast! The parents seem to respect her right to do this and don't bother her!" Jill says Cathy makes it obvious that she wants her to sit down and eat with her but Jill does not feel comfortable doing this. She learned at the Center and in her BMCC program that teachers are to be available and ready to work with the children as soon as they walk in the door. She was told "it looks highly unprofessional to be eating when children arrive. We are supposed to be there to take care of the children...starting the minute they arrive. We should be greeting them. As it is, the kids are neglected." Jill moreover describes how Cathy's breakfasts are not just a quick bagel and coffee. "She makes hot cereal or toast, sits down and really relishes it!"

Again, other than refusing to sit down with her, Jill does not comment on Cathy's breakfast ritual since Cathy has been there for eight years. In fact,

most of the teachers have been there eight or nine years. Owing to this situation, Jill wondered "How could I ever institute change in this school? I'm in an awkward position but I see lots of things I believe should be changed at the school and I don't feel I can talk to the other teachers outright about it." Jill says the only method she has found for addressing this is to role model, for example, by not sitting down and eating breakfast while the children are arriving. At times she says she sometimes begins to doubt her own judgment about what is appropriate behavior with the children, because the other teachers are more experienced. She wonders if she is being too self-righteous or standing on ceremony and if she should relax her standards so that they are not in direct opposition to the other teachers'.

Jill reports that when she leaves the classroom at 10 a.m. there is no transition - "there is no format for me to say goodbye to the children." She describes how, "the transition time is very wrenching for me, so I can imagine it's even more confusing for the kids... there's all this hubbub and the teachers coming in are asking, 'is there any coffee???'"

In fact, the lead teacher told her to sneak out when her shift was over, which Jill was learned in her teacher training program and at the Center was bad practice. The rationale is as follows: When the adults in the environment come and go, little children usually experience this very viscerally, even though they may not appear to notice. If the adults they depend upon disappear without warning or acknowledgement, this often undermines children's trust in these adults, an experience which risks to give them the impression that the Center (and, in the worst case scenario, by extrapolation, the world) is not a reliable, predictable place. For this reason, at the Center parents were asked to always say "good-bye" to children when they were leaving, even though the child who was happily involved in play might stop

and begin to cry. Jill finally took charge and decided to call her departure to the children's attention: she said good-bye to them when she left each day.

Jill reports that the lead teacher has nicknames for all the kids; for example, she calls the smallest "Chico" and one of the Chinese children "el Chinito." Jill believes this sends potentially negative if not racist messages to the Chinese child as well as the other children. She states, "I wonder how the parents would feel if they knew the teacher calls them by these names." In general, calling people nicknames - including children - implies a certain privileged intimacy with the person, and Jill is not certain that preschool teachers should presume such intimacy with the children they teach. In any case, the nicknames which emphasize children's physical characteristics and ethnic background seem highly inappropriate to her.

Jill reports that the assistant teacher sometimes decides to braid the children's hair. She says she could understand a babysitter doing this but doesn't believe it's a teacher's place. Of this practice Jill states, "I would be offended if someone changed my kid's hair but the assistant teacher says 'oh they love it!'" She does all the girls' hair, even the Asian ones. Jill wonders "how do the parents feel about this...I'm not sure they even know... maybe they take the braids out before the kids leave." She says, "I thought 'Does this bother me because this is an ethnic braid?' "

Jill also reports that Cathy says things about the children, like "He's so handsome," in front of the children. She learned in her program at BMCC and at the Center that it is very important to avoid doing this - that if teachers want to discuss children's behaviors or appearance it is important to do this out of earshot of the children. "If you say 'he's handsome' about one kid when there are several close-by, how does that make the other children feel? Like 'oh

he's handsome but I'm not.' What kind of message is that to give a child?" Additionally, if one is discussing children's behavioral problems, it is likewise important to do this where the child cannot hear. Many times children appear to be engaged in play, not noticing what is being said, but in fact, they are well aware. This is potentially damaging, not only to the self- image of the child in question, but also to other children's image of that child. Jill reports that she frequently witnessed this scenario at her daycare center.

Food Issues

Jill is additionally annoyed with how the teachers deal with (or fail to) issues around children's eating habits. She says, "They hand out snack indiscriminately - they use it when the kids are crying to comfort them." She says when she was comforting a crying child at separation time, the assistant said "give them a cracker, sometimes that works!" Jill believed that rather, this teacher should acknowledge the child's sadness and her reasons for it. She preferred not to use food as a first-line solution for children's emotional discomfort.

She says the other teachers "give kids food when they don't even ask for it." She wonders "How are they ever going to learn self-regulation skills when they do this....the goal is to get them to realize when they are feeling hungry and what they can do about it. If they are just given food at random, they will never learn how to do this."

Jill was also mortified to hear the assistant teacher decree one day, "Nobody's going to have snack unless everyone is quiet." She remembers how jarred she was when she heard this since she had learned at the Children's Center that one should NEVER make behavioral demands on children using the rewarding or withholding of food as a contingency. This creates fertile ground for eating disorders later on.

Jill is also displeased with some of the daycare center teachers' handling of children's emotional and cognitive issues. She says they tell the children they have to share, even though some of them are only 18 months old. She learned in her teacher education program and from working at the Center that children in this age group are incapable of comprehending the rationale behind the demand to share, that is, of understanding concepts of justice. As Piaget explains, very young children are not at a cognitive level which allows them to have empathy for others, that is, to put themselves in others' positions; therefore, they simply do not care that another child is pining for the toy with which they are working, or that they have injured another child. This does not mean they are "bad," but, simply, owing to their cognitive limitations, unable to empathize. What was moreover offensive to Jill was that the teachers would simply insist that the children share, without offering any explanation as to WHY they should share.

When there were "altercations" over toys two children wanted at the same time, Jill says she herself would "talk the kids through fights." She says the other teachers made it clear they thought she was "much too lenient." Jill says she coped with this conflict by talking (loudly) to parents at drop off time about the developmental (in)appropriateness of expecting children under the age of three to share and take turns. Like Loretta at the Children's Center, Jill explained to the parents the importance of choosing appropriate language to use with children; for example, that the commonly employed expression "be nice" is far too vague when it comes to helping little children understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Rather, she asserted, if a child is hitting another child one should simply tell the child "we don't hit people, that hurts!" so that the child begins to understand that 1. her actions have certain consequences for other children and 2. certain actions are

socially unacceptable. If a child grabs a toy from another child, one can simply say, "We don't grab things away from other people, look how upset he is that you took that from him. You need to ask if you want to play with that." Again, the social convention, consequences of the child's actions and, additionally, an alternative, socially acceptable behavior is presented to the child. Jill says she does these things hoping the other teachers will overhear her. She adopts this as a coping strategy intended to avoid outright conflict with other teachers.

Jill says the assistant teacher would simply resolve fights for the kids. "She separates them immediately without talking them through the process, so they don't learn how to resolve conflict on their own." Jill says she would, for example, suggest to a child who had grabbed a toy from another child go find a similar toy, hoping that the assistant teacher would learn from her role modeling. Of this situation she states, "That's what I feel most comfortable doing so the person doesn't get offended and defensive."

Jill says she has also attempted on several occasions to model reprimands or "corrections" of children's behaviors in "positive language." For example, instead of shouting "stop running!" she says "please walk slowly." Jill learned from Gabrielle that this reduces the chances that the child will perceive the "stop..." as a direct challenge to his/her budding autonomy, concomitantly increasing the likelihood that the child will comply with the directive rather than defying it. Jill says she noticed the assistant gradually began to do the same thing, that is, "make requests in the positive."

Jill reports that there was lots of crying at the beginning of the year. Many of the children wanted to sit in Jill's lap, not only at separation time but sometimes throughout the period she was there. One child, she says,

appeared " very very scared." When Jill held the child on her lap for long intervals, the assistant said to her "if you do that, she's never going to let go."

The assistant teacher told Jill, "There are just certain behaviors I just won't tolerate!!! and I'm not going to be too soft! We're not going to baby these kids! Let her go she'll cry it out!"

As this occurred at the beginning of her time at the daycare center, Jill says she felt obliged to comply with - or at least not directly defy - the assistant's directive. She said to the child, "I have to do something else now so I'm going to put you down." She says "this was hard for me but I was unable to say to the assistant, 'I think she really needs to sit with me.' " She reports "at this moment, I was very anguished over how to get along with the assistant but at the same time I wanted to do what I thought was developmentally right."

Choice of materials

With reference to choice of materials, Jill asserts that when she arrived at the center, "the equipment was all wrong - the paint brushes were too fine and narrow for the kids to work with...they couldn't handle them...I kept thinking - how am I going to work on that?" Again, Jill found herself in a situation where asserting her ideas and knowledge about early childhood practice would put her in direct confrontation with the teachers who were her superiors and who had been in the field for over ten years more than she. Yet she watched the children struggling with brushes and other materials they found difficult to manipulate, knowing from her experience at the Children's Center that there were other materials they could utilize more easily. At the time of her interview, Jill was still working on finding a way to broach this issue with her head teacher.

Also in reference to classroom materials, Jill states, "They never sorted the toys - everything got dumped in the water table. I suggested they get bins and categorize the toys - since this is a toddler preoccupation." She believed the teachers thought that since the kids were so little, they wouldn't notice if the toys were all thrown together. She states that evidently, "there was a profound lack of education about child development." In fact, her suggestion about the bins was followed and the other teachers seemed impressed that the children were able to sort and categorize toys in these.

Jill describes how the assistant insisted on taping the children's paper down on the table when they were working on artwork and insisted that Jill do likewise. Although Jill found this counterproductive - "it's a fine motor/coordination issue for the children to figure out how to keep the paper from moving all over while they are painting, drawing, glueing, etc., I picked my battles" and complied.

Similar to Deirde's complaint about the daycare teachers at LESEHS, Jill reports that the teachers at her center play tapes and music indiscriminately and LOUDLY to, as they say, "liven things up." Jill, believing that sometimes the music was getting in the way of children's focusing on their play (and KNOWING it was getting in the way of her ability to focus) would creep over and surreptitiously turn the volume down. No one said anything to her at these moments.

Administrators

Jill reports that when she left the center, she "got an incredible recommendation from the director." She was truly shocked at this since, she says, "I believed she had never really noticed me." She describes how, in fact, the recommendation was "quite astute and perceptive, and included

details about my work that I thought had gone completely unnoticed." She says the director had only appeared to pass through the classroom at different moments, spending only brief periods of time during which she never appeared to be observing Jill directly.

Although Jill wasn't included in staff meetings since these took place at lunchtime, she knew that the head teachers met separately from assistant teachers and she "didn't really see the logic in that."

Jill found it interesting that directors were addressed as "Mr.," "Mrs." and "Ms.," but the teachers were called by their first names.

Jill also noticed that the youngest children at the daycare center had the minority teachers while the teachers for the older children were white. Jill wondered about the implications of this situation: "It's as if they think the minority teachers are only qualified to do the caregiving, nurturing part, but that the white teachers should 'instruct' kids who are more ready to learn pre-academic skills."

Feeling like "the maid"

Jill felt she was being treated in a related way when she was asked to do diaper change while the children were at "circle time." This meant that she was not included at meeting. "What sort of message, she wondered, does this send to the children?" At worst, she believed the children might perceive her as a servant-type figure, not allowed to participate with the rest of the grown-ups in the most significant social event of the day. Jill additionally believed that this was a poor policy in that "the children got pulled away from circle time to be changed." This meant that they were interrupted in whatever activity the group was doing. For example, if a book was being read, they missed whatever part of the story was read while they were being changed. In one sense, this made diaper change appear somewhat punitive. Additionally,

this meant that "certain parents only saw me changing diapers if they arrived at 9:00 am and I wondered what sort of image this gave them of me." Jill says that despite these drawbacks, she enjoyed the one-on-one time it allowed her with the children. However, she describes how the assistant teacher, "gave me the message I was too slow." She noticed that when other teachers change the children, they do it as quickly as possible. Instead of having an open conversation about this issue, Jill elected to "just not speed up."

Also with reference to parents, Jill reports that the assistant teacher called parents "mommy" and "daddy" instead of by their names. Jill found this annoying and refused to do likewise: she learned the parents names and called them by these.

Chapter 6

Analysis of the Ethnographies: Correlations Between Teacher Conflict at the Lower East Side Early Head Start and the Children's Center

A number of issues were identified as sources of conflict by teachers at both the Children's Center and LESEHS. Although the general problems were similar, at times the details and finer points of the conflicts differed from site to site. The general conflicts described by teachers at both sites centered on disagreement over:

1. encouraging autonomy and independence in young children as opposed to promoting attention to teacher/adult direction
2. appropriate roles for parents in the preschool/daycare setting, including appropriate interactional styles for teachers to utilize with parents
3. appropriate disciplinary/limit setting techniques to utilize with children, and significantly, the language used by teachers during limit setting
4. policy and curriculum
5. styles of serving food to children
6. what sorts of materials to use in the classroom and teachers' interactional styles in presenting these
7. flexibility in educational commitments and teaching style, that is, appropriateness of "thinking outside the box" when working with young children
8. appropriate levels of affection and familiarity between teachers and children
9. acceptable modes of confrontation between co-workers and
10. appropriate modes for the treatment of subordinates, including assistant teachers, student teachers and volunteers

1. When interviewed teachers at both LESEHS and the Children's Center were asked about their larger philosophical commitments with regard to early childhood education, almost without exception, the first response was "encouraging autonomy and independence in young children." However, when teachers were asked to state what this specifically involved for them, diverse definitions appeared.

At the Children's Center, Priscilla, Richard, Loretta and Gabrielle, encouraging autonomy and independence was perceived as essential to the project of helping children learn to freely explore, to follow their creative

impulses. In-depth questioning revealed that the ulterior motivation here appeared to center on an underlying belief in the importance of children's development as unique individuals, that is, a philosophical commitment to the importance of self-realization/actualization.

