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Transitions to U.S. Private Schools: Perceptions of Six Immigrant Elementary School Boys

Philip Manwell

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**TRANSITIONS TO U.S. PRIVATE SCHOOLS:
PERCEPTIONS OF SIX IMMIGRANT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOYS**

A Dissertation Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by

Philip Manwell

San Francisco
May, 1996

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CHAPTER I: THE PROBLEM

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

Justin's mother is a Filipina, his father is Chinese. His step-father is Mexican. None of these adults has a healthy ethnic identity. Justin tries everything he can think of to relate to them culturally but they discourage him from doing so. Is it any wonder that Justin is confused? He says that he wants to be "just an American", yet he also says that sometimes he thinks about running away so he can "be himself".

The United States has once again become a country of and for immigrants. The U.S. experienced its greatest increase in numbers of immigrants before World War One, and those numbers are nearing the same proportion today. In 1980, the immigrant population of the U.S. reached 14.1 million or 6.2 percent of the total population. Every year during the 1980s, an average of six hundred thousand immigrants and refugees have entered the country legally and others have entered without permission or have allowed their visas to expire (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990).

The attraction of the United States remains strong for immigrants as does the resistance of some citizens of the United States to these newly arriving immigrants. Many scholars, including Portes and Rumbaut (1990), have examined the above mentioned figures in light of a solid 1980s economy and the more liberal immigration act of 1965. They have usually compared this wave with the previous one at the turn of the century and discovered that similarities include the urban journeys of most immigrants, the larger number of immigrants residing in port towns, and a willingness

on the part of immigrants to accept lower wages.

It is the differences, however, which are most often discussed since the old wave was predominantly European and white, and the present group is mostly nonwhite and from emerging nations (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990).

Historically, most of the immigrants came from Europe. As recently as 1976, more than 40% were from Europe and the United Kingdom. This number diminished to just over 20% by 1986, and today the largest number appear to come from the so-called developing nations, especially from Asia and Latin America with combined numbers equaling nearly 65%. (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990). Within the new immigrant population exists enormous diversity. "Some of the new arrivals come with just the clothes on their backs prepared to do whatever they must do to survive; others arrive with money and the promise of housing and employment. All of them are helping to define the society of the United States" (Santoli, 1988; p. 16).

The public's perception of these new arrivals is determined to a great extent by their perceptions of the countries from which the immigrants have come. Because these nations are frequently suffering economically, many may feel that the immigrants from those countries will also be poor and, therefore, inadequately educated (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990). Dissenters may see these people here to escape hunger, need, and discrimination. The political, social, and economic reality of these immigrants is viewed unfavorably because they are not "like us" - European - and because their legal status could be viewed with some suspicion (Mills, 1994).

If we were to examine the circumstances of many immigrants, we would more than likely see that these perceptions are far from true. Clearly, not all immigrants are doctors or scientists. Even fewer are rich and famous, but most have come seeking a better life for themselves and those they love.

They work as hard as they can and as they are permitted in order to achieve their goal (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990).

Immigrants of previous generations worked hard to assimilate and/or acculturate. They learned English as quickly as possible and often publicly disavowed their own language and other aspects of their cultures while often maintaining underground cultural connections within the ethnic neighborhoods which they established in urban settings keeping traditions of their countries of origin alive for future generations as well as for their own personal and cultural satisfaction (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990).

What is frequently overlooked by those writing for the mainstream is the fact that each country, region, or even town and village in the immigrants' experience has its own ethnosystem in which immigrants have led their lives before emigrating to the U.S. (Bush, Norton, Sanders and Solomon, 1983). Writing in *Mental Health and People of Color* edited by Chunn, Dunston and Ross-Sheriff, Bush and Norton, *et al.*, use Solomon's (1976) definition of ethnosystem : "A society which comprises groups which vary in modes of communication, in degree of control over material resources, and in the structure of their internal relationships or social organization. Moreover, these groups must be in a more or less stable pattern of relationships which have characteristics transcending any single group's field of interaction, e.g., the ethnosystem's political, educational or economic subsystems" (p. 45). While the cultures within these ethnosystems may have many similarities, the ethnosystems are different from each other and the people within the same ethnosystem are also unique and very different (Bush, Norton, *et al.*, 1983).

The motivations for leaving the countries of origin are also very different, and the way each immigrant adapts to the new environment

varies greatly. Unlike the earlier group of sojourners who came to earn money to take back to the families they left behind, the majority of new documented immigrants are bringing families - sometimes including three generations - with them. It is for the children of these families and their education and future success in the United States that many migrate here (Ogbu in Greenfield and Cocking, eds., 1994).

Studies have been conducted which examine the brutal dislocation of refugees and asylees who are forced to flee for their lives for a variety of political and social reasons (Ogbu in Greenfield and Cocking, eds., 1994). These people have very little choice but to settle where they are allowed to do so. They do not have the opportunity to choose their destinations. The emotional discomfort caused by their abrupt departure is devastating. The contrast between these people and the immigrants who have chosen to leave their countries, (going through proper channels in their countries of origin, and having the luxury of time to prepare themselves for their departure) is vivid.

One of the more respected scholars to discuss this and other contrasts is John Ogbu. Writing in *Cross-Cultural Roots of Minority Child Development* (1994), Ogbu describes academic problems of minority children caused by conditions and situations in schools, classrooms, and homes, in addition to historical, economic and sociocultural factors. In discovering that academic and social/emotional problems are common among some children but not others, he creates two categories of minorities: voluntary or immigrant minorities and involuntary minorities. The former are those who have migrated to the U.S. by choice (not forced to do so by Euro-Americans through "conquest, slavery, or colonization") (p. 373) because they believe that this will allow better economic well-being, better opportunities in

general, and “greater political freedom” (p. 373). These beliefs influence the way these immigrants react to problems that they encounter in the new society, including problems in education. The latter, refugees or involuntary minorities, are forced to leave their homes by “war, famine, and political upheaval” (p. 373), and often suffer from troubled family situations. They frequently have little time to plan their flight or entry. Involuntary minorities have been historically incorporated into U.S. society against their will and denied significant assimilation into the host culture. It is these minorities who often do not do as well in school.

Responding to Ogbu’s notion of voluntary and involuntary minorities, some might consider the children of voluntary immigrants to be much like the children of refugees and asylees who are involuntary. Rarely is a child consulted before parents make a move of this kind. Often children are the last to be told of such a move in order to “guard their feelings”, to “protect them”, or to ensure that the children will not “spread the word” before it is appropriate to do so. So, like involuntary minorities, these children are taken away from loved ones and extended family members, friends, perhaps family pets, the neighborhoods where they lived and played, the language and other cultural aspects of their lives which they have come to accept as natural and essential, and are withdrawn from religious and educational communities in which they have lived and within which so much of their emotional stability has been formed and supported. Their lives have been completely disrupted.

One of the important components of the immigrants’ ethnosystem which they have, in part, left behind, is education. This important facet of their life and settlement in the U.S., along with aspects of politics and economy, may differ greatly from the one at home.

These educational differences may be classified as: universal, primary, and secondary (Scribner and Cole, 1973). Some differences are universal because all children experience a transition from home to school. Adjustments involve culture and language, language use and communication, new ways of thinking, and social interaction.

Primary cultural differences exist because members of both societies (the immigrant's and the host's) had their own unique ways of behaving, thinking, and feeling before they came together in an educational setting. Immigrants possessed this cultural frame of reference before they arrived. (Ogbu defines this cultural frame of reference as "the ideal way to behave within a culture - attitudes, beliefs, preferences, and practices considered appropriate for members of the culture." p. 375) Voluntary minorities would see the new frame of reference as a hurdle to overcome to gain success. They would enter the new frame of reference without giving up their own. Ogbu (1973) calls this "accommodation without assimilation". Involuntary minorities (those this researcher refers to as immigrant children) might see this change of reference as a threat to their emotional stability and well being.

Secondary differences involve concepts and content. The differences are observed in the political and social relationship between dominant and minority cultures. They came into existence after the two groups came into contact and imply that the minority is in a subordinate position. This assumption causes the minority to create coping mechanisms to deal with the problems they may have with members of the dominant culture and the institutions controlled by that group. These differences frequently become a part of the dominant culture's gatekeeping mechanisms. Involuntary minorities would have little desire to overcome these differences because

that would compromise their cultural identity and cause them even further distress (Ogbu, 1973).

Schools are often unaware of these differences, as are many of the immigrants themselves, and are often poorly prepared to deal with the educational expectations which new immigrant students have. Any institutional and cultural similarities may mask these differences, and the researcher believes that the mistaken or improper perception or handling of these differences may cause great emotional damage to the immigrant (involuntary minority) students.

Scholars such as Mills (1994) and Portes and Rumbaut (1990) agree with Ogbu's (1994) assessment of the immigrant child's ability to "play the classroom game" (p. 385) in order to succeed and get ahead, and they and others such as Delgado-Gaitan and Trueba (1991) would suggest that this kind of game playing is dishonest, immoral, unhealthy, and completely unnecessary!

Most new immigrant families place a high value on the education of their children. Even if formal education was unavailable at home, many believe that education is essential for a bright future in the U.S. The fears of the unknown in the host country are increased by the concerns immigrant families have about life in urban public schools. Their neighbors, families, and friends tell them countless stories of violence against and among ethnic students and the ineffectiveness of burned out, fearful, and exhausted teachers. They believe that these schools represent the worst in education in the U.S. Their only recourse is to try to gain admittance to an independent school. [The number of immigrant parents attempting to enroll their children in independent schools in the U.S. increased by 26% between 1976 and 1986 (Gold, 1989).] They believe that not only will the education be better,

but that the kinds of students attending these schools will be better human beings - ones who will welcome the newly arriving students and treat them with respect. The cost of attending these schools is enormous, but many of the families interviewed (Gold, 1989) will be willing to work day and night, perhaps in several jobs (often low paying and menial), just to be able to get past the gate. Once the student has survived the perils of interviews and entrance examinations and personal evaluations by teachers and prospective classmates, he may be admitted. The future looks bright - or does it? Will the child be welcomed and respected for what and who he is? Will his culture and language be acknowledged and valued as he makes his accommodational transition into the life of his new community? How will he be made to feel about his family and the neighborhood in which he lives? Will he miss other children from a similar background? How will he feel about himself? This study attempts, through dialogue and reflection, to help six young immigrant males answer these questions for themselves and to guide them to possible solutions to any problem which may exist.

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

“The United States is faced with the privilege and challenge of educating immigrant children, not only in a second language and other skills, but also in the many and varied dimensions of life in this country” (London, 1990; p. 287).

Whether these children have fled rigid dictatorial regimes or wars, whether they came to the U.S. directly or spent time in refugee camps or detention centers, whether they have little more than what they are wearing at the time, or their families have planned the migration carefully, leaving their countries of origin legally and peacefully, bringing currency and the

promise of jobs with them, they have been uprooted and will surely experience some difficulty and emotional discomfort adjusting to their new surroundings (Mills, 1994).

“Many immigrants actually come to the U.S. not realizing that there are many differences between their culture of origin and that of the host country. They continue to speak their languages, observe customs and conventions, follow traditions, and maintain certain norms. By doing so, they often discover that they are ostracized by members of the dominant culture” (London, 1990; p. 289).

The problem examined in this study is the independent elementary school’s regard for the culture and language as well as the socioeconomic reality of the immigrant male and its effect on his emotional well being.

The researcher believes that cultural differences, when mistakenly or improperly perceived by children or schools, may be particularly distressing and problematic for male students. Their entire concept of what it is to become men in relationship to themselves and the world may be weakened, trivialized, or even destroyed through ignorance or cruel regard for their cultural traditions and values. Even if those charged with conveying the dominant culture to these boys believe that a change in outlook might be healthy and beneficial for their students, the boys must be empowered to make changes in their lives which are compatible with family and community standards and beliefs.

Schools must help immigrant males cherish and continue to participate in the culture which is theirs, and, at the same time, help them to meet the basic requirements of their new land in order to enjoy the success and happiness which their families want them to attain.

The researcher has chosen to study the emotional well being of

elementary school aged males in independent schools in the U.S. There is no doubt that females deserve a similar study, but since the researcher has taught in a private boys' school, he has had the opportunity to observe the differences in masculine behavior between male immigrant students and those male students born in the United States. He believes that the differences in perception of what it means to be a man are often quite dissimilar between one culture and another and that difficulties in adjusting to the demands of the host culture can cause the immigrant male considerable discomfort as he makes this transition.

The role of the male differs according to a number of factors. For example, while women have traditionally been viewed as being subordinate in China, Chinese men have for some time had the reputation of being henpecked. In the United States, it is not uncommon for men to appear to head the family unit while the women often make most of the major family decisions (Sung, 1967).

Japanese males are respected for their "health, character and willingness to work" (Petersen, 1978; p. 66). Historically, they possessed honest and authentic values and self-discipline, yet they allowed their families to choose their wives. They have always valued learning, and their literacy has been associated with economic progress and social characteristics and their hopes for the future. Like the Chinese and other Asian groups, the Japanese believe more in values related to the family than to the rugged individualism so highly prized in the U.S. (Petersen, 1978).

Boys from Hispanic communities may be preoccupied with the concept of 'machismo'. In these cultures, this concept may include bold and risky behavior - from games of chance to an acute sense of personal pride to a general disregard for rules and regulations. It views manhood as possessing

short lived daring and 'bravado' rather than a long term appropriation of knowledge, skills, or discipline. Within an urban setting, 'machismo' may find its natural outlet in negative behavior in school or trouble with others in the street. Depending on the specific culture, the Hispanic child may have little regard for school or intellectual tradition. These traits, along with a fatalistic view of the future, may cause considerable disruption to schooling in the U.S. (Santoli, 1988).

Each individual culture has its own male role. Each immigrant student will need to balance this role with the expectations placed on him by the host culture and the school he attends. This will be especially difficult if there are few if any children or adults from his culture of origin with whom to relate and confide in the new school setting (Handlin, 1962).

This study, therefore, investigates how a male immigrant child's culture (including his language and his instinctive sense of his own masculinity) and socioeconomic circumstances are acknowledged and accepted in independent elementary school settings, and how this reality affects his emotional well being as he transitions from home to school.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The questions suggested by the Background and Need for the Study demand a research methodology that not only facilitates the exploration of the contextual realities of the participants and allows the questions to be raised, but also encourages, through a recognition of individual and collective empowerment, problem solving as a result of the research. The methodology which the researcher has chosen and which will be discussed in Chapter Three is Participatory Research.

The theoretical framework from which this research takes its dynamic

energy and motivation seems to reside in the research methodology itself. It cannot, under any circumstances, be separate and apart from this very personal methodology.

The theorists who support and encourage the participatory model are then the theorists who provide the ideas from which the research takes its shape.

The theorists who seem to best understand the emotional realities of the immigrant student participants are the developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky and the educator Paulo Freire. Both men have strong links to the political, social, and economic theories of Karl Marx (Miller, 1993; Gadotti, 1994), and both reflect an intense commitment to the notion that one's cultural inheritance (not genetic) and current environment are most important in determining the success of a child's educational process.

A contextualist, Vygotsky offers theories which are practical and useful. There is rapport between theory, data, and change, and he believes that the distance between actual and potential educational success can be narrowed by an appropriate and informed response from educators. He believes that more skilled people are needed to support a child's success. Through the belief that the gap between theory and reality can be closed, he espouses the continuity of past, present, and future, the connectedness of a person and his/her environmental surroundings and emotional and intellectual contexts (Cole, 1992 in Miller, 1993).

Vygotsky and other contextualists pay particular attention to the sociocultural context, the adherence of commonplace experience found in learning and development, and a sensitivity to a variety of learning and developmental styles.

Human beings evolve and adapt to their surrounding physical and

social contexts. Vygotsky indicates that he includes aspects of history, sociology, economics, political science, linguistics, biology, the arts, and literature and poetry in his psychology of a child's educational experience. These aspects do not simply influence the children, they define them and the way they conduct themselves in particular behaviors.

Vygotsky encourages and allows his readers to accept a dynamic and nurturing link between one person - a child, and others - teachers, other students, or families. All of the active participants in this social exchange (and this certainly includes the physical environment) share knowledge - one with the other, some more than others (Miller, 1993).

In Western thought, society tends to separate the individual and all that goes on around him and places the responsibility for learning and change on the individual rather than on the dialogic rapport between and among all aspects of his existence (Cole, 1992 in Miller, 1993).

Vygotsky and other contextualists believe that learning complements and encourages psychological and emotional development. As children learn they gain a higher level of development. This allows them to understand new concepts which they can then accept or reject in their lives. This emphasis on change and dynamic assessment can be favorably linked with the formation of generative themes, dialogic reflection, and the pursuit of transformative change inherent in participatory research.

Children are encouraged to use the new knowledge they have created to solve social and physical problems (Cole, 1992 in Miller, 1993). They are encouraged to use materials and people - from the past, present, and even the future - as resources to define and achieve specific goals. This practice is appropriate for everyone. It embraces the fact that differences exist within and among cultures. This acceptance of diversity is essential since so much

research on the realities of immigrant children has been conducted from a white, middle-class perspective, and what may be true for this group will certainly differ for each culture with its specific social and physical environment and the tools available to it. Different historical and cultural experiences will surely produce different learning patterns, styles, methods, and results.

Paulo Freire has long been identified as one who encourages human beings (as they observe his political and social activities or through their reading of his many works) to free themselves from their present language of themselves in order to see themselves as agents of change. By naming themselves and the world as they truly exist, they are engaging in what is frequently called critical pedagogy. "He encourages the recognition of oppression as it is often found in social, cultural, and institutional contexts and offers his co-learners the opportunity to create transformative change through dialogue, thematic generation, and reflection" (Gadotti, 1994).

Freire is particularly suited to assist in providing a theoretical framework for this study. He was raised in a home which offered both freedom and authority. He understands the importance of cultural identity and family to a meaningful and nurturing educational experience. His parents worked hard to send him to a small private school (Gadotti, 1994), and it was probably there that he began to form his theories of critical pedagogy and emerging consciousness or increasing awareness that he calls 'conscientization'. He was asked to become the lessons rather than memorize them, and the knowledge that he brought with him from home was valued and encouraged (Gadotti, 1994).

Freire also experienced childhood feelings of inferiority and embarrassment. He knew what it was like to be hungry and unhappy. When

he went to high school, his classmates were affluent and from important families causing him to remark: "I was tall, lanky, wore pants which were too short and risked being made fun of because of their length. They were shorter than the length of my legs." (Gadotti, 1994; p. 3). He hated the way he looked and feared questioning the teachers because he felt that they expected him to be brighter than the other students simply because he was older than they were. As he played with ordinary children from his neighborhood, he began to find a voice he could use and to which he could relate - a comfortable means of expression - a grammar and language of the people (Gadotti, 1994).

Freire believes that through living and sharing dialogue together in community, learners can reach critical consciousness. The dialogues shared are nurtured by love, humility, hope, faith, and confidence. Therefore, the first precept of dialogue must be the respect for the ones who seek some form of new knowledge. In the dialogue, the learner is encouraged to express his freedom, his creativity, and his individuality.

For Freire, education through dialogue is an important aspect of becoming human. In this humanizing education, theory, method, and practice become one, and the whole is created by the relationship between knowledge and the knower (Gadotti, 1994).

It is important, when examining the emotional state of the immigrant child, to note Freire's clear distinction between the educational process of the colonizer/oppressor and the oppressed. He sees the *banking method* as very much a part of the educational repertoire of the oppressor (the educator and his or her community) who uses this technique as a way to convince the oppressed (the immigrant student) that the world of the colonizer (the *majority* students and their families) is desirable. There is a dichotomy

created inside the oppressed - the need to accommodate the oppressor versus the need to be free. This desire for freedom moves the oppressed from complete isolation (often seen as individualism) toward community. Freire believes that "individuals do not free themselves, nor does anyone free any one else; people free themselves together" (Freire, 1985; p. 65).

Readers may question the use of Freire's theories with regard to their appropriateness for research with children. They may suggest that he has not worked with children sufficiently or that his work has been primarily concerned with adult literacy. While this is certainly true, it is the universal issues Freire raises - finding one's voice, acquiring awareness and strength through dialogue, and gaining pride in community, among others - which are especially relevant to children. In addition to the good news of liberation which Freire brings to immigrant children and, as Shor (1987) demonstrates, to everyone else in the educational community, he also reminds them that through dialogue they will be encouraged to honor all aspects of their culture - some of which have been forgotten - and know that this heightened awareness will enhance the generation of themes for reflection which will ultimately bring transformative change (Freire, 1973).

When these children encounter those who may suggest inferiority on the part of the children themselves, they will be strong enough to help these critics realize that it may be the system which needs to be transformed - even before individual transformation can begin to take place. For many who have come from structures like this, the ability to show the need for change will be truly freeing. They will become a part of a revolutionary body which struggles against these dehumanizing structures (Freire, 1985). This cultural action for freedom is characterized by dialogue, and its main purpose is to enlighten the people and to show reality by exposing and demythologizing

ideology of all kinds (Freire, 1973).

One of the central colonizing ideas faced by immigrant students is the one that insists that English is the only language needed to succeed in the United States. Freire points out that people must feel free to express themselves in their languages of origin without fear and without elitist restrictions (Freire, 1985). Language must not ever be used to exclude immigrant children from enjoying powerful political and social realities. If it is, the power will continue to be given to the few who control the lives of the many, and language, an important aspect of cultural politics, will ultimately separate them even further from the success and satisfaction they seek.

Those in power are the ones who decide what other people do with their lives. Those who do not currently have power need to gain it in order to be able to sustain their own cultural values system. Embracing this cultural system, the immigrant child gains a sense of identity. This strong identity provides the reason and the stamina to strive for lasting and transformative change.

EMOTIONAL WELL BEING: AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

The researcher, both from his research and from his professional observations, can envision a kind of confidence and assurance which immigrant male elementary school students need to acquire in order to feel successful in their educational environment and to feel, in layperson's terms, "good about themselves". Wondering if or how they are able to acquire the essence of this confidence and assurance in independent schools was what motivated the researcher to initiate this study. For the purpose of the study, a term needed to be chosen to describe, even imprecisely, this essence. Cavanagh and McGoldrick (1966) believe that the terms self-concept,

self-image, self-portrait, and self-judgement all describe this essence. These and a number of other terms could be used; however, the researcher chose emotional well being. It seems less clinical and less threatening than the others and can be used and understood by the researcher and his participants and their families and friends to describe how the participants feel about themselves.

One of the difficulties the researcher had in creating a definition of emotional well being was that he had found it to be a condition which changed from participant to participant and from time to time. It could be elusive; yet, when it was present and maintained over time, it was clear, obvious, and right.

As children grow and develop, they create impressions of others and of themselves. Learning about one's self takes time. One creates his or her own behavior by observing the behavior of others. This interaction, an important and natural part of an immigrant child's ethnosystem which has been interrupted by relocation, and begun again in the new community, begins at home, extends into the community, and eventually involves the school. The influence of this ethnosystemic process continues to affect even second and third generation immigrant children. Kendler (1963) reminds his readers that "how a child perceives himself becomes his *self*." (p. 460). The child begins to notice his own abilities and may begin to judge his efforts as good or bad. There is a great difference in the way people perceive themselves and in the way others see them. Children may be equally competent, but their perception of their own abilities can vary enormously. Children who are capable may be asked to perform in ways which are inappropriate or unacceptable for them at the time. They are made to feel less than capable. A similarly capable child may be encouraged to thrive in his environment by

being encouraged to cope with situations and demands in ways which create self-assurance and confidence. Gradually, doubts and fears disappear.

If a child is told that he is incompetent or less than others, he will eventually believe that this is true and plan his behavior accordingly. It is possible, of course, to change this belief. For many, changes occur in only some aspects of their lives. They may gain confidence in one area of their reality, but remain defeated in another. They are forced to play different roles in different situations and react accordingly. These reactions are dictated, in part, by the response of those around them. This is the "game playing" which Ogbu (1994) describes in his analysis of the educational realities of involuntary minority children - the category into which the researcher places immigrant children.

It is difficult for immigrant males to acquire the confidence and assurance they need to cope with the demands made on them, particularly if the reactions of those around them are adversely shaped by negative stereotypes and learned false assumptions. When these barriers are removed, the immigrant students' doubts and fears disappear and they are newly empowered, making life's cultural transitions with strength and conviction. They perceive themselves as whole and worthwhile human beings. As Kendler (1963, p. 87) states, "the perception of self becomes self", and this perception stimulates and encourages what the researcher calls emotional well being.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In Participatory Research, Research Questions are those questions posed by the inquiring mind of the researcher; they are, in a sense, his or her property. They are the questions which have motivated interest in the

problem and which have moved the initiation of the research. The answers to these questions become the result of the study. They are not necessarily formed in collaboration with the participants, but are probably shared with the participants at some point in a time of shared dialogue and reflection. The Questions to Guide the Dialogues - those questions which the researcher has available to initiate beginning dialogues, and which inevitably become dynamic and everchanging - emerge from the research questions.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. How is the emotional well being of elementary aged male immigrant students affected by their enrollment in independent schools?
2. What specific actions on the part of independent schools may hinder the development of emotional well being?
3. What can independent school personnel do to help renew, create or support emotional well being?

The researcher has done participatory research (Manwell, 1994a, b, c) in which he has invited children to become his co-researchers. From his experience, he has learned that the Questions to Guide the Dialogues must be stated in language which the individual child will not only understand but also relate to and relax with. They need to be phrased in the language of the people described by Freire (1985) even if some words such as "happy" may, at first, seem vague or imprecise.

Questions to guide the dialogues in this study included:

1. Are you "happy" at school?
2. Is your school meeting the expectation you and your family

had when you enrolled?

3. How is your culture valued in your school? Are you given opportunities to share your culture with others?

4. How has your language been valued in your school? Do you continue to speak your language? How is English being taught to you in school?

5. How do you relate to the socioeconomic background of most of your classmates? Do you ever feel that they are treating you differently based on differences they may perceive in your background and theirs?

As each question was asked and answered, a new one often arose to take its place!

BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCHER

The researcher, until recently, taught music in an independent elementary school for boys in the Pacific Heights section of San Francisco. His decision to enroll in the International Multicultural Education Doctoral Program at the University of San Francisco was influenced by his perception that many independent schools (including the one where he taught) are woefully lacking in diversity of faculty, staff, and students, and that those schools that make any effort to admit non-European immigrant children do so with fear, discomfort, and a total lack of purpose and expertise in designing an educational program for these students.

The researcher's decision to leave his teaching position was reached after he felt that any efforts to help bring about a change in this reality for the immigrant children attending that particular school were unwelcome and unwanted. He is currently shaping new professional goals and interests which may more effectively help to bring about awareness of and change in

the philosophical and practical planning for these immigrant students and others if indeed they are going to continue enrolling in these independent schools in a numerically and humanistically significant way.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

Immigrant children are enrolling in schools throughout the United States in greater and greater numbers. Most of these children and their families want to succeed in school and come to the institutions full of hope for the future. They bring with them certain culture-based notions about education and learning from their countries of origin. The differences in the ways schools approach teaching and learning, the culture and language of the newly arrived students, the ways families view education and school in relation to their histories and current circumstances and their political and economic realities, their emotional and social existence and their relationship to available services, can influence the emotional well being of immigrant students.

To assist in understanding the issues involved in creating this emotional well being, the literature is reviewed in three broad categories: history and motivation for migration, aspects of immigrant realities which affect the emotional well being of elementary school students (Schools need to look at emotional distress, its causes, and the adjusting and coping mechanisms utilized by the children and their families.), and critical pedagogy and participatory research - including their natural educational extension - the practice of multicultural education.

HISTORY AND MOTIVATION FOR MIGRATION

According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (London, 1990), the first large wave of immigrants since 1820 came from Great Britain,

Ireland, Germany, and Scandinavia. These immigrants were ethnically similar to those already in the United States, and many of them were fluent in English and shared similar cultural values. The second wave (between 1900 and 1920) consisted of immigrants from Central and Southern Europe - Italy, Hungary, Poland, and Russia. They spoke very little, if any, English and came primarily from rural areas. Most of them were Roman Catholic. The third group, beginning with the 1965 Immigration Act (and the refugee acts between 1961 and 1984) and continuing today, brought immigrants who were very different from those who had arrived previously.