By contrast, for Millicent, the ulterior purpose of encouraging children to be autonomous and independent was having children learn to take responsibility for themselves. If they learned this, they could "clean up the messes they make" and come up with spellings of words they didn't know on their own, rather than asking Millicent to do these things for them.

At LESEHS, Marly and Ana expressed yet a third perspective as to the reasons for encouraging autonomy in young children. They described how in the Hispanic community (in fact, her own community) which populates the LESEHS program, encouraging children to be autonomous involves an ulterior desire for them to eventually become financially independent adults able to "give back" to their families and communities. Thus, as described previously, in contrast to the ideal of independent children who "freely pursue their own creative interests," who focus on themselves and their individualistic interests, and their own "self-realization," the ideal in the Marly's Hispanic community is a more collectively oriented one. The ultimate focus is on the community. "Independence" in children means that as adults they can take financial responsibility for themselves and the others in the group.

On a corollary note, Marly discussed how parents at LESEHS did not encourage, in fact discouraged children from being too self-assertive. Ways in which this was manifest were varied: for one, LESEHS parents told children who were engaging in behaviors the parents considered undesirable were told "stop that!" without an explanation, e.g., "if you take that away from her, she will be upset," as why she could not engage in the behavior. Marly

says that children who ask questions ("Why can't I...") which challenge adult decisions were more often than not told, "Because I said so." Thus although parents at LESEHS often coerced by their children to behave in certain ways, the teachers at LESEHS explained to children the underpinnings of social rules.

As described previously, Marly asserted that the middle class white parents she observed on her West Village strolls were more likely to have extended conversations with their children as to why it was "okay" or "not okay" to do certain things. She additionally noted that these parents, unlike the parents she knew in the LESEHS community, had lengthy conversations with their children about situations which did not involve disciplinary measures. But as Marly pointed out, if these LESEHS parents took time to answer children's questions in great detail, as well as offer nuanced explanations of behavioral regulations, then these parents would not have the energy to accomplish certain tasks necessary for daily survival, e.g., maintaining housing, medical care and obtaining food, not to mention preparing meals and cleaning the house. Marly believed if these parents had the time and energy to engage in lengthy conversations with their children, they would.

As Jill, the woman who did her student teaching at the Children's Center, stated with reference to these differences in style "...having caregivers....not being overly focused on the children might not be such a bad thing...it's a different way to be with children...why does everything have to be so child-centered?"

When the ideologies espoused by teachers in the current study with reference to the privileging of children's individuality, autonomy and

independence over children's attention to the needs of the collective/community are placed in historical context, the following could be asserted: Priscilla, Gabrielle, Loretta and Richard appear to side with John Dewey's conviction that "young children should be active questioners and experimenters...free to develop their thinking and reasoning powers more fully" (Goffin, 1994:74) and that this should be accomplished by "...stimulating children's independent thinking and reasoning processes" and allowing for children's "creative organization of experience" (quoted in Goffin, 1994: 74). These teachers also appeared allied with Anne Mitchell's 1920's ideology, expressed in her fear that "the very formulation of exact standards of normal growth might in fact distort individual variation in development and lead to the promulgation of mechanistic, uniform norms" (Antler 1982 quoted in Goffin, 1994: 74).

As described above, Marly and other Hispanic teachers in the study appeared to take what might be described as an in-between or compromise position with regard to the encouragement of autonomy vs a sense of primary responsibility to the community in children. Specifically, although these teachers advocated for the encouragement of autonomy in young children, this was done solely with the ultimate intent of producing children who could eventually "stand on their own two feet" financially, who could then give financial and other support to family and community members when they reached adulthood. That is to say, although they advocated for autonomous, independent children, this was for the ultimate benefit of the community/collective. As a teacher in Gonzalez-Mena's research expresses this attitude, "In my family we don't keep telling the children that they are special and unique all by themselves...Of course they are unique, but their

uniqueness makes them fit in - not stand out. They each have something to contribute - not for themselves, but for us all" (Gonzalez-Mena, 2001:90).

This position contrasts with other teachers who saw the encouragement of autonomy and independence in children as geared ultimately to benefit the individual child, to help the child "self-actualize," learn to express herself freely and effectively. Froebel had taken a similar stance in his statement that while "the most important social learning was relational" (Beatty, 1995:46), that "each child should develop as much as possible in accordance with his own individuality and personality" (Beatty, 1995:47).

Kamii-Devries takes the compromise/in-between position in its prioritization of the following as socioemotional goals: 1. the ability to respect the feelings and rights of other children 2. the ability to listen to others and exchange opinions, that is, "decentering" and 3. the ability to listen to adults, cooperate with them and use them as a source of friendship, guidance and information 4. to be busily doing things with initiative, enthusiasm and excitement 5. not looking for the one 'correct' answer the adult wants (Kamii in Braun and Edwards, 1972:298). Hence although there is an explicitly expressed value for abilities associated with independence - taking initiative, asking questions, looking for answers other than the teacher's, and expressing one's opinion, skills such as "decentering," listening to and cooperating with others are likewise perceived as important. Additionally, there is a focus on "teacher's respect for children's thinking, reduction of adult authority, alleviation of arbitrary rules," but at the same time, "opportunities for co-operative, caring interactions" (Goffin, 1994:143). Children are also expected to grow socially and emotionally by participation in games which require them to submit to certain rules, based on their desire to maintain relationships with others - i.e., so that the game can continue. In that the

games do not involve adult intervention, they are likewise intended to encourage children's autonomous co-operation (Goffin, 1994:145).

Although principles of Developmental Interaction also express a mixture of individually-oriented and collectivity-oriented socioemotional goals for children, its focus on "promoting children's sense of self as a unique, distinct, feeling being...with a sense of worth based on knowledge and feelings of his own competence..." (Biber, 1977:430) seem to tip the scales slightly to the side which values individualism, autonomy and independence.

In fact Robert Owen, speaking in the late 19th century, had already called for new pedagogical techniques which would "harmonize with children's natural inclinations" (Kaestle, 1983:47) and which allowed children to interact and explore objects on their own. Similarly, Bronson Alcott had maintained that the teacher's job was to "accompany the child in his progress rather than to drive or even lead him..." (Beatty, 1995:29).

More in keeping with the "follow the child's lead" school of thought, developmental interaction classrooms are divided into "work centers" which allow for and encourage children's self-directed exploration, play and learning. The child is free to move from one center to the next, in a pace she deems suitable, taking whatever materials she wishes to work with from the shelves, with little or no teacher intervention. But periods of "free play" and exploration are punctuated with teacher-directed/community oriented activities such as circle time, where children learn to sit with a whole group, listen to the teacher and other children, and work co-operatively in other ways. Snack time also requires that children conform to certain community rules, e.g., "sit in your chair, not on the floor, place your feet on the floor, not on the table, leave some cookies on the serving plate for other children, eat off your own plate, not your neighbor's." However, children's spontaneous expressions in

"conversations" with other children and teachers is likewise encouraged at snack time.

The "ancient lady" mentioned in Chapter 3, who spoke with "toothless passion" in Greenberg's The Devil has Slippery Shoes, expressed similar values and aspirations for African-American children in 1968 rural Mississippi, noting additional obstacles faced by these children: "We have been so conditioned that we feel wrong when we speak up. If we don't teach the children anything else, I say let's teach them to speak their mind" (Beatty, 1995:196).

Taking the opposite stance, Bereiter-Engelmann advocates for a classroom atmosphere in which the pleasurable, interpersonal, aesthetic factors in learning are avoided, an environment of "puritanical zeal in which difficult tasks are pursued, while delight in an original expression, deviation, personal view or recounting are devil's pleasure" (Moskovitz, 1968:27).

Montessori in her description of her mission to create "an educational environment that responded to children's innate nature and nurtured the child's complete spiritual and psychic actualization" (Goffin, 1994:49) also appears to side with other believers in children's autonomy and independence. However, as previously noted, Montessori's focus on individual children's development was merely for the purpose of understanding a child "as a member of the species," as a member of the group, and to enhance that child's eventual contribution to the social collective. From this standpoint, Montessori appears to align herself with Marly and the other Hispanic teachers, as described above, in their advocacy for children's autonomy and independence only inasmuch as this will allow to them to "give back" to the family and community as adults.

Perhaps the above accounts for the fact that the specific "works" and activities Montessori designed for children do anything but encourage children's spontaneous, independent exploration. For example, the graded cylinder "work" in which children take progressively smaller wooden cylinders out of holes specifically carved to fit each, then replace these, allows for only this one form of interaction from children. The activity in which children pour liquid back and forth between two same-sized pitchers likewise does not invite any spontaneous exploration or activity; that is, the child cannot simply decide to pour the water on the floor or in another container as might occur in water table play. Moreover, part of Montessori's program, according to some of the teachers at the Children's Center, is to have the children gather in a circle, then have the teacher demonstrate the exact mode in which they are allowed to interact with the above-described materials. In other early childhood educational approaches, children are simply presented with "transformational" materials like sand, water and clay, that allow for and invite multiple forms of interaction from children.

2. Teachers at both schools expressed various perspectives as to the role of parents in the early educational setting. Teachers also differed in their ideas about appropriate interactional styles with parents.

Ana at LESEHS expressed her unequivocal belief that it is the teachers' job to teach parents how to best take care of their young children. As described in Chapter 3, she gave - at times shouted across the classroom - orders to mothers, particularly the Chinese mothers, about how much they should carry and feed their children.

Although diplomatic with parents in other ways, Gina, the director at LESEHS demonstrated a similar perspective in her response to the diaper-

changing incident described previously during which the parents objected to having a male teacher change their daughter's diaper. Gina's position was that having both men and women teachers change diapers was a non-negotiable practice at the LESEHS. Parents who disagreed with this practice could find another early educational setting for their children.

Janine took a contrasting position, asserting that a priority should be made of the parents' concerns and interests. Specifically, for Janine, this meant attending to the fact that a. parents did not trust her childcare/education abilities since she did not have children of her own and b. many parents believed that since they themselves were parents, their opinions about childrearing practices should be automatically honored. Rather than sweeping this parental position into the backdrop, Janine chose to make it a central concern: she perceived an important part of her job to be demonstrating her competence to parents.

Marly expressed similar sensitivity to parents in her comments about relaying child development information to parents. Although she believed it was important to share such information with parents, she described how very careful she is in going about this. Presenting herself as "the child development expert," she feared, would put them off and compromise her relationship with them. Her solution was to "present this as someone else's ideas" so that she did not seem to be suggesting that her ideas were superior to parents'. This way, she believed the parents were more likely to consider the information she offered.

Gabrielle at the Children's Center expressed a similar perspective in her criticism of Henrietta. When Henrietta unhesitatingly told a parent who had just instructed his child to use a paintbrush instead of her fingers that it was "okay" for his child to use her fingers, Gabrielle was nonplussed. She did

not believe that it was appropriate for Henrietta - who had no existing relationship with the parent - to dictate to the parent how to interact with his child. In fact, Gabrielle maintained that she would not even presume to do this herself, although she had an well-established relationship with the parent. Instead she believed it the teachers' job to put themselves in the parents' place, attempt to understand the parent's position. The bottom line in such a situation, she maintained, should be drawn with ultimate consideration to potential consequences for the child. For example, in this case, would it ultimately harm or confuse the child to have the parent establish one set of rules for playing with paint while the teacher set another?

Jonilla's attitude and approach toward dealing with parents could be described as falling somewhere in between the extremes previously described. That is to say, she was neither of the Ana/Gina position that it was the school's right and place to dictate "best practice" to parents, nor did she believe in bending over backward to accommodate parents' needs and beliefs as did Janine and Gabrielle. Rather, Jonilla appeared to have a particular talent for making suggestions or even "laying down the law" to parents, but in such a warm and jovial manner that no one could possibly take offense. Her easygoing manner no doubt partly explained the fact that parents appeared very comfortable with her, even when she needed to give them instructions. When it was necessary to deliver unpleasant news about children's behavior to parents or to remind them that their child had been out of diapers for three days, Jonilla was able to do this in a non-reprimandatory, sometimes joking manner.

Cecile, the mother who began by volunteering in Jonilla's classroom and ended by being her assistant teacher, appeared to take instruction and criticism from Jonilla without being offended or defensive. As described

previously, Jonilla was happier than most of the other teachers at LESEHS to have parent volunteers in the classroom. Although she admitted they needed some instruction, Jonilla did not appear as burdened by this situation as did Lillian and Ethan. Perhaps this was related to the fact that she was more comfortable instructing them.

Marly, Ana and Lillian all appeared particularly comfortable with the Spanish-speaking parents. No doubt Marly's ease was related to the fact that she had grown up in the neighborhood and definitely felt "at home" at LESEHS and had known some of the parents before they attended the program. At pick-up time, Ana and Lillian usually engaged in very animated, often impassioned conversations punctuated with raucous laughter, with the Spanish-speaking parents. Thus it seems safe to assert that some of the comfort Ana and Lillian appeared to feel with these parents derived from their common language.

When non Spanish-speaking adults were present, Ana, Lillian and the bilingual parents would switch to English, seemingly so as not to appear rude or secretive.

Lillian's solid relationships with parents might be related to her being significantly older than most of the parents of children in her classroom, which gave her a sort of grandmotherly image. Additionally, her warmth and obviously confident manner with children also appeared to inspire confidence in the parents. Perhaps this is why LESEHS presents an exception to Holloway and Fuller's finding that Latinas tend to avoid putting their young children in group care, owing to a belief that their children will not be treated with the same warmth at school as they would be at home (Fuller and Holloway, 1997).