Since 1960, the largest number of immigrants have come from Asia, Central and South America, and Mexico. Drachman (1992) describes the complications experienced by these immigrants many of whom began their lives under very oppressive regimes, and who, as a consequence of the terrible circumstances which uprooted them and the subsequent years of migration - often to more than one host country before finally settling in a new country - were transporting psychological problems that more than likely were being misunderstood and misrepresented by institutions such as schools.

Portes and Rumbaut (1990) remind their readers that part of the complication affecting immigrants is that the United States has traditionally grappled with the dilemma of assimilationist and pluralist points of view in its social structure. Competing positions, ideologies, and discourses regarding previous migrant waves of Europeans for whom much of our immigration policy was established cause additional anxiety.

The second wave of immigrants seems to have contributed to the confusion and helped to establish a strong nativistic movement which hoped to stop the immigration of so many new people. This nativism became

widespread throughout the United States, and influenced the nation's institutions, including schools. The World Wars and other conflicts increased the nativistic approach within the greater society, and schools in turn tried to make immigrants "one hundred percent American" and to eliminate all elements of foreignness from the curricula of schools (Banks, 1981).

The conversations about this dichotomy have continued with various scholars and educators assuming opposing positions. Some like Sowell (1981), (1994) support the assimilationist position of establishing a dynamic American identity. Others like Yans-McLaughlin (1990) generally express the pluralistic view of self-respect and the maintenance of ethnicity and culture.

Theorists like Daly and Carpenter (1985) and Mills (1994) have written about the factors involved in migrating, especially the "push-pull" theory which identifies immigration as a response to such realities as overpopulation, famine, war, economic hardship, or religious distress. These are the forces which push immigrants from their homes.

Likewise, the host countries pull these immigrants with such enticements as an expanding economy, increased demand for a larger labor force, and availability of a variety of social opportunities. War accounts for immigration from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos; poverty from Latin America, and unemployment and economic hardship from Mexico. Political upheaval, civil war, and political oppression have brought people from Haiti and Central and South America (Mills, 1994).

While the public image of modern immigration has been influenced to a great extent by the so-called Third World origins of many recent arrivals, an analysis of the realities of many new immigrants would provide a greater understanding of their reasons for emigrating. Because the sending countries are frequently quite poor, many people in the United States think that all

immigrants are poor and basically uneducated (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990). The quality of the newcomers and their hope for assimilation are sometimes viewed as worse because of their non-European past and their questionable legal status.

The reality is very different. Some came simply because the 1965 Immigration Act allowed them to do so. Clearly, not all immigrants are professional or skilled workers, and fewer will become politicians or millionaires. Likewise, they are not all poor and uneducated. Underneath its tarnished image, current immigration reveals a variety of origins, reasons for coming, return statistics, and methods of adaptation to the new society.

It has never been easy for immigrants to leave family and friends and undertake long and dangerous journeys to live and work, often in the lowest and most menial of jobs, among strangers who do not speak one's language. Contrary to stories about sending countries and the false predictions of nativists in the United States, most immigrants have come because they are ambitious, want to work, and desire to succeed. Most immigrants (especially those who might fall into the refugee category) have shared another aspect of the American dream that in its purest form is "the promise of a place to live in freedom, with honor and dignity" (Kromkowski, 1986; p. 67). Most recent immigrants have had some education and come from cities. They comprise the group for whom the gap between hope and local reality is widest and which is most determined to correct the situation. The incredible number and variety of today's immigrants reflect the widespread reach and vision of modern life and the individual fulfillment that is attached to it.

For many immigrants, the United States also ensured security for families and education for children with the opportunity to raise them to be good and useful human beings. To build ethnic communities, to organize

workers' organizations, to establish businesses and churches, self-help groups and agencies as well as cultural organizations, has been a survival strategy and a way of becoming rooted in the culture of a new society.

ASPECTS OF IMMIGRANT REALITIES WHICH MIGHT AFFECT THE EMOTIONAL WELL BEING OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

The presence of recent immigrants in the United States is noticeable in schools throughout the country. With minority enrollment levels ranging from 70 to 90% in the nation's fifteen largest school districts, as immigrant numbers grow in large urban communities, schools will be serving greater numbers of immigrant students. It is estimated that the number of recent school age immigrants who are now living in the United States is approximately two million. Because they have come to a small number of states and cities, their impact on local schools may become even greater than that number might suggest. Dominated by Asian, Hispanic, and Caribbean people, the current migration brings to the United States' schools a growing number of cultural backgrounds and languages which are new to local residents. As immigrant students enroll in United States' schools, their life experiences, skills, and problems present a challenge and an opportunity for school personnel and politicians. Their presence will have a major impact on the country, and the country's reaction to them will greatly affect their emotional well-being.

Cummings, Lee, and London (1983) discuss the need for teachers to acquire an understanding of the life experiences of their students as well as their historical cultural backgrounds. They describe the failure of school personnel - teachers, counselors, and administrators - to handle the cultural diversity among their students, noting that

in spite of numerous essays and much empirical research, counseling and teaching ethnic minorities and international sojourners remains problematic for professionals in the United States. (p. 489)

Many teachers make the mistake of assuming that all immigrant children have the same backgrounds and undergo the same kinds of difficulties in their immigrant experiences. They forget that all of these children (even those from the same countries) come from different social groups and have unique problems with which the teacher should be familiar in order to provide them with a meaningful learning experience. While the educational community continues to attempt to create cultural homogenization, newly arrived immigrant children are resisting.

We are witnessing a revolution of consciousness; a rebellion against having one's identity redefined in the image of another.
(p. 489)

Most affected are those children who come from rural areas where their lives were relatively uncomplicated; they are often at a loss in a more complex and sophisticated society. Any formal schooling they may have experienced would have been quite different from the schooling they experience in the United States. Teachers frequently notice that children are having difficulty adjusting to their new schools, experiencing withdrawal symptoms, confusion, and frustration. Educators must resist the tendency to

overlook these children and regard them as uneducatable (Esquivel and Keitel, 1990).

Assuming that these immigrant children speak limited English, they will probably not possess a large or complex vocabulary. Usually, the teacher cannot understand or speak the child's language and the child is not able to understand what is said to him in the classroom.

The heritage of immigrants, rather than being appreciated in the classroom, is often being seen as the cause of the anxiety. The children, unable to understand words, are sensitive to the tone of voice and body language that transmit the words. They are often made to feel angry, afraid, sad, and insecure.

Freire (1985) reminds us that schools play a vital role in social control. Many teachers believe that education is "to adapt the learner to his environment" (p. 116). Many schools do little more than this. "The best student is not the one who acts out, or reveals doubt, or wants to know 'reasons why', or who does not follow established rules, or who denounces badly organized and run bureaucracies, or who refuses to be an object." (p. 117). Some teachers make themselves, their colleagues, and the schools appear to be emotionally absent. Affection may not be demonstrated, since distance must be maintained in order for the students to receive the information being passed on by the teacher.

Esquivel and Keitel (1990) continue to describe additional barriers to an immigrant student's emotional well being. The support systems available in school are underutilized by many immigrant children. The teachers make few referrals because they have made little effort to properly learn about the students' realities and needs. When referrals are made, they usually occur after some kind of problem has occurred. The other primary barrier to referral

is one of languages spoken during interviews. While the dialogue should be in the child's language, it is most often held in English. When families are asked to intervene, the school is often discouraged when they do not do so because, in many cultures, it is forbidden to display emotional problems. Many cultures believe in intrafamilial or folk therapies. Many children and their families refuse to interact with counselors because they, like teachers and administrators, are viewed in light of their majority status. "Indeed, many teachers and counselors lack experience, empathy, and competence" (Esquivel and Keitel, 1990; p. 217). If parents understand the need for counselling, they are more likely to allow it to occur at school rather than in the ethnic community.

One of the most difficult things for immigrant students to understand is the relationship of teachers and students born in the United States. They are confused when peers disagree with teachers and when students say more than teachers in classroom discussion. Stewart (1993) points to the lack of insistence on memorization which does not lead to understanding or thoughtful action and the lack of consideration and respect for teachers as still other causes of confusion. He also believes that the lack of punishment of students in the United States causes some immigrants to believe that no one cares about their behavior or their educational progress.

Many earlier immigrants brought new languages with them. Those languages tended to share certain characteristics such as Latin roots and the Roman alphabet with English. The sentence structure of languages such as Cambodian, Laotian, and Thai, however, has little relation to English sentence structure. In addition, some recent immigrants are not yet literate in any language, because of disrupted or limited schooling in their country or the fact that many languages of origin have only recently been given formal

structure or may still exist only in an oral tradition. Their experience with education varies according to their level of entry. Those who migrate first are generally thought to be best educated - a professional, urban elite. Those who come next are less educated merchants, officials, and those who wish to be reunited with family. The third group includes rural poor, farmers, and the least educated. They tend to have the lowest literacy in their native languages, and some have never been exposed to written material. They are the least prepared to deal with formal education in the United States.

William Smalley (1963) provides a poignant example of the culture shock he experienced when, as a student in Paris, he was experiencing difficulties not only with customs but also language. Even though he considered himself to be fluent, he was surprised to discover how much language is understood in the context of customs and behavior. He also relates how some languages reflect social level to the point where a speaker must know the relative position that he demonstrates to the person with whom he is talking in order to address him or her properly. Members of many cultures learn early on the signs by which differences of status are shown and also learn to reflect this knowledge in patterns of speech. For immigrants who are learning a new language, these signs are not always apparent. It may take immigrant students months and even years to learn them, and, in the meantime, they may suffer the stress of not knowing quite how to speak to strangers, even though they may want to do the right thing. This confusion may involve spoken language as well as gestures, postures, and facial expressions.

Daly and Carpenter (1985) state that next to missing family members and friends, "problems speaking and understanding English" was the most troublesome aspect of immigrant children's adjustment to life in the United

States (p. 974). Their research demonstrates that children's inability to talk to others in their new surroundings causes many of them severe emotional distress and tends to bring about symptoms of homesickness, grief over loss, uncertainty about the future, minor frustration, and psychosomatic illness.

Living in ethnic neighborhoods can be of help to new immigrants because it provides them with a familiar and comfortable linguistic and cultural environment within which they can begin to adjust to their new society.

Immigrant neighborhoods are typically divided by nationality, language, and institutions such as businesses and churches. Often, people from several countries, united by language, share the same neighborhood. While this may tend to blur national and, perhaps, ethnic differences, it can help to provide solidarity and strength. This concentration also helps to offer a market for ethnic goods, services, and cultural activities. This helps residents to keep their ethnic identity and cultural awareness and assists the entry of new immigrants to the community. Large numbers of families live in these communities. It is from these communities that many independent school students come. There is concern in ethnic communities that immigrant children will lose their ties with their countries of origin and be less likely to return home. Family reaction to the new society and the schools in which the children are enrolled may vary according to ethnic group. Factors such as economy, culture, language, sex and generational role changes and reversals, and residential patterns may cause considerable conflict. Dependence on immediate and extended family members for things like information, support, and resources may ease social, economic, and psychological trauma, but it may be looked down upon by a society which values individualism. Peer pressure may cause children enrolled in United

States' schools to spend less time at home, talk less to their parents, adopt poorly perceived American habits, or to be overly critical of their cultural traditions. This can cause severe emotional pressure on children, their families, and their schools.

Gold (1989) discusses the importance of home and family to members of most cultures represented in the United States. To many of them, family is everything! There are support structures which help children adjust to the new society. It is easier for these children because of the traditions of helping found within the family unit.

Children enrolled in independent schools often receive financial aid from members of their extended families. These kinds of loans are frequently made within families. Ones who have been helped will often be the first ones to offer help to others. Family groups will often live together in order to share expenses in addition to cultural support. This kind of living arrangement helps parents care for their children while they are working. An immigrant child's health and well being are often a shared responsibility, and the children regard all adults in this unit as parent figures.

Immigrant children see their families caring for others here and in their countries of origin. Some families send canned food, medicine, and money to their relatives abroad even though this material may be seized or stolen. Support may also be given to newly arrived immigrants from their country of origin. This support might include allowing extended stays in already crowded houses or apartments.

Within the family, children may be disturbed by role reversals between parents. The fact that most immigrant women who previously maintained the traditional role of wife and mother are working in the United States, and that many men are unemployed or, at best, equally employed, may affect the

family adversely. While this might be viewed as beneficial because it teaches children something about sharing, it is usually upsetting, at least initially, to both the men and their children - especially sons. Gold (1989) has found that women will remain in the workforce even when their husbands find work. The economic reality dictates that in order to send children to school and keep the family together, two salaries must be maintained. (This is especially true if they are sending money to relatives back home.)

Some women are reluctant to give up their feminine roles to the kind of equality which is expected in the United States. Their children are confused about ambiguity in gender appropriate behavior. In extreme cases, children, who have quickly realized that skills in English make them employable, have become partly responsible for the economic, social, and emotional needs of other family members. They may resent being deprived of their childhood and spend little or no time at home. Social workers have found that self-destructive, violent, psychosomatic, or antisocial reactions occur as a result of role reversal.

Many parents who are well educated and held good jobs at home are working in menial jobs in the United States. Some have been reluctant to accept these positions and are, therefore, dependent on children or other family members for financial and emotional support. Pressure on children to do well in school, establish connections, and gain prestige for the family in the new society is intense.

Within the family unit, elderly members frequently experience difficulty learning English, finding acceptable jobs, and making their way in new surroundings. They become removed from the rest and are of no concern to the younger members of the family. As children rapidly accept American ways of life, the distance between them and their older relatives

becomes greater. They are no longer willing to accept advice from parents or grandparents, and this causes conflict which will ultimately affect the existence of the child in school.

Political and economic realities sometimes blur some of the dynamics of recent immigration. It must be remembered that many current sending countries are part of the so-called Third World. These include various places which have been the scene of very serious international problems. They are countries with which the United States has traditionally had economic and political influence and in which the United States' foreign policy has had a great deal of influence. Examples include Vietnam, Laos, Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Cambodia.