Although Millicent at the Children's Center did not lecture parents about how to best rear their children, her attitude that at school, it is the teachers' role to "lay down the rules" for parents and the parents' job to comply with these is reminiscent of Ana's and Gina's attitudes toward certain parents at LESEHS. Millicent expressed the belief that parents "have no business in the classroom...it's the children's space." Martha, her supervisor supported Millicent in this conviction. Accordingly, parents were instructed to conduct "quick good-byes and long hellos," regardless of their children's behavior at separation time. Millicent heavily discouraged parents from entering the classroom at both pick-up and drop-off time. In fact, once at the end of the morning session a father arrived to pick up his child. The "dismissal" ritual created by Millicent (and other Montessori-trained teachers at the Children's Center) was to have all the children sitting in a circle while one teacher read a book. Another teacher was posted at the door, and when a parent arrived, she would go to the circle and touch that parent's child on the shoulder. At this point the child was to shake hands with the teacher, then go to the door to greet the parent. On one particular day, Blaine, a three year-old girl, upon seeing her father arrive, got up and ran to greet him, without waiting to be tapped. Millicent ordered the child to go back to the circle and to follow the usual ritual. Blaine's father became furious and insisted to Millicent, "My child may run to me anytime she sees fit...she's my child." Millicent was irate at having been confronted and a long, loud battle ensued. Millicent remained unwilling to concede to the appropriateness - under any circumstances - of Blaine's running to greet her father. Although Millicent's supervisor was brought into the conversation, the situation remained at an impasse.

Although Millicent maintained that the "quick good-byes and long hellos" policy was a Montessori principle, other Montessori-trained teachers reported they had never heard of it. In the end, it appeared that Millicent was simply uncomfortable dealing with parents or with parents' presuming to have a say in classroom practice. Although parents repeatedly complained to the administration about Millicent's apparent rejection of them, the administration apparently did not take action to change the situation.

Other teachers discussed how in similar fashion, a previously employed teacher had sometimes constructed a barrier across the entrance to classroom at arrival time. She put two chairs on either side of the entrance, then strung a rope in between them. Hanging from the rope was sign that read, "Parents - please leave your child here." Again, many of the parents found this highly inappropriate and offensive but the administration took no action.

Richard and Priscilla always appeared quite comfortable with the parents at the Children's Center. At pick-up and drop-off time there were always comfortable, sometimes lengthy conversations and exchanges of information about children. However, Dahlia, Richard's former co-teacher, generally uncomfortable with parents. In fact, as described previously, she appeared to feel very threatened when Jim's mother requested that Dahlia bend the rules a bit to accommodate Jim's hunger at arrival time. In this situation, Dahlia appeared unwilling to relinquish the tiniest bit of control over her classroom policy. Later, when complaining to Richard about his willingness to compromise with Jim's mother, Dahlia expressed the fear that if she had "given in to" this parent, other parents might expect such rule bending for their children as well.

Interestingly, when viewed in light of the historical overview, little seems to have changed over the years with regard to teacher perspectives of appropriate teacher-parent relationships: teachers in the current study express perspectives and attitudes which often directly reflect those described in the historical overview. At one extreme, Millicent's reducing interactions and contact with parents to a minimum calls to mind Carolyn Pratt's self-admitted practice of crossing the street or going around an extra block to avoid encounters with parents of children in her school. Millicent's effective banning of parents from the classroom likewise suggests the view put forth by the 1834 Infant School Movement in Boston and by Anne Bryan, the Chicago kindergartner, in the 1880's, of parents as an often detrimental influence on their children's development.

Ana from LESEHS and Sally at the Children's Center, in their unceremonious and unabashed orders to parents orders about how to interact with their children, also seemed to side with "teachers as experts in childrearing and parents as their rightful students" attitude. In that Sally worked with an middle/upper middle class population of parents, she appears to adopt the attitude expressed by Nora Smith in her 1898 The Children of the Future that upper and middle class women, not just working class women, needed training for mothering: "there are as many shallow, weak, careless stupid, morally abusive mothers among the rich as among the poor" (Beatty, 1995:97). William Torrey Harris' fear that the children of wealthy parents "inherited great power of will...developed caprice, wasted their patrimony and cost the State large sums to repair their excesses" (Beatty, 1995:67) likewise seems to pervade the attitudes expressed by Sally, Harriet, and other teachers in the study.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Gabrielle and Janine appear to side with Elizabeth Harrison, the late 19th century Chicago kindergartner, who expressed great respect and value for parents and their input in their children's education. As previously noted, Harrison asserted, "The mothers themselves will teach us many things and give flashes of insight far deeper than they realize." In fact she expressed a view of such "mutual dependency" between teacher and parent as the "basis of democracy."

3. Disciplinary/limit setting techniques

Perhaps the most significant conflicts over disciplinary and limit setting styles occurred between teachers and parents at LESEHS. Ethan and Lillian both expressed significant discomfort with the fact that certain parents sometimes hit their children in front of school personnel. Lillian believed that LESEHS parents utilized corporal punishment because this was the way they, themselves, had been disciplined and thus were unaware of limit setting strategies. She moreover believed these parents were not aware of the the potentially negative longterm consequences of corporal punishment. Thus Lillian, infuriated at seeing parents hit their children, believed it was her job to model alternative disciplinary measures for these parents.

Ethan, also extremely uncomfortable at seeing parents hit children, hesitated to tell them to stop this. As previously described, Ethan believed the lack of a clearcut administrative policy informing parents they could not hit their children on school property would make it seem that forbidding corporal punishment reflected his own personal values. Moreover, as previously mentioned, parents had already questioned Ethan's authority based on the fact that he was not a parent.

Lillian was additionally bothered by Ethan's practice of using the "safe hold" to get children to calm down. As explained previously, this involves sitting with the child in one's lap while firmly hugging her arms to her side. The method is intended to help a child who appears "out of control" to gain control of her physical body. While the method sometimes proves successful with certain children, Lillian believed this sort of restraint only served to exacerbate children's anger and aggression.

Janine disliked Ana's use of the term "no-no" for children's undesirable behaviors. Janine believed that learning a label for such behaviors merely created one more step for children in the process of learning what behaviors are unacceptable. Why not simply tell the child "We don't hit" or "We don't grab things from others" ?

Janine was also bothered by one of the limit setting strategies that Mollie, one of her assistant teachers, sometimes utilized. Occasionally, when an infant was crying and crawling at the same time, Mollie would stomp on the floor and yell "Hey!" in attempt to distract the infant from her distress. Although this was not done in a hostile tone, it was, on observation, somewhat alarming. At times this technique would succeed in momentarily startling the infant sufficiently that he or she would stop crying, at least for a few seconds. In any case, Janine found this strategy inappropriate. Since most of the time Mollie was a conscientious, attentive caregiver, Janine surmised that Mollie must have been exhausted and "burnt out" when she behaved in this way.

Although corporal punishment of children did not appear to be a frequent occurrence at the Children's Center, Gabrielle described isolated incidents of parents sheepishly admitting during parent-teacher conferences that they from time to time "gave a spank" when their children were "really

bad." Often these parents were receptive to explanations as to why this was not ultimately good for the child. Additionally, from time to time, Gabrielle saw private caregivers smacking children's hands for undesirable behavior, e.g., a child's refusal to put on her coat at departure time. Like Ethan, Gabrielle felt extremely uncomfortable confronting the caregiver for this behavior. Although the Children's Center had a very clearly stated policy that corporal punishment was forbidden on school grounds, Gabrielle found it very difficult to cite this rule to the caregiver. She attributed at least part of her discomfort to the fact that she knew that corporal punishment was commonplace in the caregivers' culture of origin. Thus to tell the caregiver to stop this seemed, in one sense, to categorically disregard the woman's cultural beliefs, values and practices. Still, Gabrielle believed allowing the caregiver to hit the child was not acceptable. In the end she spoke to the child's mother, asking her to discuss the corporal punishment with the caregiver.

Loretta believed Richard's use of African stories and certain events within these to solicit cooperative behaviors from children were inappropriate. She was particularly troubled by a student teachers' telling three year-olds at naptime, "If you don't settle down, Richard is going to come and make you fly away." Loretta believed this was particularly inappropriate for children whose cognitive limitations do not permit them to clearly delineate fantasy from reality.

In fact Loretta was also troubled by some of the other disciplinary strategies utilized by Richard and his co-teacher. As described previously, they would tell children who were screaming or yelling, "This is not a screaming school - if you want to learn to scream you go to opera school" or children who were fighting, "This is not a fighting school - if you want to learn to fight you go to karate school," then show children advertisements for these

types of schools. Loretta believed this approach was unnecessarily indirect and confusing for children. As described previously, this prevented the teachers from getting down to the more important task of finding out WHY the child felt compelled to scream or fight. That is, it kept teachers, and consequently the children, away from getting at the actual source of and learning to deal with their more difficult emotions. From this perspective, showing the children advertisements for "fighting schools" and "screaming schools" appeared as a mere gimmick, more geared toward entertaining the teachers than to ensuring children's emotional growth.

Finally, Priscilla, and other Children's Center teachers within earshot of her room, were very troubled on hearing Henrietta, the woman who briefly served as Priscilla's assistant, unceremoniously yell at children from across the room. It was not only her tone they found disturbing, but the content of her speech as well. She demanded that children "show some respect" and insisted, "you have no manners," both commands which, as explained previously, contain abstract concepts (respect and manners) which three year-olds are often not able to comprehend. Because they dwell in the concrete, giving very young children specific information as to exactly why what they are doing that is displeasing is generally more effective and appropriate. For example, one might tell a child who has just bitten another, "We don't bite people, that hurts!"

Jonilla complained that Marly sometimes yells across the room at the children instead of going to where the child whom she was addressing was working, then speaking quietly to that child. Such behavior, Jonilla and Janine maintained, encourages similar behaviors in children. Additionally, they believed that yelling at across the room at an adult, in some cultures, is a demonstration of disrespect, thus doing this with children also demonstrates

disrespect. Showing children the same respect one shows children, they believe, helps children's self-esteem and self-respect, improving the chances for socioemotional growth and stability. Self-esteem and a stable socioemotional situation, in turn, often improve children's possibilities for having a successful experience at school - academic and otherwise.

Cynthia Ballenger (1992), a sociolinguistic, has discussed similar dilemmas over differences in limit setting and disciplinary techniques. She has described her experiences teaching in a preschool in a Haitian community in Dorchester, Mass. where the children with whom she worked were described by the educational professionals as "wild" and "having no language. Ballenger details how these children "ran me ragged," constantly following their own initiatives and never her directions. She noticed that other teachers, all Haitian, did not seem to be experiencing the same difficulties. In seeking a solution to her problems, Ballenger consulted the Haitian students in the college level child development class she was teaching. These women were interning at daycare centers in the area with large groups of Haitian children, and were likewise concerned about the behavioral problems they were observing. The students also revealed their belief that the way teachers were being taught to deal with the children's objectionable behaviors was ineffective. Ballenger recounts, "One woman explained to me that when she was hit by a four year-old, she was instructed to acknowledge the anger he must be feeling, then to explain to him that he could not hit her. She told me that, from her point of view, this was the same as suggesting politely, 'Why don't you hit me again?' " (Ballenger, 1992: 201)

Upon speaking to some of the Haitian parents, Ballenger discovered that they were likewise concerned, believing that "the behavior tolerated in

their neighborhood schools was disrespectful; the children were allowed to misbehave. A common refrain...was 'We're losing a generation of children' " (Ballenger, 1992:201).

Ballenger determined that she should find out what it was the Haitian teachers were doing that she was not doing to maintain order in their classrooms. She reports a conversation with a Haitian student teacher, Clothilde, who describes her action in response to witnessing a situation with a Haitian child and a "North American" teacher. As the teacher told the child she must go into the classroom, the child kicked the teacher. Clothilde asked the director to assemble all the Haitian students, to whom she said the following: "Cl: Does your mother let you bite? Ch: No. Cl: Does your father let you punch kids? Ch: No. Cl: Do you kick at home? Ch: No Cl: You don't respect anyone, not the teachers who play with you or the adults who work upstairs. You need to respect adults - even people you see on the streets. You are taking good ways you learn at home and not bringing them to school. You're taking the bad things you learn at school and taking them home. You're not going to do this anymore. Do you want your parents to be ashamed of you?" (Ballenger, 1992:202) Apparently, this talk was effective since, it was reported, the Haitian children have been "well-behaved ever since" (Ballenger, 1992:202).

Another teacher, Josiane, recounted the following conversation with some children who had been talking loudly as the teacher gave directions. J: When you mother talks to you, don't you listen? Ch: Yes J: When your mother says, go get something, don't you go get it? Ch: Yes J: When your mother says go to the bathroom, don't you go? Ch: yes. J: You know why I'm telling you this. Because I want you to be good children. When an adult talks to you, you're supposed to listen so you will become a good person. The

adults here like you, they want you to become good children" (Ballenger, 1992:202-3).

In discussing the children's behavioral issues and different teachers' handling of these, Clothilde noted that the North American teachers she knows "...frequently refer to children's internal states and interpret their feelings for them; for example, "you must be angry," "it's hard for you when your friend does that," and so on" (Ballenger, 1992:203). In Clothilde's interactions with children, she points out, she "makes no reference to the children's emotions." Ballenger noted this was true of other Haitian teachers as well.

Another Haitian teacher, Rose, remarked to Ballenger that "North American teachers often make reference to particular factors in the child's situation that, in the teacher's opinion, may have influenced his or her behavior" (Ballenger, 1992: 203). For example, a teacher points out to a child grabbing toys from other children when his mother has just left that although she understands he is upset by his mother's departure, he must still share toys (Ballenger, 1992:203). Haitian teachers, generally, do not do this. Rose explained that rather than verbalizing for the child why he feels bad, she would focus on "making him feel comfortable with the group." If the child behaved aggressively, she would say "You know I'm your friend," and then remind him "We don't do that" (Ballenger, 1992:204).

Ballenger's assessment of the general differences between North American and Haitian teachers with reference to discipline and the language of limit setting - in Ballenger's terms "control talk" - is as follows:

It seems North American teachers characteristically are concerned with making a connection with the individual child, with articulating his or her feelings and problems. On the other hand, Clothilde, Josiane, and the many other Haitian people I spoke to and observed, emphasize

group in the control talk, articulating the values and responsibilities of group membership...Another difference the Haitian teachers noted is the use of consequences. North American teachers typically present the particular consequences of an act of misbehavior. For example, I often say something like, 'He's crying because you hit him,' or 'If you don't listen to me, you won't know what to do.' Haitian teachers are less likely to differentiate among particular kinds of misbehavior; they condemn them all, less in terms of their results than as examples of 'bad' behavior. Clothilde is typical of the Haitian teachers in that the immediate consequences are not made explicit; she does not explain why is against biting or punching. She instead refers to such behavior as 'bad,' and then explains to the children the consequences of bad behavior in general, such as shame for the family...Josiane tells the children to be good because the people who like them want them to be good (Ballenger, 1992:204).

As Ballenger points out, for North Americans, "misbehavior is considered wrong not because of anything inherent in it but because of its particular consequences, or perhaps because the behavior stems from feelings that the child has failed to identify and control" (Ballenger, 1992:204).

Moreover,

In the Haitian texts, one has the impression that the children share the adults' understanding of what bad behavior is. Clothilde's series of rhetorical questions, like 'Do your parents let you kick?' is an example of the form that many Haitian teachers adopt when addressing children about their behavior. The children understand their role without difficulty; they repeat the expected answers in choral unison (Ballenger, 1992:204).

More generally, Ballenger asserts, "North Americans perceive Haitians as too severe, both verbally and in their use of physical punishment, while Haitians often perceive North American children as being extraordinarily fresh and out of control" (Ballenger, 1992:206). And

North American teachers speak as if something like the child's 'enlightened self interest' were the ultimate moral guidepost. In comparison to the language used by the Haitian teachers, North American teachers' language seems to place very little emphasis on shared values, on a moral community (Ballenger, 1992:207).

Fuller and Hollway have also discussed issues arising from different disciplinary styles associated with parents from different groups. Somewhat in defense of working class and/or minority parents who adopt comparatively stricter, more rigid childrearing practices, they point out how "Parents in dangerous communities try to maintain social order in their own households, promoting a feeling of discipline and structure that contrasts with the softer, more romantic images of childhood prevalent within the middle class" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:118). While such parents' styles might be considered authoritarian in some communities, within the "contextual realities" of the community in question, it is simply considered adaptive. Thus although a middle class white child from a suburban community might interpret an authoritarian parent as cold or detached, within a low income family living in a dangerous community, the children might perceive such parental behavior as nurturant and protective (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:118). In spite of such assertions, it is still often the general notion that authoritarian parenting is always undesirable in any context.

Kohn and his colleagues have suggested that working class parents' more authoritarian parenting are related to the fact that "hierarchical forms of power characterize their own work" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:119). Low status jobs do not require one to demonstrate initiative and self-direction while compliance with the directions of the authority is considered a desirable characteristic

McLoyd (1990) has offered the alternative perspective that authoritarian parenting styles are, more simply, the result of the stresses associated with "living with economic uncertainty" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:119). Sources of stress include life in a community filled with violence

and having poor or inadequate neighborhood schools, as well as unsatisfactory employment opportunities. McLoyd asserts that parents who experience such conditions, rather than acting from conscious commitments in childrearing ideologies are instead often harsh with their children because they feel overwhelmed by and out of control of their own situations (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:119). However, as Fuller and Holloway point out, "in attributing parenting styles solely to environmental stressors, one risks losing sight of the philosophy and moral values underpinning the views of the working poor" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:119). What Fuller and Holloway suggest instead is that in attempting to understand the disciplinary practices of the working poor, one look for "the guiding precepts that interact with the challenges (and opportunities) in their communities" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:120).

For example, one of Fuller and Holloway's interviewees, Helena stated, "I don't like a smart mouth. I think adults should just be respected and you don't stand there and argue and back-talk and be fresh. I just won't stand for it." Helena and other mothers believed that learning one shouldn't "back talk" and respect for adults was simply prerequisite to a child's success in school.

For one of the mothers, trouble began when a child began to lose site of the distinction between adults' versus childrens' status. She described her mode of disciplining her child as follows: "Talkin' back! It's basically talking back...." When her child is told to do something and he says, "But I don't want to!" she tells him "It's not what you wanna do, it's what I tell you to do...Cause I said so!" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:122)

Thus this mom believed that adults should be granted unconditional respect by children; moreover, that adults are not obligated to give children

explanations or reasons for the behavioral demands they make of children. That is, it is inappropriate for children to question adult behavioral demands - rather, unquestioning respect and blind obedience are the only acceptable responses. The child is not expected to understand the meaning of the request or "make sense of it." This, Fuller and Holloway refer to this as a "coercion model" of limit setting.

Although this limit setting model and the perspective from which it derives have traditionally been associated with working class minority parents (Kohn, 1990) several of the middle class white teachers at the Children's Center appeared to adopt them as well. Sally, a teacher who was not formally interviewed, was a head teacher in a class of 2.5 to 3.5 year-olds. She could frequently be overheard, not only shouting orders to children but also responding to their "Why's?" with a resounding "because I said so." Moreover, she occasionally attached shaming and humiliating remarks to her commands, e.g., "You are one of the bigger kids in the classroom so you ought to KNOW better!" or "no kids want to play with you anymore because you keep..." As described at length in Chapter 5, Henrietta, a middle class white assistant teacher with a Masters degree from Bank Street College, yelled so loudly at children that the administrators at the front desk became sufficiently frightened that they found it necessary to escort her out of the building and change the locks. Callie, a third head teacher who was middle class and white at the Children's Center habitually shouted admonitions at the children in her classroom. Other teachers commented that they could hear her in their classrooms. Moreover, parents who came to tour the school, thinking they might send their children there next year, sometimes fled after observing Callie's class. They told other parents in the neighborhood that Callie's tone with the children was "consistently acerbic."

Another mother in Fuller and Holloway's study expressed her doubts about adults' explaining to children the rationale behind their disciplinary measures and the behavioral demands they make on children. Her lack of faith in this method centered on her fear that reasoning with a child offered the child the possibility of taking control of the situation - to "invert the hierarchy" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:124). That is, there was a fear of a loss of power on the adults' part. The same might be said of the Children's Center teachers described above: Callie, Henrietta and Sally. Like Fuller and Holloway's interviewee, their shouting at children often seemed to signal anger as a result of this fearful feeling - of having a child "run" the adult instead of the adult's running the child. For the mothers in Fuller and Holloway's study, this fear of losing control of one's children was compounded by a feeling of being overwhelmed and out of control of many aspects of their lives. But for Callie, Henrietta and Sallie, these stresses were not a factor: they were not on welfare, did not have financial troubles, housing and medical concerns.

Significantly, Helena, the above-mentioned mother in Fuller and Holloway's study, while insisting that children shouldn't "talk back," also acknowledged the need for adults to demonstrate respect for children: "I'll take something from her and she'll say 'Don't grab!' And it makes me stop and think...she's right! I don't like her grabbing things out of my hand" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:120). Like Deirdre and Rona, the student teachers at the Children's Center, the mothers in the study who subscribed to this idea of bilateral respect came to believe more in the appropriateness of explaining why certain behaviors were unacceptable to their children, rather than

physically coercing the child to comply with behavioral demands (Fuller and Holloway, 1997: 121).

Also important to note is that the definition of respect for mothers in Fuller and Holloway's study implies (children's) understanding that there are consequences for behaviors and thus that is important for one to take responsibility for one's activities (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:126). As Fuller and Holloway interpret this, "... respect means justice: if children failed to show respect for adults there were consequences...If children got the message that their actions had no consequences, they would have nothing to fear or to be accountable for" (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:126). Such "consequences" included taking away privileges, physical punishment and explanations as to the inappropriateness of certain behaviors.

Jackie, one mother in Fuller and Holloway's study, described the importance of showing respect for and sensitivity to the child's feelings in a disciplinary situation.

...if like if a kid has something...and they're not supposed to and you just come and take it away from 'em? I don't like that, I feel that because...both my kids are so sensitive...it's you - you're hurting their feelings... It's important...to explain to the kid why I'm taking it from them...because I just look at it as a misuse of power! It's like, OK because you're bigger than me, you just gonna come and take my toys (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:129).

Jackie also expressed her belief in letting children have a voice in adults' dealings with them. Specifically, she asserted the importance of hearing children's accounts of problem incidents. "You have to like, take the time to find out what happened..." (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:129). She asserts it's important to help children develop conflict resolution strategies.

For example if her son takes something away from her daughter, she asks him to think of an alternative way he could have handled the situation - like asking his sister for the toy. Thus although she saw it as her job be the mitigator in such a situation, she also believed it was important to allow children to come up with their own solutions and to give them the message she believed they were able to do this (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:130).

As mentioned previously, adult abuse of power, size and status with children is another characteristic typically associated with lower class minority adults. However, it is clear from the above that this is a gross oversimplification of what goes on between the lower class, minority mothers interviewed by Fuller and Holloway. As Holloway and Fuller state, "these women displayed patterns of conscious thought and evaluation...They observed the effects of certain strategies...They listened to advice from social workers...They articulated their views to their own children." Moreover, "The consciousness that permeates these processes of co-construction..." led Fuller and Holloway to conclude that "...the mothers were not simply reproducing cultural norms or patterns of behavior learned from their families; nor were they merely responding reflexively to structural conditions of employment." And, importantly,

developmental psychologists miss the central organizing rubric of respect, the salient principle that organized these women's responses to children's misbehavior...the oppression created by these [violence, degradation, racism] conditions does not constitute the sole, nor even the primary, driving force behind the child-rearing practices of these women. To argue that it does is to strip away their humanity and sense of dignity - defining them as another species whose feelings and actions toward their children are motivated by factors different from the rest of us (Fuller and Holloway, 1997:131).

Giroux adds that in order to "...understand more thoroughly the complex ways in which people mediate and respond to the interface between their own lived experiences and structures of domination and constraint..." one must acknowledge "...the wider structural and ideological determinations while recognizing that human beings never represent simply a reflex of such constraints..." (Giroux, 1983:119).

In fact, teachers and one administrator at the Children's Center who were middle class and white were also observed to abuse power with children. Shouting at children across the room and refusing to give a rationale for behavioral demands has already been cited above. This can be construed as a form of abuse of one's power over children in that its purpose is to frighten, shame or humiliate the child into complying. In addition, Sally, the head teacher in the 3's group, was observed snatching objects away from children at whom she was angry, while simultaneously snapping, "You may not grab things away from other children!"

Perhaps worse, Martha, the administrator, was at times observed to take children's transition objects away from them. Transition objects are items brought from home - dolls, trucks, parts of blankets, mom's old lipsticks - and often carried around most of the day to facilitate the transition from home to school. The child has, in a sense, brought a piece of home with them and this is comforting during separation and throughout the day. Martha decided that a child's transition object was preventing him from participating fully in class activities and thus decreed that the object should be banished to the child's cubby for the remainder of the day. For hours the child sat quietly with a troubled look on her face, so that in fact, her participation in class decreased even further.

On another occasion, Martha barked at a mother, "You need to leave!" despite the fact that both mother and child were weeping. It was the child's second day at school and the parent had stayed an extra one half hour at arrival time, at the teacher's request, to help the child "warm up" to the classroom and teachers. Martha's proclamation only heightened the distress of both mother and child. Somewhat like her performance in the transition object episode, Martha "grabbed" the mother away from the child and, literally grabbed the child away from the mother. Loretta, the classroom teacher was not only appalled at Martha's treatment of the child and mother, but also of Martha's treatment of Loretta as the child's teacher. Loretta had a very careful plan in place for facilitating the separation process for children and parents, and this, she believed, had been categorically ignored and disrespected.

In sum, there is a certain irony apparent here. In spite of their extensive educational backgrounds in early childhood education, Harriet, Sally and Martha do not appear to make use of the wealth of research materials which explain the advantages for children's development afforded by more diplomatic, democratic limit setting strategies. As discussed in Chapter 3, support for such strategies has been widespread throughout the history of early childhood education. As early as 1816, Robert Owen asserted that the children in his school for factory workers, rather than being scolded and punished, be encouraged to ask questions. One would think that these teachers might have considered Barbara Biber's assertion that children's behavioral impulses could be channeled in a way that allows their ego strength to be augmented rather than undermined. One wonders why, assuming that these teachers were exposed to this and other such

information in their teacher education programs, they chose to categorically ignore this when it came to interacting with the children.

Additionally, several of the teachers at the Children's Center were observed to utilize a "time out chair" strategy in which children who behaved objectionably were banished to a chair located in a distant corner of the classroom. There they would sit alone until the teacher deemed them "ready" to rejoin the other children. A group of pediatricians who have taken it upon themselves to write a parenting advice newsletter has endorsed such this practice. The group advises the adult "one minute per year of age of the child" as an appropriate "time out" interval. The basis for such an assertion is obscure, or, at least, bears no relationship to respected research on child development. What is the two year-old to learn by sitting for two minutes in a "time out" chair? What does the punishment interval of two minutes represent to her as opposed to three minutes, one minute or four minutes? Additionally, the importance of having an adult explain to the child why her behavior is objectionable and helping her find acceptable alternatives is neglected.