The recent anti-immigration sentiment in the United States which could enact California's Proposition 187 and other measures, deeply affects the emotional security and well being of immigrant children. They sense the tension of international migration and the difficulties brought about by people like them working in an affluent capitalist democracy (Zolberg, 1990).

Traditionally, immigration was encouraged by a relationship of structural inequality between two countries, forming the components of a transitional economic system with immigrants from the dependent country serving as members of the labor reserve. Leaving aside the costs and benefits to the sending country and individual immigrants, from the view of the receiving country, the balance is difficult to detect. On the economic side, the benefits of immigrant labor used in this way spill over from the specific sectors where it is employed to the economy as a whole, by reducing the prices of some widely used goods. The costs are borne unevenly by the lowest income groups of the receiving society, whose salaries are lowered by the

additional supply of labor, and by local communities which must provide additional services without compensatory income (Zolberg, 1990).

Children are aware of the growing objection to their family's entrance in to the work force of the U.S., and are particularly nervous when some of those who object are members of other ethnic groups and when the powerlessness experienced by these groups prevents them from changing their own situations. The children can relate to the frustration of being powerless, and often sympathize with the objectors when they realize that their presence in the economy lowers the status of others like themselves (Zolberg, 1990).

The inclusion of immigrants in society demands their involvement in a regional economy. The type and availability of work provide the basic economic resources that immigrants must have in order to become a part of and be accepted by the community in which they live. Generally, the employment opportunities exist in low-waged service and operative occupations. Low-skilled jobs will continue to dominate the labor force in the 1990s according to the California Employment Department (Wallace, 1989), and most of these jobs will be filled by immigrants. Children's lives will be disturbed if both parents are required to hold down two jobs just to be able to make ends meet, including paying for their children's education.

It is generally understood that transcultural adjustment is very stressful for both immigrants and refugees. Depression, stress, paranoia, reactive psychosis, and somatization are symptoms that have appeared among many immigrant groups. Despite generally excellent physical health, many immigrants experience somatic complaints. Many suffer homesickness, sadness over losses of various kinds, uncertainty about the future, as well as many incidences of frustration. While much research has focused on

voluntary and involuntary adult immigrants (Kromkowski, 1986), relatively little attention has been paid to the effects of migration on children. (The researcher believes that children of voluntary immigrants have come to the U.S. very much the same way as involuntary immigrant and refugee children - against their wills.) It would certainly be expected that all children would experience some psychological and adjustment problems. Environmental issues such as weather, locale, clothing, and schools, as well as social relationships and degree of acceptance, can also cause a number of emotional problems. Many immigrants show their emotional distress through physical symptoms and, because of cultural and other barriers, are often unable to take advantage of appropriate services (Fischman, 1986).

Three additional sources of emotional distress are poverty, acculturation, and the nature of schooling. Many immigrants have low socioeconomic status in the United States even though they may have been relatively affluent in their countries of origin. Their perception of their new status frequently causes emotional and physical distress, low self esteem, depression, anger, and serious academic problems. Further instances of loneliness, anxiety, and isolation frequently occur (Simon, 1991). Acculturation often results in the loss of friends and extended family members, difficulty in learning a new language and adjusting to a new culture, as well as intergenerational difficulties. In school, children experience differences in cultural values including children's deference to adults, and are faced with the concept of competition vs. co-operation, witness adverse reactions to their restrained emotions, and face the criticism that they are lacking initiative or the desire to be independent.

People vary as to the degree of their cultural shock and emotional distress. Some simply cannot live in their new surroundings; others make

adjustments. Simon (1991) describes a typical sequence of adjustment: in the beginning, many are fascinated by everything that is new. Then, frequently, hostile behavior prevails as genuine problems such as differences in language and customs occur. As the immigrants develop knowledge of the language and a certain degree of independence, they begin to take their problems in stride and even begin to help those who may be newer to the society than they themselves. Soon they find that they are accepting the new customs as their own, and while they still experience some stress, they begin to actually enjoy their new way of life. Those who seem to cope best are the ones whose cultures are acknowledged and who allow themselves to get to know their hosts and get to know the language - the principal means of communication. Through this new knowledge, they gain power and confidence.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY, PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH, AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

It is essential that immigrant students gain power and confidence if they are going to become active and contributing members of their new society. They may gain this in school by learning and growing through active participation in projects which promote their abilities, understandings, and awareness. This can happen when the conscious and unconscious experiences, skills, and social and political realities come together to create knowledge and awareness. Freire (1973, p. 62) calls these students "the 'subjects' acting in the world rather than the 'objects' acted upon." They develop the power to view themselves and their realities in the world through the manifestation of: 1. a sense of self; 2. critical understanding of the environment; and, 3. the ability to be competent in acquiring social and

political goals for themselves and others. To assist immigrant students in developing this power, an alternative research method is needed. While other methods may remain clinical and detached, participatory research is fully involved in the lives of the co-researchers/learners. It is enmeshed in their struggle, growth, and change. This is a dynamic process in an everchanging world. It is history framed in an empowering new knowledge created by participant and researcher as they discover meaning through joint investigation of their individual and mutual realities.

Ira Shor (1992) explains that for critical pedagogy to be effective, the curriculum for immigrant students must be rooted in the issues and language of daily life. The dialogue created in this context provides generative themes upon which the students, reflecting on their culture and the state of their lives, can begin to gain a world view which encourages steps toward action and change. Freire (in Shor, 1992; p. 55) says that these themes from the students' experiences are "weighted with emotion and meaning, expressing the anxieties, fears, demands, and dreams of the group." These themes are the basis for problem posing and problem solving.

Participatory research encourages, through dialogue and reflection, action for change. Kieffer (1981) makes the distinction between traditional research methodology which gives the researcher complete control of the process and results of the study and participatory research which requires participant collaboration and involvement in the entire process which stimulates a greater application of the findings, and empowers both researchers and participants - working together as equals - to create the knowledge they need in order to be able to affect change for the common good. Ada and Beutel (1993) discuss the power of voice as it is discovered by populations such as immigrant students. They, like Freire (1970), understand

that liberation of the mind, spirit, and soul occurs when the participants name their realities by naming the reality of the world around them. When change (or the realization of the need for change) begins to occur inside both the researcher and the participant, the seed for transformation has been planted and, through dialogue and reflection, will take root and grow.

In order for United States' educational institutions and their staffs to be in a strategic position to deal with the problems of recent immigrants, it is essential for them to draw on persuasive research and combine this information with the acceptance of and willingness to make changes in the structure of their institutions. Such multicultural research should certainly include the work of scholars who have been in the field for some time, trying to derive some knowledge of the dynamics of ethnic diversity as well as specific ethnic groups which are entering the United States as new immigrants (Banks, 1994). From these research efforts, educators should learn that a particular group has its own institutions through which its members cope with environmental, social, economic, and personal/emotional conditions and pressures to which they may be subjected. These educators should be made aware of the factors which pertain to the understanding of the immigrants' attempt to maintain their social institutions and cultural heritage. Such factors will include an awareness of the background of the groups' social reality. Educators must view immigrant life styles in light of their attempts to gain access to power and the preservation of their ethnic and individual identity. This is what they are rather than what one thinks they should be. They need the time and support to make successful and lasting changes. This requires that educators see historical factors linked with the demands of current realities and needs, and view laws and government policies in relation to immigrants' education and emotional well being.

In the forward to *Empowerment through Multicultural Education*, (1991) Christine Sleeter equates social equity and empowerment with multicultural education and suggests that, viewed together, they demand “far reaching school reform”. (p. 2)

Many people discuss empowerment without ever addressing social change, what a better world would look like, or society’s racial, gender, and social-class groups. Many other people discuss multiculturalism, human relations, or ‘at risk’ populations as if oppression and collective power were irrelevant considerations or lenses for analysis. (p. 2)

The empowerment of immigrant children in schools in the United States depends on their access to correct information about themselves and about the world in which they live. Education from a multicultural perspective may help to provide them with this truth.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

If the methodology is the natural result of the Theoretical Framework established in Chapter One, there seems to be no other possibility for this researcher than to use Participatory Research in his work with immigrant children.

Both Vygotsky and, perhaps more specifically, Freire encourage Participatory Research with those among us who seem voiceless. They believe that one's cultural inheritance and environment determine the success of one's educational process.

Both men believe that educators need to be informed and able to support a child's educational progress and success. All aspects of a child's previous experience must be acknowledged and appreciated in order to continue building a dynamic future. In addition, children must always be in social relationship with others. They need to exist in community and share experiences with them. Through dialogue, they are able to come to the understanding that their experiences are not so different from those of others, and through reflection on generated themes, they can begin to gain control of their realities. This power in their lives allows them to find, use, and strengthen their voices, and by raising these voices, create lasting transformative change. They create new knowledge for themselves and others in their communities (Ada and Beutel, 1993).

The children are encouraged to explore diversity among and within cultures. Their voices are mingled with the voices of others to create a new language of themselves. This new language reminds them that they are connected with others and, therefore, truly exist in the world. This is the essence of critical pedagogy. Through participation in critical pedagogy, the

researcher and his participants can discover what may be different in their reality than what normally occurs in the rest of society, and together they can create situations quite different from the ones they are currently experiencing (Jaeger, 1988).

When immigrant children gain this kind of awareness, they more easily recognize oppression as it has been and continues to be a strong force in their lives. Through dialogue, thematic generation, and reflection offered in Participatory Research, they are better able to conquer and destroy oppression forever.

The general rubrics of qualitative research clearly apply to Participatory Research (Slavin, 1992; p. 66-68). These are:

1. Qualitative research uses the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher as the key instrument.
2. Qualitative research is descriptive.
3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products. (While Participatory Research is not concerned with results for results' sake, action or change is a very important aspect of this research method. This will be explored in greater detail later in the section.)
4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively. Hypotheses are formulated as the research itself progresses.
5. Meaning is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. Researchers are interested in the ways people make sense of their realities.

Paulo Freire, in the introduction to *Voices of Change* (Park, Brydon-Miller, et al, 1993), tells us that “. . .participatory research. . .promote(s) a politico-pedagogic instrument for moving women and men to. . .transformative action.” (Park, Brydon-Miller, et al, p. ix). This also applies to

children. He understands that “silence and paralyzing fatalism in individuals and social groups is not their fate or destiny” (p. ix). He also acknowledges that participatory research cannot work magic in the “culture of silence” (p. ix). It cannot immediately restore a voice that has historically been conditioned to be silent. It is clear that silence is not genetically determined but is the result of pathological systems and structures which, in time, can be altered.

Let us examine the specific aspects of this method and discover why it is appropriate for this research on the emotional well being of immigrant elementary school aged boys in independent schools and for creating change for the voiceless.

The dialogic process between the researcher and participants which encourages the participants to share their experiences, interpret and reflect on them, find meaning in their experiences and take action to change their realities, is central to the research. Freire (1970) tells us that dialogue is the way through which we discover our true humanity. Dialogue is essential to communication which, through critical thinking, stimulates true and meaningful education.

The participants - co-learners and co-beneficiaries of the research - are active partners throughout the research process. They may be involved in preliminary research design, in the generation of data, and in the interpretation of data, as it is created, through active and dynamic dialogues (Kieffer, 1981).

Participatory research must lead to community action (Ada and Freire, 1989). Immigrant children and the schools they attend must share the responsibility for the children’s educational experience. Igoa (1989) and Shor (1987) demonstrate that the participants, having reflected on their own experiences,

may be prepared to dialogue with teachers, administrators, and friends at the schools they attend to help bring about change. Freire (1984) teaches us that through this experience, “. . .human beings develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves.” (p. 70-71).

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The researcher identified six fifth through eighth grade immigrant males who attend independent schools in San Francisco and asked them to become a part of his study - to form a community of male immigrant students. The schools included both religious and non-sectarian, as well as single-sex and co-educational institutions. All schools were located in the San Francisco Bay Area, but they were located in different neighborhoods - some near and some far away from the boys' homes. One of the boys is originally from Central America, two from Asia, and one from the former USSR. The family of another is from Haiti and another was born in France. This provided a wide cultural diversity among the members of the community. The boys also represented different socio-economic backgrounds, and their previous educational experiences varied as well. Likewise, their level of achievement in their new schools also varied. One boy was newly arrived, three came with willing and anxious parents, and two were born in the United States. All of them were able to communicate with the researcher in English. (Initially, the researcher did not preclude the possibility of consulting with interpreters on occasion, but this was not necessary.)

Having established these criteria, however, the researcher believes that the most important factors in his selection of the participants was the will-

ingness, energy, excitement, and spirit of adventure found within each of the boys.

The researcher applied to the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco for approval to involve humans as research participants. This study was exempted and given the approval number: 95-05-19-44. A copy of this document is included in the appendix.

RESEARCH PROCESS

The researcher obtained the permission of both the schools and the boys' families before beginning his research. After permission was granted, the researcher gathered the boys together for a general meeting. This gave them a chance to meet each other in an informal social setting where they could share common joys and concerns and come to the realization that they are not alone in their immigrant experiences. The researcher explained the research problem and the participatory research method to them using examples from his own work and that of others, and following a time of reflection on the researcher's Research Questions, he asked them for input on additional Questions to Guide the Dialogues knowing that these questions always grow and change as the dialogues progress.

It was determined that each of the boys would then have a minimum of two dialogues with the researcher. Each dialogue was recorded (with the agreement of each party) and carefully transcribed. The researcher added his observations and interpretations as appropriate and the participants were asked to read the transcripts and make any corrections they felt needed to be made (especially as they related to the researcher's observations and interpretations). Questions for the second (and any subsequent) dialogues were

formulated based on the reflections of both the researcher and the participants.

The second dialogues were conducted, transcripts made and corrected, and a time of introspective reflection on the generative themes observed. This time of reflection was crucial. It allowed the participants to think about their current realities and dream about alternative realities. They then moved toward planning a course of action through which change in the current realities could begin to occur.

The final dialogues and the reflections on generated themes were shared by all of the participants in a final group meeting. Again, the boys had the opportunity to discover that their generated themes were similar to those of the other boys, and together they worked on developing a plan which, when implemented, could bring about important and critical transformative change in their emotional well being.