In fact Elizabeth Harris, the Chicago Kindergartner mentioned in the historical overview, writing in the 1890's had pointed to the benefits of presenting children with alternative behavioral choices when helping them to develop self-control. Nonetheless, several of the teachers at the Children's Center reported that Martha, the administrator, had advocated for such a practice. No doubt, the elderly Black woman from Polly Greenberg's Mississippi Head Start study would have heartily objected to this technique. As recounted in the historical overview, this woman stated "with toothless passion"

....Sometimes children speak by acting, doing things. Let them. This is their freedom. Never mind obedience. They'll fit in as they grow. I wouldn't want anyone shaming my grandchildren in no "bad boy chair" (Beatty, 1995:196).

4. Disagreements between teachers and administrators over policy and curriculum

Teachers at both the Children's Center and LESEHS described having been embroiled in significant battles with the administration over issues of policy and classroom practice. Priscilla was put under tremendous stress by the administrators decision to put the five children in school with the most complex socioemotional difficulties all in her class. Moreover, she was obliged to work with a series of assistants who, she believed, were significantly unqualified to help her address these children's needs. In the end, her sense of a lack of support from - if not exploitation by - the administration, coupled with exhaustion from trying to keep her classroom intact, resulted in Priscilla's loss of confidence in her administrator, and eventually, her quitting.

Ethan expressed similar difficulties with the administration at LESEHS. In his classroom of eight one year-olds, five of the children had significant developmental delays and socioemotional problems, all of which required professional intervention. Like Priscilla, Ethan felt he was not given enough staff, nor appropriately trained staff, for dealing with these children. As a result, he reported feeling like a "police teacher" for most of the school year. This made his work overly taxing and unfulfilling on any level, not to mention that he was unable to properly address the children's aggressive behaviors. Bettye Caldwell has emphasized the importance of educators' helping children to control their aggressive urges as early as possible - that is, at just the age

of the children in Ethan's classroom. She has pointed out that the aggressive urges need to be acknowledged and addressed through teachers' strengthening of altruism in children, expression of nonpermissive attitudes toward children's aggressive behaviors, in helping children "de-escalate" their aggressive behaviors and in finding alternative solutions to aggression-producing situations (Caldwell, 1977). Evidently, the probability that two teachers working with eight one year-olds, four of whom exhibit perpetual aggressive urges, will be able to implement the above strategies is low. As a result, at the beginning of the following school year he found a job teaching third grade in the public school system.

Teachers at both sites expressed dissatisfaction with their administration's handling of student teachers, interns and volunteers. Teachers at both schools stated, in almost identical fashion, that the administration "just throws the student teachers and volunteers in there without telling them anything and that makes a lot of extra work for us....sometimes it's like having extra children in the room." When Gabrielle had suggested to Martha, one of the administrators at the Children's Center, that perhaps the student teachers could receive a modicum of instruction before entering the classroom, Martha snapped "Maybe your expectations are just too high." Sheila, another administrator told Gabrielle, "just think of it as having another child in your class." "I'm not," Gabrielle quipped privately, "paid to teach an extra child - especially an adolescent one."

Complicating the matter was the fact that some of the student teachers were adolescents who came from an alternative high school program. They had been placed in this program because they were unable to succeed in any other high school setting. Some - but not all - of these student teachers had significant emotional problems themselves. Thus teachers sometimes felt

they were being forced to play the role of psychotherapist for these student teachers, all the while taking care of an entire class of young children.

The net effect was that teachers at both sites felt sorely unsupported and "unheard" by the administration. Priscilla and Ethan both stated that the sort of "hopeless" feeling this engendered was a major contributor to their decisions to quit.

5. Feeding children

Whereas differences of opinion as to proper modes for feeding children existed primarily between parents and teachers at the LESEHS, at the Children's Center the disagreements were mostly between teachers and teachers. Teachers at the LESEHS complained that many parents would not comply with their request to keep infants on a regular feeding schedule over the weekend. Babies who willingly ate on a schedule during the week at the school, come Monday morning, were "out of the habit," making life difficult for the two teachers taking care of six and sometimes as many as eight babies in the Infant Room. The teachers primarily blamed Chinese mothers for this situation. However, teachers also noted that they felt obliged to teach the Puerto Rican and Dominican parents how to properly nourish their children, asserting that many of them overfed their infants, or gave them food not suited for infant nutrition.

Teachers at the Children's Center described different issues related to feeding children. Feeding schedules were not an issue here because there was no infant room. Teachers also did not comment on the quality of the food parents gave their children; however, one parent sent in a bag of Oreos for snack, only to have the head teacher hand them back to her and ask that she go get something less sugar-filled.

The primary differences here were over snack-serving practices. Gabrielle and Loretta were dedicated to the idea that snack should provide an opportunity for children to learn self-regulatory skills. Children should be allowed to serve themselves from a serving plate, rather than having a teacher serve the plates for them, i.e., decide how much food they would be given. Millicent and Richard had a snack-on-demand policy, meaning snack foods were left on a side table so children could go and serve themselves snack whenever they were hungry. Although this practice would seem congruent with Gabrielle and Loretta's self-regulation skills learning ideology, one feature made it markedly different: next to the serving dishes, Millicent and Richard placed a small drawing depicting a certain number of cookies, or grapes or whatever the snack food was. This meant that although children could choose **WHEN** to have snack, they were not allowed to decide **HOW MUCH** they would eat.

Jill, the woman who did her student teaching at the Children's Center, described how at her current center, in contrast to what she learned as a student teacher at the Children's Center, children are offered food indiscriminately "all the time." She reported that teachers never wait until children say they are hungry but offer them food at numerous points in the morning, for no apparent reason. She was also bothered that when children are upset at separation time, some teachers immediately offer them food to comfort them. Jill was afraid this might result in eating disorders later on.

Perhaps the most extreme practices were observed in Kelly's class. Here all 18 children were obliged to sit in a circle on the floor for snack - no rationale was given for this. One plate of each snack food was passed around the circle for children to serve themselves. The children were obliged to sit quietly and wait until all 18 children had served themselves before

beginning to eat. Moreover, children were obliged to finish all the food on their plates, or they were not allowed to go to gym time. Additionally, the children who ate at a leisurely pace lost gym time, since they were only allowed to go to gym when they had finished snack. As with other situations previously described, it was asserted that this was a Montessori practice, but Montessori instructional texts revealed no such teaching.

Once during snack time in Kelly's classroom, a child, Delia, was left alone with her snack plate almost full. Delia had been quietly weeping since "wash up" time, just before snack. Kelly did not ask Delia why she was crying or go and try to comfort her. Instead, Delia sat weeping while, one by one, her classmates finished snack and ran off to the gym. Kelly insisted in a cheerful tone that Delia must finish her snack so she could go to the gym. Delia continued to cry but Kelly ignored her. Unfortunately the observation had to be concluded before this situation was resolved. Perhaps Kelly's childhood in a military family convinced her that it is important to be able to "pull oneself up by one's boot straps." Here again, Montessori was used as an ideological screen, from behind which Kelly defended her practice.

Loretta, upon hearing of this situation, described Kelly's practice as "cruel and barbaric." Not only were Delia's emotional needs ignored, but also behavioral contingencies were being established based on the rewarding or withholding of food. As previously mentioned, research maintains that this provides fertile ground for eating disorders later on.

Deirdre, the teacher who happened to do one student teaching internship at the Children's Center and a second one at the daycare center run by LESEHS' administration described an equally disturbing incident. She was having lunch with a table full of children while working at the daycare center one day. The children at her table finished the bowl of mashed

potatoes they had been served and wanted more. Deirdre saw that another table had a bowl which was still quite full, so she encouraged a child to go and ask the teacher at that table if they would share their potatoes. When the child did so, the assistant teacher shouted at her, "No and your table has already asked for more - don't come get our food - the rest of this food is for the children at THIS table and stop staring at the food!!!!!" Deirdre found this highly inappropriate if not cruel, especially since scarcity of food is an issue in this population of children.

Nell, an assistant teacher who joined the staff in Jonilla's classroom toward the end of the study was observed to withhold snack for behavioral demands. She told a child "if you don't sit down at the table and be quiet you won't get snack." Interestingly, several of the (middle class white) teachers at the Children's Center who held advanced degrees from Early Childhood Education programs made similar threats. Apparently, the research supporting the discouragement of such practice had not made it to the mainstream of teacher training programs; or perhaps teachers, for some reason, chose to disregard this information.

Lillian at LESEHS found it disturbing that "People don't cook for their children anymore they just buy fast food." She believes this is detrimental to family life and mother-child relationships. It is interesting to note that the middle and upper middle class parents at the Children's Center also did very little cooking and reported that for many evening meals, they order out. One parent recounted how each time her two year-old hears a doorbell ring he yells, "Dinner!" However, none of the teachers at the Children's Center appeared to find this problematic or objectionable, perhaps because these parents order take-out food from expensive gourmet establishments.

As previously described a major difference between ideas about food serving practices at the Children's Center when compared to LESEHS centered on the fact that the LESEHS teachers believed that for several of the children in their classrooms, lunch at the school might be the only nutritional meal they received. Thus while Children's Center teachers, with the exception of Kelly, made a policy of not forcing children to eat the food on their plates, LESEHS teachers often tried to get children to finish the food on their plates. While coercing children to eat probably flies in the face of developmentally appropriate practice, in this particular case it addresses practical nutritional concerns.

6. Teachers at both sites described mild to significant conflicts between themselves and other teachers, and sometimes between themselves and administrators, with reference to appropriate classroom materials. Conflict at the Children's Center mostly centered on differences between Montessori-trained teachers and teachers trained in other approaches, e.g., the Developmental-Interaction approach, while disagreements at LESEHS centered on many teachers' objection to what they perceived as austerity in the City and Country approach promoted by the director.

The City and Country approach is Bank Street derived as it was instituted by Carolyn Pratt, an early Bank Street (then Bureau of Educational Experiments) participant. The Developmental-Interaction approach is likewise associated with Bank Street, in fact was called "The Bank Street Approach" until Barbara Biber asserted that it was inappropriate for a pedagogical approach to be named after a geographical location. Although both

approaches are Bank Street affiliated, they differ significantly in some aspects. For example, the director at LESEHS asserted that the water table should not be simply filled with water, but instead that each of the children should have her own bowl of water to work with within the confines of the water table. Teachers at LESEHS found this odd and unrealistic, as did Gabrielle, a Bank Street trained teacher at the Children's Center. Along similar lines, the teachers at LESEHS did not understand why the children were not allowed to have plastic animals in the block area, since young children often enjoy constructing cages and fences for these. Children were also not allowed to have dress-up clothes or a dramatic play area. Although teachers seemed confused as to the rationale for this, as best as they were able to understand, the City and Country philosophy maintains that children should not be encouraged to engage in excessive fantasy play. Rather, their play should be focused on constructing "realistic" objects they wish to play with on their own, primarily out of blocks.

Ironically, Ana, who was one of the teachers complaining that the materials selected by the director lacked "color" described with pride how, as a child, she just had simple things to work with - no toys. She played with empty vegetable cans, making cars and other play objects with these. She used shoe boxes to make doll houses and had pieces of rags for doll clothes. Ana also used tops of toothpaste and other tubes as well as bottle tops to "just put these together to make toys."

Teachers at the Children's Center who were not Montessori trained expressed similar attitudes ("It's too austere!") toward some of the Montessori - or what was put forth as Montessori - principles. For example, Gabrielle, Loretta, Priscilla and Jane all found much of the activities solicited by the

Montessori "works" pedantic, rote-like and solitary. For example, the work in which the child pours liquid back and forth from one pitcher to the other, then is given a smaller set of pitchers with which to do the same, dictates the exact type of physical engagement the child will have with the materials and in no way encourages any imagination or creativity on the part of the child, let alone social interaction between children. Moreover, the teachers' role in all this, according to some of the Montessori-ites, is to stand aside and take notes on the child's progress in these activities so s/he knows which sized pitcher to give the child next. Again, this seems to justify and encourage a certain distant, mechanical behavior from teachers.

For the above-described reasons, many of the non Montessori-trained teachers found Montessori austere and "child unfriendly" in the way the LESEHS teachers found the City and Country approach cold and mechanical. In fact, as described previously, the instant the first director left, many new more "colorful" materials were ordered for the classrooms.

7. Closely related to the conflicts over rigidity and "sticking to the method" in choice of classroom materials, certain teachers at the Children's Center complained about their co-workers unwillingness to be flexible or to "think outside the box" when dealing with children in the classroom. Priscilla described how her first co-teacher, Nancy, "always went running to the textbook" and how Amelia, her last co-teacher, not only rigidly "stuck to the rules" she had learned about early childhood educational practice but moreover accused Priscilla of being too willing to bend rules, of being "too flexible and too familiar" with the children. Richard maintained that what one learns in a teacher training program should merely serve as "a map" for what one does in the classroom. What's more, he states "sometimes the map tells

you that this is a one way street but then when you get there you find out it's not," implying that sometimes teacher training programs give one information which is specifically contradictory to what one encounters in the real-live classroom with real-live children. For this reason, Richard and Priscilla believed it is mandatory that early childhood educators be able to "think on their feet."

Except for the above-described disagreements they had with the director's proclamations as to appropriate classroom materials, teachers at LESEHS did not raise flexibility in teaching practice as a major issue. This might be attributable to the fact that the children at LESEHS are, on the whole, younger than the children at the Children's Center, and thus automatically require more flexibility. Many of the 3-30 month-old children at LESEHS are not at a developmental/cognitive level which allows them to comprehend rules and regulations, thus it is inappropriate - if not masochistic - for teachers to attempt to enforce rules and regulations on children this age. Additionally, the children's preverbal or limited verbal abilities similarly mean that they are not yet able to understand adult's verbal explanations of rules and regulations to them. Finally, very young children are less able to regulate their bodily functions than are the 2 to 5 year-old children at the Children's Center, again demanding a tremendous amount of flexibility from the adults who take care of them. Children of this age group cannot be expected to participate in group toileting practices (everyone lines up to go to the toilet at a specified time) or wait until everyone else is hungry to eat.