Adjunct to the participant dialogues, the researcher conducted "mini-dialogues" with a family member, a teacher, and a school friend in order to balance the comments of the participants with the view of others in their lives. Additionally, the researcher asked older male immigrant graduates to take part in a final evaluative dialogue in order to compare the current experiences and reactions of the participants with the realities of those who have moved on. All of the supplementary dialogues were recorded, and information pertinent to the research was transcribed in synthesized versions.

Certainly the most important voices in this research are those of the boys; however, an important aspect of their emotional status in their various communities is both the expectation of and the demand for a certain behavior and attainment. These demands and expectations come from members of

both the culture of origin and the host culture, and the boys' inability to measure up may be the source of sadness and insecurity.

Some children feel so embarrassed and ashamed that they resort to distortions of truth and actually thwart attempts by family and school to collaborate on their behalf. Often this double life even prevents children from welcoming their school friends to their ethnic or familial community.

Even if immigrant children are able, as Ogbu (1994) suggests, to straddle both original and host cultural environments, they are painfully aware that there are those who look on them as "foreign" and resent their presence in their environment. There are some who have little regard for their language and culture, and in their attempt to assimilate, they often find that they are actually being acculturated. A kind of dual reality was observed but, through reflection and continuing dialogue, it can be erased, and permanently avoided.

The mini-dialogues with family members, teachers, and school friends helped the researcher to gain greater insight in his interpretation of the participants' dialogues.

OBTAINING ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Which of the Questions to Guide the Dialogues were asked in order to elicit responses sufficient to provide the maximum amount of information to produce the generative themes which were essential to the formulation of plans leading to transformative action for change?

1. How is the emotional well being of elementary aged male immigrant students affected by their enrollment in independent schools?

The response to all of the questions to guide the dialogue (Chapter one, above) contributed to the collective answer to this important question. The questions which elicited the greatest response from the boys and propelled ongoing questioning were the ones which related to culture and cultural sharing (#3) and socioeconomic background (#5).

2. What specific actions on the part of independent schools may hinder the development of emotional well being?

The answers to the question which asked the children if they are happy in their new school (#1) are important in order to inform schools about the general emotional well being of the immigrant children. It has been the researcher's observation that children are usually happy when the school makes an effort to find out how they are. Likewise, the question about expectation (#2) can inform schools about some of the educational practices of the cultures of origin and help them to make smoother curricular and methodological transitions for the children.

3. What can independent school personnel do to help renew, create, or support emotional well being?

The answers to the questions concerning language appreciation, maintenance, and transition (#4) and the behavior of others based on socioeconomic differences (#5) are important for the school as it attempts to create emotional well being for its immigrant students. Language is central to culture and the literature supports a child's right to maintain his or her culture and to proudly celebrate it with others. The differences in socioeconomic status between immigrants and other students can be diminished and even ignored by a school which is eager to offer programs which do not make undue demands on its students and their families for

additional expenditures and which offer as many opportunities as possible for children and their families to meet on school premises for extracurricular and social gatherings which allow human beings to get to know and appreciate one another on equal grounds devoid of comparisons which may lead to frustration, anxiety, and unnecessary comparisons of properties and possessions.

ANALYZING THE DATA

After each dialogue took place, the researcher offered the participants a copy of the raw transcript for their reaction, corrections, and suggestions. The researcher also provided an edited version of the dialogue (one in which he had removed "uh", "you know", and other superfluous bits of conversation, and had made some editorial comments concerning the nature of the responses and indications of issues which could become generative themes). He asked the participant to read this version also and share his reactions, especially as they involve the generative themes.

The participants were invited to suggest additional questions for the second dialogue and the researcher suggested some as well. The researcher's additional questions were based not only on the responses of one participant but also on the collective responses of all the participants which he synthesized in order to find common issues which would certainly then become common generative themes, and - probably - ultimately the issues which would shape the recommendations for action to bring about transformative change.

After the second dialogues were completed, the researcher prepared the transcripts and analyzed them continuing to search for generative themes. At

this point, the researcher disseminated the transcripts and gathered the participants, presenting them with a list of the themes he believed were common to all, those which were shared by just a few, and any which were unique. He encouraged general discussion among the participants and encouraged their individual and collective analyses. At this final group meeting, the researcher also invited the participants to make suggestions, based upon their reflections, to help bring about change.

This group dialogue was transcribed and copies given to the boys. The analyses were edited, annotated, and directed to specific research questions, and the conclusions and discoveries, along with recommendations for action and change, are presented in the fifth and sixth chapters of the dissertation. As co-researchers, the participants were offered the opportunity to share and comment on all of the researchers work.

The supplementary dialogues, including the group discussion with the older boys, were analyzed by comparing the ideas contained in the generative themes raised by the participants with the thoughts and feelings contained in the supplementary dialogues and discussion. The researcher sought data which supported or corroborated the participants' stated realities, but was respectful of any contradictions which might have been made.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Researchers committed to participatory research as a strong and dynamic vehicle for creating social justice believe that there are no limitations inherent in the methodology itself. Initial questions are refined and often changed completely as the research progresses and the needs of the participants are revealed. The method for analysis is not determined in

advance but, rather, after the study is completed. Despite occasional criticism, participatory research welcomes and acknowledges the voices of children as well as adults.

This particular study may be limited in the following ways:

1. The use of only six participants may limit the generalizability of the results. The ethnic diversity of the participants and the depth of the conversations compensate for this possible weakness.
2. The fact that the six participants and their schools were known to the researcher, that the participants - singly and collectively - helped to define the research, data analysis, and final recommendations, and that these aspects of the process are important to the success of this study may appear to limit the study's impact.
3. That the dialogues were conducted in English rather than in the participants' language of origin may seem to have weakened the study. Every attempt was made to maintain the emotional thrust of the dialogues throughout the process of transcription and analysis.

CHAPTER IV: GATHERING THE DATA

INTRODUCTION

The first thing required in order to begin work on this research with the participants was the clear identification of the problem (emotional well being of immigrant males in private elementary schools). Traditionally, this identification has been accomplished by a researcher on behalf of the participants' community (as it has been accomplished in this study) or it may be done jointly by both the researcher and the community. Sometimes the problem is identified by the participants alone and a researcher is sought to help formalize and formulate the investigation of a problem (Maguire, 1987).

The problem is almost always social in nature and demands a solution by and for all those involved. Since immigrant children are not always completely aware of the problems they may face in private elementary schools or may feel powerless to act on their own behalf, the researcher intervened and became engaged in the research process on their behalf. The researcher became involved when the problem was clear to him and when he felt a deep commitment within himself to help solve it. The researcher and his six participants (along with their families, teachers, friends, and some former elementary school aged boys) became equal partners in this important work.

Change is better and longer lasting if it is created through a shared experience. It can become a communal process, and each participant gains strength, energy, and power from the support of others. The voices of the participants are joined with the voices of others to create a personal language-Freire's "language of the people" (1973). This language connects them with others and, therefore, they truly exist in the world. This is the essence of

critical pedagogy which is an essential component of participatory research. By engaging in this process, the researcher and the participants discover what makes their reality different from that of the rest of society, and together they can create situations quite different from the ones they are currently experiencing (Jaeger, 1988).

The researcher has observed a reluctance on the part of other researchers to engage children in their qualitative research. If they do, it seems that they insist on qualifying or justifying their work, hence, somehow diminishing the validity of the data gathered. It seems that the voices of children are less valid or less true than those who are older or considered more experienced.

To one who has taught children of all ages for a period of twenty five years, children certainly seem perfectly suited to this kind of research. The strong characteristics of children which guarantee the success of engaging them in participatory research are honesty, love, and trust. It is these qualities that the researcher has always admired in his students and have motivated his research with them on their behalf. Helping children gain or, in some cases, regain power so that they might recognize and rid themselves of the oppression which has been a strong force in their lives is extremely important for them, the researcher, and for the society in which they all reside.

Children, like all human beings, are social. At home, at school, and in all other aspects of their existence, children are being conditioned for future socialization based on their current social realities. Theorists like Vygotsky (Miller, 1993) and Freire (1985) recognize socialization as an essential aspect of growing up and demand that children be given the opportunity to question their realities at home and at school. Children are by nature curious. They want to learn. The educational process at home or school can either foster or

hinder their basic need to question. If their curiosity is impeded, they slowly lose their ability to think critically about the world around them. Their capacity for critical thinking and transformative action is restricted. Acquiring new knowledge through curiosity about every day experiences and conditions empowers children to construct meaning in their lives and, after much reflection, act on this meaning. Not to promote this questioning only encourages maintaining the 'status quo'. It tells children that knowledge and the world are fixed and that everything is "just fine" the way it is and that there is no opportunity for children to transform anything and no need for change (Shor, 1992).

Education is a socializing activity for children who should come to the experience with their own dreams and agendas and, being allowed the opportunity to question, dialogue, reflect, and act, either cooperate or resist what the institution intends for them. This is the kind of empowerment that children need in order to become contributing members of society. Christina Igoa (1995) reminds her readers to be careful to distinguish this meaning of empowerment from the traditional meaning we often ascribe to the word power - one that usually indicates that one person controls another.

Empowerment creates change - self and social - for children in all aspects of their lives. Shor (1992), like Freire, believes that self and society create each other allowing individual growth to be an active, cooperative, and social process. Human beings do not invent themselves alone and society cannot be created unless people work at it together. The goal of this participatory research with the participants is to connect personal growth to public and social life by helping to inspire strong personal and technical skills, academic and emotional knowledge, an inquisitive nature, and, as Shor (1992) suggests, a critical awareness of society, power, inequality, and change.

The researcher entered the communities of his participants knowing that problem solving would be their shared work. Initiative on the researcher's part was required, but care was exercised in his approach to members of the participants' communities. The researcher could not forget that powerlessness is pervasive in many immigrant communities and that this may have prevented them from previously recognizing and working on the problem. It has required more than intention to motivate the boys to trust the process and to believe that a solution to their problems not only exists but can be attained.

The researcher felt it necessary to acquire some historical and sociological information about each of the boys' countries of origin, their current neighborhoods, and their school communities (Freire, 1973). Sometimes a researcher lives or works in the community he plans to investigate. This simplifies his efforts since understanding and trust may already exist between him and the participants' communities. In this study, the researcher already knew two of his participants very well. They are students in the school in which the researcher previously taught. While he did not know the remaining boys personally when the research began, he had become acquainted with their schools, and this fact made his entrance into their communities smoother. The fact that he had taught in a similar kind of school made it possible for the boys to trust him more easily and quickly.

Once the participants had been identified and engaged, it became important to make sure that all of them were introduced to one another so that they would feel that as individuals they had become part of a solid new community of immigrants working on behalf of a larger community of immigrant students. Likewise, it was important to explain the problem which the researcher had identified on their behalf to ensure that all of them would

be willing to agree that such a problem exists and that each would be willing to discuss the problem even though it may have touched each of them to varying degrees. In addition, it was essential to explain participatory research (and critical pedagogy) so that the boys could understand the researcher's commitment to its rigorous process and the transformative change inherent in it. The boys needed to understand that this method requires that participants conduct the research themselves making other methods which separate subject from object and researcher from the researched inappropriate. Some of the tools used in those other methods - interviews, questionnaires, field observations, library research, etc. - can be employed in participatory research but only to assist with its primary objectives - dialogue, reflection, and change.

Soon, during the initial "getting to know you" meeting, the boys began to understand that dialogue indicates equality in every sense of the word. It allows the participants to discover how much they share in the identification and solution of the problem, the connectedness of their lives, and their common belief in the need for transformative change. This research allows everyone to speak honestly and fully because there are no right or wrong answers. The heart and soul are as important as the mind in the dialogues, and this aspect of the research allows the boys to become fully human. It allows everyone (including the researcher) to get to know themselves as well as the others and helps to create individual and collective power within the community.

THE PARTICIPANTS: ENTRY INTO THE COMMUNITY

When the researcher began to plan his study, it was his intention to work within the community he knew best - the private boys' elementary

school where he taught. He had approached ten of his students informally and asked if they might be willing to participate in a study of the emotional well being of elementary school aged immigrant boys in private elementary schools.

At first, there was considerable hesitancy from each of the boys. They were not sure why they were being "singled out". The researcher explained that he felt that they were students who might be interested in their pre-migration backgrounds and who would be articulate in discussing how they were feeling about themselves and their cultural identities at school. They all wanted to know for what purpose the study was being conducted. The researcher shared that he was concerned that languages and cultures were being overlooked in the curricula of many schools and that he was hoping that the participants and he might come up with ideas which might help both students and schools deal effectively with an increasingly diverse population in the community in which they lived. All of them, rightly, wanted to talk to their parents. The researcher explained that a letter would be sent to their parents if they made a tentative decision to take part and that the school had agreed to student participation. Six boys returned within the week to inform the researcher that they would like to become participants in the study. Two of them said that their families were very excited about the study and really wanted them to participate. The other four said that their parents had no objection.

The remaining four boys did not respond and, in fact, seemed to avoid the researcher over the next several days. The researcher decided that it was important to bring closure to the matter and sought the boys to find out what they had decided. Two of the four said that they decided they "didn't have time" and the other two said that their parents "didn't want them to take

part." The researcher tried to make sure that there was no problem stemming from his initial inquiry and even offered to contact the parents if the boys wished. All of them said that there was "no problem", and the conversations seemed to ease any tension which may have existed. In retrospect, the researcher assumes that the boys felt that by not participating, they would hurt or anger their teacher. Once they realized that this was not the case, they relaxed and resumed day to day contact with the researcher at school.

When the researcher made his decision to leave his teaching position at this school, he was concerned that he might lose his participants. When he contacted them after the new school year had begun, the two boys whose families had been enthusiastic about their participation expressed their immediate desire to continue their involvement. The other four seemed to have lost interest in the study. Whether they had always been only marginally committed or were no longer interested simply because the researcher was no longer one of their teachers remains unknown.

Upon reflection, the researcher decided that this change had created an interesting opportunity. The small community of immigrant boys would now need to become larger. The researcher would be required to involve himself even further in the *entrance into the community* process which the research method requires. This set-back allowed him the opportunity to get to know other schools and, through his involvement with more than one institution, gain yet another interesting variable in the data gathering process.