As was the case with other sources of classroom conflict described above, arguments over rigidity vs flexibility in teaching practice has a long and important history in early child educational ideology. Although one of Froebel's express goals was that teachers and mothers demonstrate a

willingness to actively participate in children's play and NOT set themselves apart from children as authority figures, certain aspects of his program appear to discourage this - most notably, the meticulous, elaborate and detailed instructions which dictate how adults should demonstrate for children appropriate modes of interaction with his "gifts," the didactic materials he designed. As previously mentioned, one of the "gifts" was accompanied by 94 pages of instructions as to how it should be utilized by children; however, in light of his position that children's play should be "quite a structured activity," that "undirected play was a waste of time" (Beatty, 1995:45), this does not seem surprising.

Taking a contrasting position, Elizabeth Peabody had asserted that kindergartners in her 1860's schools should make a point of "accepting, not opposing children's spontaneous and natural activity" (Beatty, 1995:60). Siding with Froebel's assertion of the need for teacher's direction of children's play and learning, Edward Wiebe's 1869 Paradise of Childhood presented a "script" of what mothers and teachers should say and do with young children. Wiebe insisted that Kindergartners attempt to "use the same terms to avoid producing any ambiguity in the mind of the child" and that "everything must be done with a great deal of precision" since "order and regularity in all performances were of the utmost importance" (Beatty, 1995:55).

In a similar vein, Susan Blow and William Torrey Harris had expressed a belief in their 1873 kindergarten's mission of education for citizenship and civil order, for "controlling the gushing hilarity of young children" (Beatty, 1995:66).

Rose Alschuler, writing in the early 20th century, expressed her belief that when it came to dealing with young children, there were no panaceas but "several methods that might be tried with equal chance of success" (Beatty, 1995:190). Grace Landon in her recommendations for the World War I

emergency nurseries that pedagogical rigidity was inappropriate for two and three year-old children, stressed the need for a "flexible, informal program" which did not utilize formal teaching techniques (Beatty, 1995:182).

Dewey's position on child-directed vs teacher-directed learning is expressed in his criticism of Froebel: "Nothing is more absurd than to suppose that there is no middle term between leaving a child to his own unguided fancies and likes or controlling his activities by a formal succession of dictated directions" (Weber, 1994:86). He believed that it was, instead, the teacher's job to serve as "a stimulus, to bring forth more adequately what the child is already blindly struggling to do" (Beatty, 1995:86).

Barbara Biber, siding with Dewey in his advocacy of child-directed learning, explained the importance of flexibility in curriculum and practice for the developmental-interaction approach. She asserts that owing to the approach's "personalized interpretation of individual change" developmental-interaction "...cannot, by definition, present a predetermined curriculum and description of teacher strategies and still remain conceptually consistent" (Goffin, 1994:81). Biber further asserts that flexibility is a necessary element for any approach which, rather than emphasizing "discrete, concrete, behavioral achievements sequenced toward a specific accomplishment," focuses on supporting children's "increased competence, individuality, socialization and integration" (Goffin, 1994:86). In fact if the underlying principles of developmental interaction involve, as Goffin describes, "distilled, conceptual guidelines for informing teacher practice,...not particulars of implementation" (Goffin, 1994:84) then flexibility in teaching styles is inevitable.

Carolyn Pratt supported this position in her assertion that teaching is an art and teachers are artists whose artform was creative pedagogy. That is to

say, their artistic task was to design experiences for children which would help children to "compose and create" rather than "appreciate and reproduce" (Beatty, 1995:139).

Bereiter-Engelmann positions itself at the opposite extreme of the spectrum with reference to the appropriateness of teachers' "thinking outside the box." Instructing children, for this approach, consists largely of teaching children rules through repetition, and patterning tasks which embody these rules. Moreover, teachers are given "scripts" to be used in their interactions with children and told that "slight variations can make the difference between successful learning and discouraging confusion" (Goffin, 1994:111). The strategies put forth by Bereiter-Engelmann were to be used "like recipes in a cook book" and were to be strictly adhered to.

Several of the teachers at the Montessori teachers at the Children's Center - among them Dahlia, Millicent, Martha and Kelly, demonstrated a similar rigidity in their teaching practices: Dahlia refused to help a crying, fearful child down a large staircase, insisting that Montessori encourages children's independence in all situations. She also refused to let a crying Jim have juice and crackers at arrival time because it was not yet snack time, despite his mother's suggestion that Jim was crying because he had not had breakfast. As previously described, although these teachers often assert that they are standing on Montessori principles in such incidents, it is difficult to find support for such teacher behaviors in Montessori's writings. Thus one can't help wondering if their choice of practice was rooted in some other source, e.g., a basic discomfort with children and their needs.

8. Appearing as something of a corollary concern to the above-described issues, there were disagreements at both sites as to the nature and amount of

familiarity and affection teachers should demonstrate with children. At LESEHS the conflict was manifest between parents and teachers, while at the Children's Center the differences of opinion were between teachers. As described above, some of the Hispanic parents at the LESEHS did not want their girlchildren to sit on the laps of the male teachers. In Cassandra's case, the mother and grandmother did not want the male teacher to change Cassandra's diaper. Also, as described by Ethan, some of these parents were uncomfortable with the fact that their girlchildren became more attached to Ethan than to Ana, the female Puerto Rican teacher. Thus the dilemma was centered not on what parents believed was specifically appropriate in terms of affection between teacher and child in general, but between girlchildren and the male teacher. In fact Ana herself reported, "I'm very loving and hugging" which she abundantly demonstrated at pick-up time, in full view of the parents.

The above is interesting in light of the previously described research findings (Holloway and Fuller 1997) that Latino parents are less likely to utilize a formal preschool setting because they fear teachers will be less warm and affectionate with their children than they or their family members would be. Thus apparently, the warmth is desirable, as long as it comes from a female teacher.

At the Children's Center, Priscilla and Amelia disagreed over how familiar and affectionate one should be with children. Priscilla believed in being flexible in her teaching interaction style with children in order to accommodate the individual temperaments and issues of certain children. Amelia called this being "too familiar," insinuating that a teacher should keep her distance from the children, putting school rules and regulations in between

the children and herself. To Ameila, "Stand in line" means "stand in line," no matter how a child is feeling or what social and emotional issues a child might be grappling with at any given moment, on a given day or in his life in general. According to Amelia, for the teacher to attempt to "tune in to" a child's mood or difficulties is being "too familiar" with the child. Amelia likewise perceived joking with children to violate the guidelines for teacher-child relationships.

Gabrielle and Loretta were uncomfortable with the apparent coldness of the Montessori-trained teachers' ritual of greeting and saying good-bye to children with a handshake. The Montessori teachers were likewise uncomfortable with the fact that Gabrielle and Loretta were very affectionate with children, allowing the children to sit on their laps, picking them up frequently, and hugging the children at pick-up time or when the children needed comfort. Gabrielle and Loretta's rationale for this included the following (1) most young children frequently seek physical contact with the adults who take care of them and (2) developmental theory maintains that in order for young children to learn from someone, it is important for them to feel accepted by and cared for by that person. Loretta and Gabrielle believed that by responding to the children's bids for physical contact and by volunteering such contact themselves, they were building relationships with those children based on a clear acceptance of those children and the needs for affection they expressed. As Noddings and others explain, such a relationship in which care is clearly expressed by the teacher for the child is prerequisite for any sort of learning (Noddings, 1984; Benhabib, 1992). By contrast, Montessori teachers stood behind their handshake ritual, asserting that it was a principle of Montessori's teachings - one with which they were not willing to be flexible.

Perhaps it was this very issue with which Ethan was concerned in his complaint that the children are moved out of his class and into the next

classroom too quickly. He believes he is not allowed adequate time to develop a relationship with the children so that they could learn more effectively from him.

Jill, the woman who did her student teaching at the Children's Center then went on to teach at another preschool, expressed discomfort with the assistant teacher's practice of braiding all the little girls' hair and with making up nicknames for many of the children. She believed that such behavior assumes a level of intimacy inappropriate for a teacher-child relationship.

Gabrielle was particularly bothered when she observed many of the teachers at the Children's Center using terms of endearment, e. g., "honey" or "sweetie," with the children more often than they used their names. She believed use of such terms should be reserved for parents and other family members. She moreover believed that if teachers called all the children by these names, never using their given names, children might sense that teachers perceive them as indistinguishable from one another. They might believe that as far as the teachers are concerned, they possess no particular characteristics of qualities which set them apart from the other children - which make them individuals.

As with other above-described categories of conflicts, problems with the amount of affection teachers should demonstrate with children, as well as problems over the appropriate nature of teacher-child relationships, have pervaded early childhood educational history. As previously described, Froebel's early 19th century writings included the assertion that nurturing children's development necessarily involved "expanding the earliest intimate play relationships of adults and children, getting mothers and teachers to participate actively in children's play...rather than standing apart from them as adult authority figures" (Beatty, 1995:44). Robert Owen similarly asserted that

the teachers in his 1816 New Lanark factory school should demonstrate "continual kindness" toward children. Early 19th century early childhood educators saw increased and visible affection between mothers and children as crucially important, even though the 20th century saw a reversal in this position in which too much "mother love" was perceived as dangerous to children's development. Rose Alschuler, in her guidelines for wartime nurseries, maintained that "the most important thing to see to is that children get legitimate and sufficient affectional satisfactions at home and at school" (Beatty, 1995:190). Speaking in a similar vein, Barbara Biber advocated in the 1960's for teachers' establishment of mutuality between themselves and children, of a quality of "knowing," a relationship of trust. In addition to contributing to the children's sense of individuality, Biber believed this would "assure the child's identification with the teacher and serve as a model for human interchange" (Goffin, 1994:89). She additionally believed that establishment of such a relationship involved teachers' acceptance of children's fears, weaknesses, guilt and anxiety (Braun and Edwards, 1972:320).

Kamii-Devries in its assertion of the teacher's role as evaluator, stimulator and organizer, appears to neglect the more affective, humanistic aspects of teaching. However, like Developmental Interaction, it elsewhere asserts the importance of the establishment of relationships, as well as collaboration, between children and teachers.

Perhaps the value for keeping children at a comfortable distance demonstrated by some of the Montessori teachers at the Children Center's could be explained in terms of Montessori's vision of the teacher as scientific observer/researcher. Montessori asserted that in order for her method to maintain its status as "scientific," it must be based on empirical observations

of children, and teachers must be trained to conduct such observations. This, for Montessori, involved having teachers "divest (themselves) of personality in order to become instruments of investigation" (Goffin, 1994:59). Moreover, any teacher-initiated modifications posed a threat to the method's "scientific validity."

9. Several teachers at both the Children's Center and at LESEHS described the nature of their confrontations between themselves and co-workers. With two exceptions, the dynamic and mode of teacher-to-teacher confrontations at both sites were quite similar.

Janine described how Ana was often outdone with Ethan for not doing his share of the day-to-day tasks. Although Ana complained to many of her co-workers, she never complained directly to Ethan. Janine described how Ana's anger around this situation would eventually become explosive and it would be up to everyone to comfort her; however, Ethan was generally not victimized by the fallout. Even Janine, the educational director, had not confronted Ethan about his behavior, although she had explicitly noted that his "let Ana take care of it" attitude had annoyed her.

Additionally, Ethan was also never made directly aware of Lillian's disapproval of the way he "plays rough" with the boy children. Although Lillian believed this exacerbated some of the children's aggressive behaviors and socio-emotional issues, she did not convey this to Ethan, but to her co-workers.

Janine described how all the teachers complained to her about various issues - most notably the administration's policy of not hiring substitute teachers when someone was out sick - but at staff meetings where an opportunity was provided for them to relay these concerns to the director, these teachers remained silent. Janine said she was out sick one day during

such a meeting and was shocked to discover on her return that several teachers who had recently complained bitterly to her about various issues remained completely silent during the meeting.

Teachers' complaints about one another at the Children's Center had a similar dynamic. When Amelia had complaints about Priscilla, her head teacher, rather than confronting Priscilla directly, she expressed her discontent to an assembled group of teachers at lunchtime. (no gender issue here - but Amelia is Puerto Rican and Priscilla is white middle class) When Priscilla asked her "Why didn't you come to me first?" Amelia replied "I thought you would be defensive." As Priscilla pointed out, "You didn't give me a chance."

Exceptions to these indirect modes of confrontation took place at the Children's Center. Priscilla described how she had directly confronted Richard, her co-teacher, in brutally open terms, about his loquacious, meandering style during parent-teacher conferences. Although Richard appeared initially hurt, the next day he complied with Priscilla's injunction to be short and to the point during the conferences. The confrontation did not appear to do any lasting damage to their relationship.

Loretta also reported confronting Richard directly, although with not so positive results. When she suggested changing a classroom practice, he rebuked her, telling her "new teachers always think they know so much more but they don't." Perhaps Richard's different reaction to the two confrontations derived from the fact that he had a longstanding relationship with Priscilla when the confrontation took place, and had only just met Loretta when she confronted him.

(Loretta and Priscilla are both white and middle class and Richard is from a Village in Kenya)

In fact Ethan and Richard, the two males in the study, utilized diametrically opposed modes of confronting coworkers with their discontents. As described previously, Richard often "told a story" when he had a complaint with another teacher, utilizing metaphors and morals to get his point across. Though this is probably related to his experiences growing up in Kenya, Loretta found this annoying if not demeaning. In contrast, Ethan, when he believed Ana was being overly directive of a child's play, barked at her, "Why don't you just leave her alone and let her play!" Ana found this highly offensive and in fact "sulked" in Ethan's presence for several days. So while Loretta was offended by Richard's indirectness, Ana was offended by Ethan's directness. But perhaps more offensive to Ana was Ethan's criticizing her interactional style with children within earshot of a parent volunteer. This, Ana believed, was disrespectful to her and meant that the parent would lose respect for her.

10. Various approaches to dealing with one's subordinates - be they parent volunteers, student teachers or assistant teachers - were described by teachers at both sites.

Ethan's treatment of Ana, his assistant teacher has just been described. Apparently, judging by the reprimandatory tone he used with Ana, he felt it was more important for him to assert his beliefs about best practice for children than it was to cultivate a good working relationship with Ana.

For both LESEHS and Children's Center teachers experiencing problems with co-workers, indirect confrontation appeared to be the most common approach. Ethan at LESEHS and Priscilla at the Children's Center

appear as the only exceptions. Teachers at both sites report that when they are displeased with or angry at another teacher or administrator, they first discuss the situation with their co-workers. Often these conversations were characterized as "gossip" or "ganging up" sessions in which the plaintiff attempted to rally support for his or her position. On many occasions, the offending party would hear "through the grapevine" about the complaint against him or her. For example, Amelia told co-workers gathered at the lunch table about her problems with Priscilla, her head teacher, then some of those co-workers related the conversation to Priscilla. At this point Priscilla, breaking the usual gossip-behind-the-co-worker's-back policy, confronted Amelia directly. She not only expressed her complaints about Amelia's behavior directly to Amelia, but also offered possibilities for altering her own behavior to assuage Amelia's complaints. This behavior stood in stark exception to the usual *modus operandi* of teachers at both sites. Typically, teachers hearing about complaints "through the grapevine" would send return messages, also via the grapevine, to the person complaining against her/him. Interestingly, compromises were sometimes made and problems solved via this method.

As analysts of workplace dynamics have pointed out, such policy often comes into being "from the top down." At the Children's Center, this was clearly the case as the chief administrator routinely refused to deal with complaints - both from teachers and from parents - in any direct fashion. Gabrielle reports that she adopted the practice of relaying her complaints through Sally, the head teacher in the 3-4's class. She reports that Sally, while frequently pretending to collude with those complaining against the administration, would consistently go to the administration and relay other teachers' complaints, omitting her own part in the conversation. Apparently,

the administrator felt her status and position were less threatened in this scenario than she might if teachers confronted her directly. As a result, this allowed the administrator to take action to correct whatever behavior or policy the teachers found objectionable, without "losing face."

Gabrielle presented a different approach for dealing with subordinates. She said in situations where either student teachers or assistant teachers are engaging in practices she believes are not in the child's best interest, unless the child's physical or psychological safety is under imminent threat, she waits until the end of the session to discuss this. She begins by asking the teacher about his/her rationale for the practice in question to see if this derives from a deep-seated ideological or educational commitment. She says sometimes student teachers do articulate such commitments and other times they can state no particular reason for handling a situation as they did. On some occasions, the student teacher reports, "That's how we've always done it in my family."

Gabrielle says she then presents her side - what she might do instead and why - but without insisting that the student teacher do likewise. She reports that sometimes, she notices that the student teacher appears to accept her suggestion; however, it is difficult to determine whether this happens because the student teacher found Gabrielle's practice and its rationale "made more sense" or if the student teacher is simply attempting to appease her. At other times, teachers persist in their original practice. In similar fashion, Gabrielle says she is not sure if this occurs because the subordinate teacher has thoroughly thought through her/his original practice and decided it is "better" than Gabrielle's approach or the teacher simply forgets the conversation about alternative practice. Gabriella says that in

such a case, when given the chance, she would usually role model the behaviors she found more appropriate in close proximity to the student teacher whose practices had bothered her. She says this approach generally had about a 50% rate of success.

Jonilla at LESEHS described a similar mode for dealing with her assistant teacher, Marly. Although Marly frequently "yelled across the room at the kids," Jonilla did not feel comfortable directly telling Marly to stop this. Instead, she continued to role model her own behavior of going to where a child was playing, and speaking to the child at a normal volume. Apparently, this met with some success since, as Jonilla noted, toward the end of Marly's time at LESEHS, she began to remark "I sound like a drill sargent!" then lower her voice.

Jonilla did however, report being more straightforward with her new assistant teacher, Cecile. Cecile was a parent volunteer, then a Web worker before being hired. Jonilla had also had one of Cecile's children in her class the year before and thus had good opportunity to develop a relationship with her. Jonilla says Cecile required "a good deal" of instruction at the outset, but that she "took it very well." Jonilla attributed this to Cecile's personal emotional maturity. On observation, it appeared that this was helped along by, as described above, the cheerful easygoing, nonthreatening manner Jonilla perpetually maintained. The message she managed to convey to both parents and children was: First and foremost, I like and appreciate you as you are. On observation, it was this very attitude which appeared to disarm even the most difficult parents and children.

Although Jill was the subordinate, the aid rather than the head teacher, she described indirect methods similar to Jonilla's for dealing with her superiors. As described above, when Jill disagreed with the head and

assistant teachers' practice, she often role modeled what she thought were appropriate behaviors in close proximity with a solid success rate. For example, she described how following her efforts to "use more positive language with children," e.g., asking children to "please walk slowly" rather than shouting "don't run!" she noticed the head and assistant teachers following suit. With other head teacher behaviors she found objectionable Jill was equally subtle: when the music was being loudly blasted to "liven things up" she would discretely go over and lower the volume. Additionally, when the head teacher insinuated that Jill was taking too long to change the children's diapers, Jill elected to simply "not speed up" since she saw this as an opportunity for one-on-one time with the children. There were a few situations in which Jill was more direct, for example, when she saw that all the toys were being thrown together in one bin rather than having separate bins into which the children could sort them, she made the suggestion that bins be purchased. As described above, her suggestion was followed and the head and assistant teachers seemed pleased and impressed that the children were able to sort and categorize the toys in the appropriate bins.

Janine had a more direct yet compromising approach to "criticizing" the assistant teachers in the Infant Room at LESEHS. As described above, she wanted the infants to be on a regular napping schedule in the afternoons so she asked that once the infants were put down for their afternoon nap and she left for lunch, that the assistants not pick children up immediately if they began to whimper. Instead of "ordering" the assistants to do this, Janine managed to make her request in a mollified manner, jokingly insisting "you're just so loving you can't bear to hear them cry!" then giving the reasons for her request. (If you get them up and down, they are going to be cranky and crabby for the late afternoon and evening and this makes things difficult for the parents who may

have other children to attend to.) In similar fashion, if Janine returned from lunch to find the assistants speaking in a "normal" volume while the children slept, she would, in a self-mocking "mommy" manner shush them. Although this is difficult to describe, it seemed clear on observation that the assistants were amused rather than offended by Janine's approach and attempted to comply with her request.

Deirdre, one of the student teachers at the Children's Center, commented with reference to her relationship with Jonna, her cooperating teacher, "I don't know why but it always seems like she has to let me know she is above me....things that I know I have to do and Gabrielle (her other cooperating teacher) knows I know to do, so she just lets me do them....Jonna always tells me ahead of time...it's like she just has to act like I'm the assistant." Other student teachers described situations where Jonna would instruct them to go and do other things when they were in the middle of interactions with the children. One student teacher noted that a child in the classroom had become particularly attached to her and had the easiest time separating at drop-off time if she got to sit in her lap. This teacher said Jonna would come over and tell her to go work with another child, then take the attached child away from her. With reference to this situation, the teacher stated, "It's like she can't bear it if the kids like us better than they like her...if the child wants to stay with me, she should be allowed to stay with me...it's where she feels safer!"

With reference to the treatment of student teachers and new assistant teachers, Millicent seemed to align herself with Jonna in her statement, "I used to try to be more democratic but now when they come in I say, 'This is the way I do it in my classroom' and then I expect them to follow that....I had my years of trying to be more diplomatic but if you give them an inch...." This

attitude seems congruent with Millicent's statement, "There are lots of rules in my classroom," with reference to her treatment of children in the classroom. She expanded this by noting that she likes "a quiet, orderly classroom." Perhaps dealing with student teachers' behaviors and practices that differ from hers creates an obstacle to this goal.

In a similar fashion, Richard described how when he first began teaching, he used to try to be democratic with student teachers and "hear them out." After a few years of teaching, he reports, his approach to new assistant teachers and student teachers changed. Once again, utilizing his storytelling technique to convey his message, Richard says he would tell new teachers, "I've been traveling this road for a long time and learning where all the one-way streets and twists and turns are. Don't try to tell me things about this road that I already know for a long time."

Gabrielle was disturbed to observe how Sally, the head teacher in the 3-4's classroom, treated her student teachers. The student teachers were, without exception, from minority groups. After snack when the children gathered for circle time, Sally, rather than inviting the student teachers to join the children and her, asked them to clean up the snack area. Thus while Sally, who happens to be middle class and white, as are most of the children in the classroom, sat singing songs and reading books with the children, the only adults of color in the school wiped down tables, swept up Cheerios and emptied the garbage.

Interestingly, Jill, who is middle class and white, described being treated in a similar fashion at the daycare center she taught in after leaving the Children's Center. She also was not invited to circle time, but was to change diapers and clean the classroom while the head teacher and

assistant, both African American, sang songs and read books with the children. Jill says she "felt like the maid."

With reference to student teachers, Ethan expressed a contrasting attitude. In the situation with the student teacher who caught a pigeon, Ethan debated for a period before asking the teacher to let the bird go. Wishing to be democratic and "fair" about his response, Ethan carefully considered the situation and speculated that this might be a culturally-derived practice with which he should not interfere. In the end, his decision to ask the student teacher to let the bird go was based on a concern for the children's health, i.e., he was afraid the pigeon might have lice.

Chapter 7

Concluding Discussion

This study was motivated by an identified need, as described at the outset, for research literature focused on conflict over early childhood educational ideology and practice between teachers, parents and administrators. Although a wealth of existent research literature centers on conflict between schools and parents, research which addresses conflict between early childhood teachers and administrators is conspicuously lacking. As discussed previously, a body of knowledge which deals with these issues appears crucially important to the curriculum of early childhood teacher training programs. In order for teachers-in-training to be appropriately prepared for work in real-live classrooms with real-live co-teachers, assistants, and aides, not to mention administrators, they need to be made aware of the possibility of finding themselves in co-worker conflict situations like those described by teachers in the ethnographies above. That is to say, they need to be ready to find themselves in the midst of an early childhood "ideological minefield." The ethnographic findings of this study stand to be highly useful in this effort to provide teachers-in-training with an understanding of the sources, nature, details and outcomes of the different types of conflict they may experience with co-workers in early childhood educational settings.

Additionally, as previously described, any comprehensive understanding of these conflicts is impossible in the absence of a discussion of the significant histories they possess. Many of conflicts identified by teachers in the current study have a long and important history. In fact, beginning shortly after the Civil War, many of the contemporary conflicts have continually reappeared in the history of early childhood educational ideology in the U.S. The discussion in Chapter 6 which places the contemporary conflicts in their historical context is intended to provide teachers-in-training with more

in-depth understandings of and insights into the problematic situations in which they find themselves.

Analysis of the ethnographic findings at both sites raise many questions with reference to appropriate early childhood educational practice, setting an agenda for future discussion and research. The most significant of these include the following: What are the appropriate criteria for decisions about early childhood educational practice? What body of knowledge should be utilized as a basis for these decisions? Who should have the final say in these decisions - parents, teachers, administrators, or early childhood research literature? How much weight should culturally-based, or teachers' and parents' "intuitive" commitments to childrearing and early education wield in these decisions? Should the edicts of "Developmentally Appropriate Practice" be given more weight? What role is played by "the best interest of the child"? Should this factor always receive primary consideration and if so, who determines what "the best interest of the child" is in a given situation?

Corollary concerns include the following: How much, if any, power should parents be given in decisions about what happens in the classroom? What are appropriate modes of teacher-parent relationships and interactions when a conflict occurs over early childhood ideology and practice? Should teachers unhesitatingly instruct parents as to what constitutes "best practice" with very young children?

Several factors come into the forefront of any discussion in response to the above. Lubeck (1994) and others have discussed problems arising from subscription to the position that teachers and administrators take for granted their positions as "experts in childrearing and early childhood education," then

proceed to instruct parents, with little or no attention to the parents' individually, culturally or ethnically based ideas about childrearing and early education. As Lubeck has pointed out, this position is premised on a belief that certain parents - usually parents of "disadvantaged" children "will not or cannot provide children with what they need" that it is the responsibility of middle class white professionals to train these parents in the "correct" childrearing practices and provide their children with the "appropriate" preschool experiences (Lubeck, 1994:33). The position implies a belief that "some cultural practices are preferable (and others, if not 'deficient', certainly less desirable)" (Lubeck, 1994:20) resulting in a position where parents and others not versed in child development research are "expected to listen to those who make claims to greater knowledge and authority" (Lubeck, 1994:33).

Gonzalez-Mena describes the consequences of this position when played out in early educational settings:

the ideal is that children benefit from learning new cultural systems and still keep their home culture, unfortunately that isn't always the case. More often, the dominant culture competes with the home culture and the home culture loses. This happens especially when the program's goals (whether conscious or unconscious) is to eradicate the home culture. When children encounter such "subtractive processes," they fail to grow up with bicultural skills and identities (Gonzalez-Mena, 2001:11).

The situation can be exacerbated by the fact that it is frequently difficult for parents to articulate why they do what they do with their children and particularly "to explain their point of view in the face of knowledgeable caregivers who carry an aura of expertise. It becomes even harder with parents who do not speak English fluently" (Gonzalez-Mena, 2001:36). But as Gonzalez-Mena has pointed out, caregivers need to acknowledge that most

parents "love their children and are doing the best they can with what they know, who they are, and the circumstances they find themselves in" (Gonzalez-Mena, 2001:38).