During several weeks prior to gathering the data, the researcher visited several private elementary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area. Some were single-sex and some were co-educational. One of them, like the school where he had previously taught, was non-sectarian. The others were, to some extent, parochial; one was Episcopalian, the others Roman Catholic. The researcher

took the opportunity to meet informally with the heads of these schools to explain his study and to express interest in the possible involvement of one or more of their students. The reception the researcher received varied enormously from school to school. One head immediately referred the researcher to another administrator who perfunctorily showed him around the facility and talked at length about the multicultural curriculum offered at the school. When the researcher asked if the administrator might recommend a boy who might like to take part in the study, he was told, simply, "No!". This reaction provided a stark contrast to others which were overly receptive and eager (with various levels of interest in between).

The researcher also asked the two committed boys if they had any classmates who, meeting the criteria for participants, might like to take part in the project. From among their suggestions and the recommendations of some of the school administrators, the researcher was able to gather an interesting and varied group of young men who would become his participants and co-learners in this important research.

THE SIX PARTICIPANTS: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

For the purposes of this study, words surrounded by "..." indicate those spoken by the participants; words surrounded by [...] are the comments and observations of the researcher.

The six participants all chose to use pseudonyms in print. They were:

DAVID B.: David, a "Haitian American", is an extremely active and bright eleven year old fifth grader at what might be called an exclusive co-educational private school in Marin County, north of San Francisco. He has attended the same school for two years and told the researcher that he was "held back" a year when he first arrived at the school so that he could "catch

up on some things" in which he was considered weak by his teachers. When asked what those "things" were, he said "really just about everything, I guess."

David likes his homeroom teacher. She reminds him of the teachers "at home" because she is "very strict" but "pretty fair". Knowing that David had not attended school in Haiti, the researcher suggested that he meant Florida when he said "home". David said, "No. I mean Haiti. That's what my Dad said teachers were like when he went to school. He thinks all teachers should be like that here!" David likes his other teachers and classmates for the most part and told the researcher that one of the reasons he is attending that particular school is to take advantage of smaller class sizes.

David was born in Tampa, Florida and remained there with his aunt and uncle for a year while his parents settled in California. His father is employed in a large nursery in San Pablo and his mother works for several families in various parts of Marin County as a housekeeper. David said that his father "hopes that he can own his own business some day."

One of the families for whom David's mother works interested the family in the school which he attends. They told the couple that they should enroll David in a school which could provide him "the right opportunities". The employers arranged an interview for him, provided recommendations for him, and "vouched" for his family. The school was able to offer the family a full scholarship for David, but the family still works very hard in order to pay their bills and to provide David with as many "nice things" as they can so that he won't feel "different or left out" at school. They want David to have a better (though not necessarily easier) life than they had.

David's father was born in Tampa. His parents were born in Haiti. He met David's mother when he travelled to Port-au-Prince to see his elderly

grandparents. David's parents married quickly so that she could return to the U.S. with him when his visit to Haiti ended.

When asked about the languages his family speak at home, David, who speaks "perfect, unaccented English", told the researcher that both parents speak "a kind of French" and that his father speaks English better than his mother. At home, they speak English with David, but revert to French when they are by themselves or when friends come to visit. His parents seem to care more about David's learning English than French. They told the researcher that their French wasn't "good French". David told the researcher that he and his parents wanted him to take French next year but that the school told them that he should study "a language he doesn't know already".

David has never been to Haiti, yet he says he "feels Haitian". He feels like he knows the country very well because his mother used to talk about it "all the time". She talks about her home less now since "there aren't as many Haitian people in California as there were in our neighborhood in Florida", but they follow the news about their country with interest. David told the researcher that he felt more Hispanic than African since "many of his relatives now live in the Dominican Republic". The concept of diaspora is not yet relevant to David. He is extremely sensitive about this and wanted to make sure that the researcher "understood". He would like to visit Haiti and the Dominican Republic some time in the future. "I might even go there to live some day." Asked about how he felt about being a U.S. citizen since he was born here, he replied that "he is still Haitian!" He has a fairly clear understanding of the political history of his country though he has learned most of what he knows from family discussions and the news rather than from discussions at school. He can talk about dictators and oppressors with some conviction and knows the names of most of the recent Haitian dictators

and presidents. He respects Jimmy Carter and thinks that Colin Powell should be the next U.S. President because of what he did to help Haiti. David and his family attend a pentecostal church near their home. The parents were raised to be Roman Catholic and feel some discomfort in having "switched religions". Both sets of grandparents, according to David's father, practiced a combination of Catholicism and voodoo - "Good magic, not black magic".

David is aware of the enormous poverty (and wealth) that exists in his country and said that that is why his parents "did not want to live there". He said that his family was "rich" now compared to relatives there. David and his family live in a small but comfortable apartment in San Pablo and he rides to school with his mother who drops him and his father off on her way to work in the communities that surround David's school.

The fact that David doesn't live near the campus makes it difficult for him to see his school friends socially. David is probably not the only child with this problem; the researcher learned that the school has a large "commuter" student population. David has made friends in his family neighborhood in San Pablo, but he can play with them only on weekends. During the week, he spends most of his after school time doing his homework and helping his mother with chores around the apartment. His mother insists that her husband should not have to do much at home during the week. "He has worked hard enough." On weekends, David is sometimes required to help one or both of his parents with extra work they have been hired to do. He does not mind saying that "they do it for me."

JUSTIN C.: Justin is a twelve year old seventh grader who attends a paraochial co-educational school in the Sunset District of San Francisco. He lives with his mother, half sister, and stepfather in a small two bedroom flat which they rent in the lower Pacific Heights district. Justin sleeps on a sofa

bed in the living room. His mother, a Filipina, is a dress designer who began her career as a seamstress and is slowly making a name for herself in San Francisco and the region. Justin's birth father is a Chinese exporter who lives in Hong Kong where Justin was born. He sends for his son once a year for a short visit. The stepfather is a professor at a state university in the Bay Area. Justin confided that his stepfather, who is Mexican American, is "mean" to him and that he and Justin's mother give his half-sister more attention than they give Justin. The half-sister, who is six, occupies the second bedroom. This is a crucial issue for Justin since he feels that his adolescence demands that he have some privacy. The researcher very carefully inquired if Justin felt that his stepfather, or mother for that matter, had been abusive in any way and he was assured that it "wasn't that bad". Continuing to monitor this situation became an important part of the dialogic process.

Justin came to the United States, speaking Tagalog and Mandarin but very little English, as he was about to enter the equivalent of the second grade in Hong Kong. His parents had separated and his father sent them to the U.S. Justin believes that his father "just wanted to get rid of us". His parents were divorced shortly after he and his mother arrived in San Francisco, and this caused a split between his mother and her family who, being devout Roman Catholics, believe that divorce is a mortal sin. His mother spoke a little English and, upon arrival in San Francisco, went immediately to a Catholic relief organization which helped her find a small apartment and her first job. She began attending the neighboring parish church where she met her second husband. They knew each other for a very short time, and his promise to provide a better life for her and her son prompted her to marry him in a civil ceremony since the priest at their church would not marry a divorced person. Justin, who did not attend school immediately upon arrival, was enrolled in

the parish school where he has been a student ever since.

The family lived in the Sunset until Justin's mother began to achieve some success designing women's casual clothing. At that point, her husband decided that they needed to move to a "classier" neighborhood so that she would "appear to be successful". The couple soon had a daughter.

The teachers at Justin's school made no attempt to "do anything" special to help him learn English. He went to school every day, sat in the back of the classroom and "did his best" to understand what was going on. The teacher did not speak Tagalog or Chinese, but a number of his classmates did. Friends helped him with the little bit of homework they were assigned and his mother, who was herself improving her English, and stepfather spoke only English at home. It was a little like a game or adventure. Who could learn English quicker? Mother or son? Soon his English was "at grade level", and the teachers were "very pleased with his progress".

Justin does not remember school in Hong Kong so he is unable to make a comparison. He has been in classes with the same children since second grade and feels that his relationship with all of them is "solid". He wishes that the family still lived in the school's neighborhood because it is much more diverse and most of his friends live in that neighborhood. Since they have moved, his family has been less involved in school activities, and they have started to attend another church closer to their flat. Justin has a few friends at church but has not made an attempt to integrate his school and church communities in any kind of lasting or meaningful way. He tends to go to his friends' homes rather than inviting them to his because "I can't have people in the house without an adult; besides, if I'm there they make me baby sit with my sister."

Justin takes public transportation to school and back. He knows the

"city in between" his home and school very well. He doesn't feel that he knows Hong Kong nearly as well because when he is there, his father structures their time so tightly and carefully that he "doesn't really have time to go exploring." His mother talks negatively about her homeland, and his stepfather "seems embarrassed to be from Mexico". Of all the participants, Justin was perhaps the most eager to talk about himself and his reality. It appeared that he did not have many opportunities to dialogue with adults, and he developed a close bond with the researcher almost immediately.

CHARLES H.: When the researcher, having left his teaching position expecting that no one would want to continue participating in this research, called those former students who had agreed to be participants, Charles was the first one (of two) to say "absolutely, yes; when do we get started?"

Charles and the researcher had a five year "history" together, having been student and teacher in the same school. Charles had been required to attend the researcher's classes from third to sixth grades, but when the classes became optional, Charles chose not to enroll. He was never terribly interested in the researcher's academic discipline, but never caused any problems in class. Because of this, the researcher was both pleased and a little surprised at his enthusiastic response to continuing his involvement in the study.

Charles was born in the United States but both of his parents were born in China. They came to San Francisco with a Chinese opera company and sought asylum here in order to escape the oppression of the Cultural Revolution in China. They were granted asylum and are now U.S. citizens. At first, they both took jobs in Chinese restaurants and now own their own very successful restaurant. They speak Cantonese and a little English. Charles speaks English and "a little Cantonese". A grandmother has come to live with the family within the last few years and she speaks only Cantonese; therefore,

the family speaks only Cantonese at home. Charles is fluent enough to do all the translating required for the family.

The three generations live together in a very nice condominium near their business in the heart of San Francisco's Chinatown. The grandmother is highly revered and respected in the household and she plays a very active role in the family's life. She seems to be making most of the decisions about Charles' schedule and activities while the parents are at work and he does not seem to resent this fact.

The grandmother wears traditional Chinese clothing all the time as do the parents when they are working at the restaurant. When they are home, they "look American". Charles said that he hates to dress in "Chinese costumes". The family practices Buddhism and Charles attends Chinese school on Saturdays where he learns Cantonese and Chinese cultural traditions. His parents insist that he attend and Charles is neutral in his feelings about it.

Charles attended the nearest public school through second grade. When his parents began to achieve some success, they immediately enrolled him in a private boys' school. They believed that this kind of school would offer their only son the best possible opportunity to succeed in a society that might make it difficult for "Orientals [sic] to get ahead". They believed that it would be less distracting for Charles to be in a single sex school. They said that he has plenty of opportunities to be with girls.

Charles would prefer to have continued attending the public school in Chinatown since that is where all of his close friends are enrolled. He has nothing against his current classmates but believes that they "look down on him" and that they have very little in common. He has few close friends at his school and does not take part in any extra curricular activities there. He

confided that most of the people at his school don't even know that he plays the piano and studies martial arts. The researcher expressed surprise since music was the subject he taught and Charles laughed and said that he just didn't want anybody to know. Now that the researcher knows, "that's ok". He said that the reason he didn't disrupt the researcher's classes like some of the others who didn't like music was that he respected what was happening in the classes and "really learned a lot!"

Charles never invites any of his classmates to his home and says that he never gets invited to their homes. His parents do not get involved in school activities because "they are too busy" and "they wouldn't understand what was going on". Charles said he discourages them from attending school functions by diminishing their importance. Despite this, he does not appear to be embarrassed by his family.

JONATHAN K.: Among the participants, Jonathan seems to be the most "in touch" with his ethnicity. He was born in Russia and, even though he is a citizen, he considers himself "very much" Russian. His responses to the initial "getting to know you" questionnaire, which the researcher asked all the boys to fill out were the most informed, detailed, and proud of all the participants. Jonathan is Jewish and, feeling increasing religious prejudice in Russia ("but no physical abuse"), his family waited patiently for several years to finally gain permission to emigrate. They went immediately to France to stay with relatives. There the family, which includes a grandfather, two parents, and Jonathan and his older brother Daniel - now in high school - was allowed the luxury of gaining its confidence and strength while learning a bit about "the West" before continuing on to New York and, finally, to San Francisco.

Jonathan's parents are both musicians. His father teaches violin and

his mother is a pianist who plays for a number of dance teachers in the City. The family was assisted in its location and acclimatization by an agency at San Francisco's Temple Emmanuel, and their musical contacts were made through people in that congregation. Jonathan did not speak English when he arrived in New York, but now speaks it fluently. His brother has a little more difficulty with the language, the parents "real trouble" communicating (though they are receiving ESL instruction at the Jewish Community Center), and the grandfather has not tried to learn English. ("He's too old and set in his ways.") Jonathan shared his concern for his grandfather's isolation and loneliness since the family is away from home a good deal, but he thinks that his grandfather may understand more English than he is willing to acknowledge.

The family lives in a small three bedroom apartment in the Richmond district of San Francisco. The brothers share a bedroom and the kitchen is the family's center.

The family feels very, very fortunate to be living as they are. The fact that the parents can continue their artistic careers is considered a blessing, and they are amazed (and sometimes a little embarrassed) at some of the "luxuries" they are able to buy in the United States.

They are amused that the school the boys attend is Roman Catholic. At first this fact bothered the grandfather, but the whole family agreed that the school is "very kind" and that the boys felt no anti-semitism from any member of that academic community.

The agency which helped them relocate had urged the family to place the boys in public schools where they would be able to interact with others who spoke their language on a daily basis, but their brief experience in New York caused them to be fearful of public schools and they sought some kind of

private educational setting. One of the dance teachers for whom the mother works assisted the family in finding what has sometimes been called an "exclusive" parochial school which was willing (and eager) to offer the boys full scholarships. Neither of the boys received any special help with English and both were immediately immersed in regular classes. They were both fortunate to have received "outside help" with English at the Jewish Community Center and "extra help" from caring teachers at the school. Some special tutoring was also needed in order to be able to enter their respective grade levels and this was accomplished with help from friends in the Russian community.

Jonathan was "the center of attention" when he first entered his class. Everyone was "curious" to meet him and hear about life in the "former USSR". At first, he felt awkward since he did not always understand their questions and could not communicate with his classmates very well. "Sometimes, they just stared at me looking like they were afraid or something. Maybe they thought I was a spy!"

He is pleased that his home land is discussed in the curriculum even though he feels that some of what is printed in textbooks is not completely accurate or is out of date. He is a little surprised that the teachers do not ask him to help clarify some of this information. "Maybe, they don't want to single me out. It might makes the others resentful?"

To be able to practice his religious beliefs is a real privilege. At first, it felt strange to be able to attend open public services in a "real" synagogue without fear of hate, distrust, or reprisal. The family celebrates religious customs at home as well, and Jonathan looks forward to preparing for his Bar Mitzvah next year. Jonathan looks forward to returning to his homeland at some point but says that he will probably always live in the United States.

GABRIEL L.: Gabriel and the researcher have known each other for three years. He is the other one of two boys from the researcher's former school who was willing to take part in this study. Gabriel's older brother, Pierre (a pseudonym), served as a participant in two of the researcher's previous participatory research studies. Gabriel was actually included in conversations as a part of those studies and he came to this project with some knowledge of and experience with the method. He is also aware that the method really does "work" and that it really does help to create transformative change in the lives of participants and their several communities. His brother's work actually helped to bring about important and positive changes in their family structure. He sees additional changes which need to be made in his family's relationship to the United States and his place in "American education", and hopes that this research will help.

Gabriel, his brother, and mother came from France where she was an important official in the Ministry of Justice. [The focus of Pierre's research was the broken relationship of his parents and the betrayal he and his brother felt because of their mother's need to "run away" from the problem she was experiencing.] She was invited to accept a visiting professorship in the law school at UC, Berkeley and the family moved to a rented home in Marin County. The boys were enrolled in an exclusive non-sectarian private boys' school in Pacific Heights where several of their neighbors were enrolled and where she could drop them off on her way to Berkeley in the morning and pick them up again on her way home.

Theirs was a life of economic if not emotional privilege and the boys were given everything they could possibly want. Gabriel reflected that his mother was trying to "buy their loyalty away from their father". They spoke no English when they arrived at the school but Gabriel and his brother are

both fluent English speakers now. Gabriel's school was not helpful in assisting him in his educational transition. He was immersed in the routine of his class and given no extra help by any of his teachers. Gabriel told the researcher that he and a bilingual French classmate were "scolded" for speaking French at lunch or free time, that he was discouraged from seeking out his brother's assistance when he was confused or upset about something, and that his mother, who speaks perfect English, helps the boys with their lessons but refused to seek extra "outside" help. She also believed the school when they told her that it would be better if they stopped speaking French at home! The school's French teacher was unwilling to give Gabriel any special help claiming that she "was too busy". It was a very difficult transition especially when his personal life was also disrupted and difficult. Since the father speaks no English, language became a "weapon" in the parent's relationship. When he used to call the boys on the phone, their mother insisted that the boys speak English to their father. "If he didn't understand, that was too bad for him". During previous participatory projects the researcher had suggested to the mother that it was a shame that the boys were falling behind in their original language. "How would they cope when they returned to France?" "We will just have to stay here forever" was her reply. When the older brother was asked to choose a "foreign" language to study in the sixth grade, the school told him that he "certainly could not study French since he already knew that language; he would have to take Spanish instead." The mother has since changed her mind [due in part to the previous research accomplished with her older son] and speaks French to the boys at home. She has also allowed them to enroll in an "outside" French language and culture class offered at their church.

Gabriel remembers school in France. He attended a similar kind of

private school, but was overwhelmed by the luxury attached to his school in San Francisco. At first, the surroundings, not to mention the difficulties he had understanding "what was happening", distracted him. He could not believe how pretty everything was or the number of computers that the school possessed. The classes were so much smaller than the ones he left behind. The teachers were somewhat less authoritarian than the ones in France but they were as "strict". Students here tried "to get away with more" even though they were usually "caught" and "scolded". Gabriel has since learned that other private schools in San Francisco are less rigid and that teachers and students are encouraged to have a "dialogical" relationship in the classroom. Friends who attend other private schools have told him that they have "more fun" in their classes.

Gabriel enjoys life in the United States but definitely feels that he is "just visiting". He fully expects to return to France at some point in the near future though he confides that his mother and brother would like to become United States citizens and remain here. He is aware that the decision will have to be made soon since his mother's leave from the French government cannot go on indefinitely and she will need to decide what she is going to do. The father is not as affluent or "powerful" as his wife and he is not able to help in any significant way financially. Divorce might be preferable for all members of the family, but, for personal religious reasons, it is out of the question. Gabriel's mother now believes that the boys should be able to visit with their father on a regular basis and this fact will influence the decision making process concerning where they choose to live.

RAPHAEL V.: Raphael and his family left El Salvador during the height of a political upheaval which threatened to imprison his father who was a minor but, apparently, important member of the Cristiani regime

which was being "displaced". They escaped at night with the clothes they were wearing leaving behind grandparents and other family members who were not previously informed about the family's departure. Raphael's father did not think that any of the remaining members of the family would suffer any kind of reprisal as the result of their flight.

The family - mother, father, and two children - were assisted in their departure by a friend - an officer in the reigning military - who loaded the family on a supply truck and took them across the border into Guatemala. They continued migrating up through Mexico for nearly a year, and then came to the United States requesting political asylum from the Immigration and Naturalization Service in San Diego. This asylum was eventually granted and the family was relocated to San Francisco where a cousin guaranteed both parents jobs in his janitorial service.

Of all the participants, Raphael has probably had the most difficult time becoming accustomed to a new way of life in the United States. He remembers everything about life "at home". He is aware that his parents have concealed many "bad things" from him, but he loves his home and misses it very much. He misses his friends. He misses the way his Salvadoran school was run. He misses his home with its pretty patio and large, shady backyard. He misses the climate and the food and he prefers the clothing he wore in El Salvador.

Raphael is very aware that his parents are in a different "class" here than they were at home. It hurts his feelings to know that his father is working as a "janitor" here for low wages when he was "very important - among the economically elite" at home. When the researcher asked him if he feels worse about this than his parents do, he had no answer. Is he worried about what his current classmates think about his parents? "Maybe", was his

reply.

Raphael spoke English before he arrived in this country as did his parents, but they all speak Spanish at home. He lives in a neighborhood which is predominantly Spanish speaking and which celebrates Hispanic culture. This makes being here a "little easier". In fact, it would be possible to speak only Spanish on a day to day basis since most of the family's needs are met by neighborhood businesses which are at least bilingual. Even the Roman Catholic church they attend is pastored by a Spanish speaking priest.

Raphael is not sure exactly why he attends his current school - an Episcopal "cathedral school for boys". Raphael would prefer to attend the public school in his neighborhood. All of his close friends go there and Raphael feels that they are learning as much if not more than he is. There students are encouraged to speak their languages in addition to English and various regular events focus on cultural activities that help "keep kids in touch with things they did back home." [At his current school, Raphael is scolded constantly for not working harder to rid himself of his "accent".] Raphael does not feel that a beautiful building or "all the modern conveniences" are essential to learning and said that "nothing matters if you are not happy." His neighborhood friends' parents are all very active in planning and participating in school activities. There, family events are planned around the schedules of working parents, whereas things for parents at his school are held for the convenience of people who can leave work any time they want or who do not work at all. Even though his parents speak English, teachers and other parents often act like they "come from outer space". This bothers Raphael more than it bothers his parents because they are convinced that he is in the "right" school and that this kind of institution will help him "become a success in the future".

Raphael is very aware that he does not have as "many things" as some of his classmates and he is constantly reminded of the fact that he is "different than everybody else" even though his parents pay "full tuition", unlike some other immigrants. Classmates are always talking about "what they did or where they went" and most of what they talk about requires money. The only things that seems to bother Raphael's parents is the fact that most "invitations" they receive from the school seem to have some financial commitment or requirement connected to them. They must decline most of these invitations! They hope that this won't interfere with Raphael's acceptance or his educational progress.

Raphael does not have close friends at his school. He is quick to add that he has "buddies" during the school day but that he doesn't spend time with them outside of school. They live in very different neighborhoods. Most of them live near the school and tell him that they think his neighborhood is dangerous indicating to him that they probably do not want to come to visit him. His school does not require uniforms and Raphael says that he wished that it did. He feels that he is not as well dressed as his classmates. He has plenty of clothes but they are practical rather than fashionable. He takes public transportation to and from school most days and has been "physically threatened" on two occasions. When his father is able to drive him to school, Raphael has him stop at the cross street a block away from school. Raphael admits that he is embarrassed by their old pick-up truck because everyone else ("including most of the teachers") has "a nice car". He has not told his father why he walks that last block but thinks that he "probably figured it out". Raphael's parents would like to stay here to take advantage of their newly found freedom but Raphael would rather "go home".

THE FIRST GROUP MEETING

A meeting of the researcher and all six of the participants was scheduled with everyone's consent and mutual availability. The researcher determined that Saturday might be the day many of his participants would prefer. Even those who attend language/culture schools preferred a Saturday afternoon after their classes were concluded. The Saturday immediately following the Columbus Day weekend was chosen for the first group meeting. The researcher invited all of the boys to come to an Episcopal church where he directs music for their first meeting. This facility is not located in any of the participants' neighborhoods or the neighborhood of any of their schools. Even though one of the boys attends an Episcopal sponsored school, none of the boys is himself Episcopalian. This tended to make the facility a little more neutral.

Saint Francis' Episcopal Church is located in an interesting neighborhood. It sits on San Fernando Way at the edge of Saint Francis Wood, one of the most affluent neighborhoods in the City, but its cross street is Ocean Avenue, a street of great ethnic and economic diversity. It is built in California mission style architecture and could easily elicit familiar emotional responses from several of the boys.

The researcher had previously learned (Manwell, 1994) that participatory research with children is most successful when an attempt is made to provide some light refreshments at each meeting. This tends to relax all concerned. He made sure that a variety of juices and fruits were provided for this late afternoon meeting. The researcher had planned a simple agenda which he determined should take no longer than an hour. (This point is important in dialoguing with children since children tend to be more

forthcoming if they feel that their time is considered valuable and important.)

The agenda was as follows:

1. Introduce all of the boys to each other and ask each of them to say a little bit about himself.
2. Explain participatory research and critical pedagogy as simply as possible using examples from the researcher's previous studies.
3. Explain the problem which the researcher had identified on their behalf and present the Questions to Guide the First Dialogue. Probe the participants' understanding of culture.
4. Get their initial reactions to items 2 and 3.

In addition, the researcher asked the boys to take home a "getting to know you" questionnaire to fill out and bring back to their first dialogue. This was presented in a very low-key way so that the boys would not think that this empowering research required homework.

No matter how many times a researcher has dialogued with participants, he or she will probably be nervous. The participants may be frightened as well, and children may demonstrate this fear in a number of ways. The researcher must be as calm and confident as possible not allowing any initial nervous behavior of the participants to be distracting. The researcher has not failed if less happens at the first meeting than originally expected. This is a natural part of the process.

The researcher and the boys gathered in a warm, friendly room at the church furnished with comfortable couches and chairs. The researcher set refreshments out on a coffee table and told the boys to "dig in as the spirit moved". One of the boys asked if he could take off his shoes and soon all of them wanted to do the same thing. Some sat on the floor with their backs against the furniture while others sat on the furniture.

All of the boys were a little nervous with each other at first. They shared their names, where they go to school, whether or not they have brothers and sisters or pets, what their country of origin is, what they like to do when they are not in school, etc. None of them revealed anything very personal or sensitive.

They listened attentively as the researcher described the process and the problem and all of them seemed to like the idea that they were not going to be the subjects of an experiment but, rather, partners in equal conversations which should, eventually, help others like themselves to have better school experiences. All of them were fascinated by the idea of choosing pseudonyms to be used in place of their real names in print. They felt that this would allow them to be more "open and honest" and worry less about who reads the researcher's dissertation later on. Likewise, they all understood that the research would be confidential unless they chose to reveal something which the researcher would be required, by law, to report to the proper authorities, and that nothing they said would appear in print unless they had approved of it in advance.

One of the aspects of the research process that needed to receive additional careful consideration was how the dialogues would be recorded and preserved. Children tend to be less concerned about this aspect of the research than adults but they must agree on the way the dialogues are being maintained. It was explained that video taping, audio taping, and note taking following the dialogues - singly or in combination with each other - are all appropriate ways to preserve the dialogues. The researcher explained that audio taping had been the method which he used most successfully in the past since it had been more inconspicuous and less disruptive than videotaping, and told the boys that he would not take notes during a dialogue

because he felt that it would be disrespectful of the process. [This could easily appear to weaken his interest and enthusiasm for the research in the eyes of the boys.] They all agreed that audio taping would be most manageable and least distracting.

When they were asked if they wished to respond to the process or the problem, three of them were silent. The other three, seeming to be perfectly at ease with the process and methodology, began to tell stories about things that have happened to them in their schools or in their school neighborhoods which had bothered them (people making fun of their "accents", their clothes, the way their parents look and talk, where they live, the criminal elements in their countries of origin, the stereotypes about the way people live in those countries, etc.). They asked the researcher if these were the kinds of things that he hoped they would be able to prevent, and they were assured that they understood the purpose of the research. The other three boys nodded and smiled. They probably realized that they would have stories to tell, too.

The researcher had also previously discovered (Manwell, 1994) that it is helpful and expeditious to make the appointments for the first dialogues while all the participants are gathered together for the first community meeting. This tends to capitalize on the excitement just generated, solidify the commitment of all the participants, and encourage everyone to continue with the challenging work ahead.