Lubeck has also pointed to problems with invariably giving DAP the "last word," the "bottom line," when conflicts over early childhood educational practice emerge. The bulk of Developmentally Appropriate Practice's assertions are based on Piaget's "compelling evidence...that children's development is marked by invariant stages..." DAP presumes "one clear developmental trajectory" (Lubeck, 1996:151). To make matters worse, "Piaget believed that there was such a thing as a 'child,' prototypic of all children...." and "Because all children were the same, the developmental trajectory they exhibited would be evidenced in children everywhere...The sequence of development is universal" (Lubeck, 1996:154). Thus studies of children whose developmental paths do not follow these universal norms, primarily children from minority groups, suggest that these children are somehow deficient (Lubeck, 1996).

In a like-minded vein, NAEYC, the engineers of DAP, promotes a concept of child development as progressing in "universal, predictable sequences of growth and change" (Lubeck, 1994:31) that are the same for all children, regardless of the conditions, cultural or otherwise, in which they are raised. What this position fails to take into account are "such questions as whether stages are, in fact universal, whether development is an individual process or a socially mediated one, and whether development precedes or follows learning (Lubeck, 1994:33).

Lubeck sums up the larger problem here: "...the child reified in Piaget's protocols is one who is White, Western, and middle class..." (Lubeck, 1996:155) whereas, as Moore has pointed out, "a lifespan perspective on

human development requires analysis on how socialization in different ethnic groups affects behavioral development from childhood throughout later life" (Moore, 1985:102).

Presenting the contrasting viewpoint, Kessen has argued that "the child is essentially and eternally a cultural invention and that the variety of the child's definition is not the removable error of an incomplete science" (Kessen, 1979:815). Thus as Lubeck notes, "In sum, we are left with (at least) two definitions of a child - a universal child and a culturally constituted child - and two explanations of what theory is all about; it is scientific, describing a universal human experience, or it is a 'cultural invention,' a comment on our time and/or one of a number of plausible explanations for a particular phenomenon" (Lubeck, 1996:155).

Lubeck describes the end result of this situation as follows:

...by subscribing to a universal child and a scientific practice, we fail to interrogate our own cultural practices-and, tellingly, fail to see child development knowledge as a cultural construction so in line with our beliefs that we cannot assess its limitations (Lubeck, 1996:158).

Working from the above-described foundational assumptions, the DAP guidelines "define a 'universal' childrearing practice to foster this development by distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate practices, a dualism which makes it difficult to consider other options" (Lubeck, 1996:151). Lubeck points out how "...dualisms [like normal vs abnormal] so implicit in Western thought forms...narrow the scope of human possibility." This assertion is easily and readily applied to the format of Developmentally Appropriate Practice which entails two columns on each page, one entitled "appropriate practice" and the other "inappropriate practice."

To this discussion Fuller and Holloway (1999) add

many in the field of early childhood education (ECE) espouse a rather narrow view of childcare quality that largely represents the socialization and educational practices - the cultural models - of the white, American middle class. This representation of quality is often characterized by its proponents as "cultureless" by virtue of being rooted in universal norms of child development rather than socially constructed models of appropriate practices. We argue that all formulaions about childrearing are constructed within a cultural context, including those that incorporate research findings and professional expertise (Fuller and Holloway, 1999:99).

Usher and Edwards (1994) maintain that a more appropriate approach to early childhood education is a more postmodernist view in which the aim is

not to designate some fixed and systematic 'thing.' Rather, it is to use a loose umbrella term under whose broad cover can be encompassed at one and the same time a condition, a set of practices, a 'cultural discourse,' and attitude and mode of analysis (quoted in Lubeck, 1996:150).

Polly Greenberg (1969/1990) repeatedly visits the above-described issues in her The Devil Has Slippery Shoes, a documentation of the implementation and functioning of a 1968 Head Start Program administered by the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM). Her account includes a description of numerous conflicts over early childhood educational ideology and practice, some between parents and teachers, some between program administrators and teachers and some between teachers. Of particular interest to this study is her chapter "Reading: A Key to their Future: a Freedom." Here Greenberg recounts an example successful management of conflict between teachers and parents over early childhood ideology. Specifically, a group of resourceful teachers were able to accommodate parents' more intuitive beliefs about the age at which children should receive formal instruction in reading early education without making tremendous compromises to what was considered developmentally appropriate practice by Head Start ideology at the time.

The parents' position was as follows:

Generally, parents considered the CDGM program's major possible contribution to their children teaching them to read. The only method of learning to read they knew was the rote memorization ABC method. So they pressed hard for it. They felt they did not read well enough, so naturally assumed that it was because they had had too little ABC drill...they wanted their children to have more of it than they had had...(Greenberg, 1990:162).

Teaching reading skills to children who are the age Head Start serves (3-5) was and is still considered developmentally inappropriate by certain early childhood educators. As was made apparent in Chapter 3, many times over in the history of early childhood ideology in the U.S., the belief has been expressed that children in this age group need to spend most of their time in hands-on exploration and self-directed activities, that is, in "free play," with concrete materials and people. It is only after children have experienced, first-hand "what happens when I do this with this object or with that person" repeatedly, in many contexts, that the child is in a position to be given, to be "taught" abstract symbols, like words and numbers, with which they can represent these more visceral experiences. As developmental theory has it, it is only by having these initial concrete experiences and opportunities for "play" that the abstract symbols can be "meaningful" for the child. Thus, as Greenberg describes,

We had to interest (parents) in...alternative methods of teaching reading in the hope that they would soon come to see that there might be some that would work better for them than ABC's...If CDGM planners were going to claim to be deeply concerned with community values and parents' ideas, we could not stoically resist parental conviction that reading is critically important (Greenberg, 1990:162).

Thus even though teaching reading to Head Start aged children went against the educational philosophy of the program, teachers did not fall prey to

the DAP school of thought as described above by Lubeck in which disadvantaged parents are dismissed as "deficient" and unable to provide their children with the educational experiences that white middle class educators can provide. Rather, teachers believed it was important to acknowledge the parents' beliefs and values, and somehow address their concerns. Greenberg adds her belief that the parents of the CDGM Head Start participants were

by no means being 'pushy' when they worried that their children wouldn't learn to read unless CDGM taught them. Most Head Start graduates would never learn to read adequately if we left the matter entirely to the public school system. Statistics and thousands of adults in our project proved this...We couldn't indulge in the luxury of the smug membership in a well-established pedagogic rigidity that said, in 1965, teaching reading to the preschool-age child is somehow repressive to the child and a denial of other important parts of programming ...We couldn't plummet our graduates, innocent of what it takes to learn to read, into a wasted first grade year and a fall into the fatal finality of academic failure in a system with no remedial services (Greenberg, 1990:163)

But addressing this problem and maintaining developmentally appropriate ideology was no easy task. CDGM believed they could address both goals by building

a reading program out of the resources, experiences, living techniques, friendships, interests, standards, thoughts, dreams, language and wealth of 'material' inside a child...welcoming the child's world in our reading program would help each child unfold and dip inward and stretch out and reach around and continue becoming a person for himself(sic), for his sub-community. Using the material each child brought to the center with him, by making it into books for him to learn to read from, could help us work with him - not ON him - toward evolving a strong self that could cope and contribute in a manner that brought him satisfaction (Greenberg, 1990:157)...We envisioned this not only as..."drawing out and extending" instead of "pouring in and suppressing" (Greenberg, 1990:159).

Ingeniously and somewhat ironically, the program engineers manage to, while "defying" developmentally appropriate practice by teaching reading

skills to three to five year-olds in an effort to address the (black working class) parents' concerns, at the same time espouse developmentally appropriate practice's (middle class white) principle that learning should be child-centered, that curriculum should come from the child, from what she brings to school from home. As explained in the history chapter, this assertion derives from the assumption that children learn best when the subject of their learning is accessible, familiar and therefore meaningful to them.

With these larger commitments in mind, Greenberg and her colleagues set about finding ways to introduce reading skills to three to five year-olds in ways that were acceptable to the educational convictions of the teachers:

We could begin emphasizing orderliness, sequence, and accurate perception in the classrooms of sights, sounds, and also, specifically phonics. A great trouble CDGM people had with reading was that they didn't have much logic in their lives, and they had refined the ability to shut OUT sights and sounds rather than the ability to notice them precisely (Greenberg, 1990:169-70).

Owing to teacher resourcefulness, there was still plenty of space in the curriculum for teacher flexibility and for "free play" in children's learning. That is to say, the elements most valued and privileged by the white middle class and developmentally appropriate practice - were not lost in the shuffle of putting into place a program for teaching reading skills. Greenberg explains:

We loved the children's language, 'English,' as a second language...They would need to be bilingual. There would be plenty of time later on. Let them just learn to enjoy themselves first...Let them learn to enjoy themselves in print first. Let them learn to read in an atmosphere of acceptance, not condemnation. We could not imagine how we would be helping a child love to communicate verbal...if we shot him down with grammatical bullets and threw punctuation grenades at him every time he eagerly opened his mouth to share with us (Greenberg, 1990:167).

Interestingly, Greenberg describes the child-made books produced as a result of the effort at CDGM were "overwhelmingly about fear, punishment, violence, death, food, and sex. They tended to be more associative than the 'neat,' trite stories of middle class children" (Greenberg, 1990:157).

Greenman (1989) has recounted a second, lucid example of how, if lines of communication are opened and properly maintained, when discord between parents' childrearing values and teachers' educational values arises, solutions that are acceptable to both parties can be identified.

I worked in a center that believed kids should get dirty and be little scientists...Parents, particularly black parents, would say "We don't want our kids to go outside. We spend an hour and half on their hair. Two minutes later they are covered with sand. We can't get that stuff out and we spend our whole evening cleaning it up...For awhile, our earnest and empathic response was "Gee that's too bad. But this really is good for the children." Of course knowing our response implied "You poor, ignorant person, valuing appearance over good child development"...Now the response to these sorts of issues is: "Okay let's figure this out. Obviously it's important to you how your child looks. And you know it's very good for children to have these sorts of experiences. Let's come up with a solution." The assumption is two legitimate points of view...the answer was shower caps for the kids (Greenman, 1989:11).

Thus what Barrer has called a "third space" in which a "whole new view that encompasses both (perspectives) and takes them out of oppositional stance" (Gonzalez-Mena, 2001:38) was created. As Gonzalez-Mena asserts

When we stop thinking in terms of opposites such as right or wrong, good or bad, appropriate or inappropriate, black or white, we can come up with ideas we never dreamed of (Gonzalez-Mena, 2001:38).

In sum, what took place in both Greenberg and Greenman's experiences might be described as a dialectic between developmentally appropriate practice's mainstream, middle class white ideology and the beliefs and practices of minority, nonmainstream groups who normally enjoy less

power in daycare and preschool settings. I would like to suggest, for purposes of the current study, that it is exactly this type of dialectic that needs to take place between teachers, administrators and parents when ANY sort of conflict arises. Although Greenberg's example of dialogue, compromise and resolution takes place between parties of presumably unequal status, that is, between teachers as the supposed "experts" in early childhood education and parents as the supposedly naive "consumers" of Head Start's services, it seems that the same sort of strategy could be promoted for resolving conflicts between teachers of equal status - like those in the current study.

Along similar lines, Schubert has pointed to a need for approaches to teaching which combine "the paradigm of practical inquiry" and "the paradigm of critical praxis." He explains, "....the former is focused on concrete problem-solving in specific situations, with the goal of 'increased capacity to act morally and effectively in pedagogical situations' while the latter is explicitly political" (Schubert, 1986 quoted in Lubeck, 1996:162). Such an approach

offers a broad perspective on the meaning of educational endeavors within the context of economic and ideological life. It includes an effort to look critically at impingements of ideology and economics on human growth and development (Schubert 1986:314).

In a related vein, Moll et al (1992) have suggested that households which have traditionally been regarded as "deficient" in terms of their ability to provide children with valuable early educational experiences, should instead be regarded as important and viable sources of knowledge for young children. Through ethnographic studies in a working class Mexican community in Arizona, Moll and his colleagues identified the "funds of knowledge" utilized in the daily operations of the local households. Moll and his colleagues used

these "funds" as the basis for curricular reform in the local public schools - in Moll's words, for "developing novel classroom practices that involve strategic connections between [households and classrooms]" ...that is to say, for developing "...ethnographically informed classroom practices" (Moll et al, 1992:132). Moll and colleagues believed that this sort of work had the potential to "...capitaliz(e) on household and other community resources..." so that researchers could "organize classroom instruction that far exceeds in quality the rote-like instruction [children in the community] encounter in schools" (Moll et al, 1992:132).

Lubeck points out that what is called for by the above is a "transformational model of teacher training." Collaborative inquiry, social constructionism and ethnography have been identified as important elements in such a model (Fernie and Kantor 1994) . A transformational model of teacher training would provide teachers-in-training with a situated knowledge base, observational fluency, the ability to skillfully reflect on their own practice (Fein 1994) and to collaborate effectively with co-workers.

Additional strategies have been suggested for addressing issues of ideological conflict in early childhood educational settings. Fuller and Holloway (1999) have noted a need for the creation of forums in which teachers are encouraged to identify "which of their own goals and pedagogical approaches are based upon moral and philosophical assumptions" (Fuller and Holloway, 1999:105). When this is accomplished, early childhood educators will hopefully be in a position to "participate in highly useful discussions with community members, encouraging everyone to clarify and articulate their assumptions, values, and goals for children" (Fuller and Holloway, 1999:105).

Such discussion stands to help early childhood educators identify "challenging matters of moral values and philosophical assumptions...then argue the merits of their own position..." (Fuller and Holloway, 1999:105). Teachers skilled in these abilities are better equipped to not only clearly communicate their own positions - both to themselves and others - but to understand, if not tolerate, the contrasting positions of other teachers, parents and administrators. .

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