The dates for individual dialogues were negotiated. (Each of the boys said that they would check with their families - "just to be sure that it was o.k.") The researcher was pleased that all of the boys chose to have their first dialogues "sooner than later". When the question of the location of individual dialogues arose it was determined that it was very important that

the participants be fully involved in choosing and arranging the locations. The researcher mentioned the idea of a library or a church and asked each of the boys to obtain permission and arrange for a facility well before the day of their first dialogue. All of them were willing to do so and felt that this gave them "equal status in and control of" the process. All of them succeeded in their mission and notified the researcher well in advance of their meetings.

THE FIRST INDIVIDUAL DIALOGUES

The individual dialogues must reflect the cooperation of both the researcher and the participants. The researcher must be very careful not to "lead" the research in a direction which best serves his research. He or she must be content with the direction the dialogues follow and be patient with the silences, pauses, grunts, and groans, paying particular attention to the participants' body language as the dialogues progress, and pace the sessions accordingly. He needs to know when it is "time to stop" regardless of the length of the conversation. The researcher needs to let the participant ask questions - of himself and the researcher - and answer these questions as completely and as honestly as possible.

The researcher encouraged the participants to share the substance of the dialogues with family members and friends and to bring feedback to the next dialogue session. When the researcher transcribed and edited the dialogues, he provided the participants with a copy to read and reflect on before the second dialogues. [All of the participants in this study agreed that the researcher would maintain the tapes in their entirety but would provide the participants edited and probably shortened versions for their reading and reflection.] Both researcher and participants spent a good bit of time reflecting on the thrust and accuracy of the first transcripts. They shared the generative

themes which they felt had emerged from the first dialogues, and agreed that these themes would suggest the Questions to Guide the Second Dialogue.

When discussing the research problem with the participants in the first group meeting, the researcher did not share the research questions. He did, however, list the Questions to Guide the First Dialogue which he had prepared in advance so that the boys would have some idea about the kinds of things the researcher wanted to talk about. The boys were asked to think about the questions (if they remembered what they were) while they were filling out their questionnaires.

Synthesis of the First Dialogues

It was the intention of the researcher to ask each of the boys the Questions to Guide the First Dialogues knowing that this might be the only time the participants would be responding to the same general inquiries. All of the questions except the one concerning social and economic differences were addressed to some extent by each of the participants in the first dialogues, and the synthesis reflects their responses to these questions.

Schools, Classmates, and Teachers

None of the boys said that they were totally unhappy in their current school environments. All of them, on the other hand, had some reservations about certain aspects of their institution. Raphael and Charles seemed to be the least happy. Both of them said that they feel that they are "not quite a part of their class". The fact that neither of them participates in any extra curricular activities at their schools makes it difficult for them "to be one of the group". They are both aware of this fact, but neither is willing to make any

changes in this regard.

All of the boys said that they liked their classmates, but David, Justin, Charles, and Raphael - to one degree or another - said that they did not feel "really close" to many people at school mostly because they felt that they needed to "leave the neighborhood" as soon as school was over for the day. All of the boys said that they had had minor physical altercations with classmates at some point, but Gabriel and Jonathan did not connect this fact with any particular discrimination on the part of their classmates. The other four said that the fights were always a result of "tensions" which had built up between them and their classmates and that the tensions were generally culturally or economically based.

The teachers did not generate the same level of enthusiasm as the classmates. Each of the boys attends classes taught by several different teachers and while each boy has at least one teacher whom he really likes and respects, all of them had several negative things to say about many of their teachers. All of the boys - Justin being the possible exception - believe that teachers must be "strict" in order to be able to accomplish anything. Charles believes that students take advantage of teachers who do not "crack the whip". All of the boys dislike teachers who are not strict and who do not demand a lot from their classes. Raphael and David seemed very interested in pursuing the concept of a teacher's being "authoritative" as opposed to "authoritarian". Raphael is particularly in command of the concept of "authoritarianism" since he believes that the regime which "tried to get his father" was "authoritarian" among other things. David, whose father believes that teachers are too lenient in the United States said that he feels that "teachers can be nice and still get their students to behave in class". He remarked, "If the teacher acts like she enjoys her subject and has lots of interesting things to

tell us and neat projects which help us remember what we learn, then we will behave and do what she asks us to do." Justin agreed saying that the teachers at his school "seem more interested in us than in the subjects they teach. We appreciate that and want to do our best for those teachers." Charles shared that the teachers at his school "seem to know a lot about their subjects, but act like they are bored sometimes. They get mad if they have to go over something two or three times. I guess they expect us to be geniuses."

Gabriel does not like his current teacher as well as last year's. This teacher compares Gabriel to his brother all the time and he "doesn't think that's fair". He added, "Even my mother doesn't compare us at home." Most of the boys said that they have had experiences in which a teacher has seemed uninterested in them as people, and all of them related experiences in which a teacher has acted like he or she disliked them because they are "foreign".

With just two exceptions, all of the boys said that they liked the school campus and the furnishings inside the building. All of them said that their school was in a "nice neighborhood" and that the buildings "looked nice" from the outside. With the previously noted exceptions, they felt that attending a "well kept" school probably helped them "learn better". The boys who attend co-educational schools said that they prefer going to school "with girls" and the boys who attend single sex schools said that they personally saw no advantage to this arrangement. The latter participants said that they felt like they were "missing out" on some social interactions which friends were allowed at other schools and that they felt "embarrassed and awkward" when they were around girls in social situations.

While most of the participants appeared to demonstrate the same awkwardness experienced by any elementary school boys, their ethnicities and cultural backgrounds seemed to elicit two unique concerns: the feeling of

alienation from others caused by cultural differences and physical separation from the campus and the confusion over new and different teachings styles. Each of the boys reacted very positively to his well appointed campus - more so, perhaps, than a student who has experienced nothing else.

Expectations of their Schools

When the researcher asked the boys about the expectation they and their families had about their schools, all of them said that their parents expectations were probably being met but that they had different expectations about school. David, Charles, and Raphael stated very strongly that their parents had enrolled them in their schools for "all the wrong reasons". When asked to elaborate, David said that his parents were trying to "act like" the people his mother works for and that they think that David's attending a "mostly white" school will help them get ahead even though they say that it is for his future. Charles agreed. He felt that his parents wanted him to "become as good as the non-Asian boys in his class and to go to all the right schools and because of this, eventually, be a greater success in business". He confided that it hurt his feelings that they "don't really believe that I am as good as everyone else", but the researcher felt that Charles probably understands that it is actually his parents' feelings of inferiority which are the cause of their concern. Raphael said that his is the kind of school that his father attended in El Salvador and that he was attending before they left their country, but now it doesn't make any sense for him to be attending a school which is "so far above" where the family is now. He claims that his parents are "living in a dream world" and that he really thinks that it would be better for all of them if he "went to a normal school". This would "force" his parents to join with other parents from their neighborhood in "adjusting to

life in the United States the way it really is". The researcher believes that school for these three boys is what it is. They attend school because it is expected of them. They are willing to learn what is being offered, but they cannot envision themselves "preparing for the future" this early in their lives. They expect to go to college, get jobs (They have not decided what field they will enter unlike other boys in their classes!), get married, and raise families. "What's the big deal? Everything's possible in the United States, right?", Raphael interjected with a grin.

Gabriel, Justin, and Jonathan believe that their parents had nothing but their best interests in mind when they enrolled them in their respective schools. Even though Justin would rather be "somewhere else", he believes that he should do his best to please his parents. He would rather go to school with friends from his former neighborhood, but he said that his expectations about school were being met where he is. He likes school and wants to do well. He appreciates the opportunities his school provides and feels that attending this school will give him "an edge". Jonathan said that any school in the United States is better than one he might attend in Russia, so he feels that his expectations are "more than being met". He feels that some of his teachers actually encourage him to be creative and "go further" than what is expected to satisfy the requirements of the course. Gabriel said that he knew what kind of school his mother would choose for him and his brother, and he said that his school in San Francisco is "exactly what he expected". He wishes it were not so difficult but understands that "you have to work hard if you are going to get ahead in life". Parental expectations, whether they be for better opportunities for themselves or their sons or for the best education available, seem to be met. The boys are either in agreement with or somewhat suspicious of their parents' motives and seem to be having their expectations

met to the extent that they have any significant expectations at this point in their lives. All of the boys feel that there are "better" schools than theirs and all of them feel that they could be getting equally good educations elsewhere. Raphael and Charles actually feel that they would get a better education at another school.

The participants seemed more eager to discuss their parents' expectation of their schools, their sons' place in them, and their perception of the benefits the children might receive than their own expectation of their particular schools. The boys demonstrated considerable wisdom in their interpretations of their parents expectations and motives, and most of them, seemingly oblivious to any serious consequences of their school enrollment, expressed gratitude for their parents' concern.

Culture and Language

The questions about culture and language elicited the strongest and most thoughtful responses from all the boys. All of them feel some ambivalence concerning this important aspect of their lives.

Jonathan was very comfortable discussing his culture and his language. He understands that it is important for him to learn English in order to be able to do the things he needs to do on a daily basis. He also realizes that he is attending, for all intents and purposes, a monolingual school and that, in order to do well there, he needs to be very proficient in English. He attends Russian school on Wednesday afternoons and is continuing to grow in that language as well as English. He, like all of the boys except Charles and Justin, wishes that, if he cannot study his language of origin at school, he could be given academic credit for his work at the Russian school. His parents have inquired about the possibility of some kind of credit but the school has been

unwilling to discuss the possibility.

Charles accepts his Chinese dialect with some discomfort. He has difficulty feeling good about being trilingual (He studies French at school). He is embarrassed when his parents speak Chinese around people who do not understand it and is reluctant to translate for them in social settings. His self image seems diminished when he is "forced" to speak Chinese in non-Asian settings, but says that he does not mind speaking Chinese at home - especially since his grandmother does not speak any English.

Likewise, David is not very interested in speaking French. When the researcher told him that French used to be, and may still be in some parts of the world, considered the international language, David laughed and said, "Not the way my folks speak it". His parents told the researcher that they "resent" French because it represents the "elite" in Haiti. They have always felt that the variety of French they spoke was "looked down on" by the upper class, so they are glad to be learning English and are happy that David considers English "his language". They would be pleased, however, if he studied "proper French" and cannot convince his school that "he doesn't really speak French - just a few words he's picked up from us." They are unhappy that David's school is requiring him to take Spanish instead and feel "helpless" about it, though they have no objections to the Spanish language. It was the researcher's impression that, for them, David's learning "proper French" would help to elevate him, at least in part, to the level of the 'elite' in Haiti.

Justin remembers almost nothing of Tagalog or Mandarin, but he would like to learn both; he feels that he has a "knack" for languages. He is studying Spanish now, at the insistence of his step father, and his mother said that Spanish would "help a little" if he were to visit her home in Manilla

where there is "lots of Spanish influence". Justin said that the Spanish he is learning at school has caused yet another conflict between him and his stepfather since his teacher says that the Spanish he is learning "is upper class Spanish" and his stepfather speaks "lower class Spanish". Justin felt comfortable, initially, correcting his stepfather, but his mother suggested that he "should be careful and have a little more respect". Now he says nothing and is reluctant to speak Spanish to his stepfather at all. Justin considers English to be his primary language but feels that knowledge of Mandarin, Tagalog, and maybe Spanish, would help him to "get in touch" with his cultural heritage.

Gabriel said that he is definitely "bilingual" now that his mother allows him and his brother to "keep up" their French. He feels that he is completely caught up to grade level in English and said that his teacher told him that he was "losing his French accent when he spoke English". He is glad that he can speak French to his father and that his mother will speak French with her sons at home. When the researcher talked about code switching, Gabriel said that they "didn't do that." They spoke "all English or all French". He shared that though his brother was "mad" that he was forced to study Spanish instead of French, Gabriel looked forward to it. "Then I'll be trilingual". (He confessed that his brother is lazy and wants to take French because "he thought it would be easier". Now he has homework in Spanish and French, though the French class they both take doesn't require a lot of outside work.) Gabriel understands that French is considered to be "very upper class" and he likes to feel that he is a part of that. He said that people who speak French are more "cultured" and that some of his classmates were "jealous" because he could already speak a language that they would just be starting next year. He enjoys feeling like "he's ahead".

Once again, Raphael expressed discontent - this time with the way his language is viewed by his school. Even though he realizes that Spanish has been a highly regarded, scholarly world language for some time, he is still very much aware of the stigma connected with it especially as it is compared to English or even French. He is also aware of the "good Spanish" - "bad Spanish" dichotomy that exists in some parts of the world and confessed that even his family had in the past expressed some concern about people in their community who did not speak "correct Spanish". On the other hand, he gets very angry at school if he hears the Spanish teacher talk about the variety of Spanish spoken by others. She always implies that they could not possibly come from as refined a social group as those who speak like she does. He senses that she looks down on one of the school custodians when they speak Spanish together, and she has turned to Raphael on a number of occasions and made sarcastic remarks about the custodian's "vocabulary and grammar". Raphael also feels that students whose primary language is English feel that his language is not as good as theirs or the language of "native" French speakers.

On occasion, when the Spanish teacher brings in videos or literature produced in Spain, he understands that she makes remarks about how much better this material is than that produced in Central or South America or, "God forbid, Mexico or the Caribbean". Students who have the Spanish television station on their Cable service frequently make fun of the programming and tease Raphael about the "poor production quality or the native costumes". When he tries to explain that these programs are not produced in his country, they just look at him like "they don't know what he's talking about".

Raphael is proud of his language and enjoys speaking it. He confessed

that when he feels most hostile, he likes to "speak Spanish to his classmates who are studying the language"; he likes to speak very quickly and use "a lot of words that they don't know" so that he can stand and look at them as if to say, "Well, I can understand what you say to me in English, why don't you understand what I am saying to you. You think you are so smart, so good."

All of the boys agreed that their cultures are probably not really acknowledged or respected by their schools. Gabriel was the only boy who said he thought that while people may not know enough about France and her culture - especially regions outside of Paris - they "pretended" to know a lot. When the researcher pressed him to elaborate, he said that his mother felt that some people in the United States felt culturally inferior to Europeans and liked to think that they are "sophisticated about European things". He went on to say that he knew that it really had to do more with the number of years the United States has been a country than anything else. He shared that his family used to laugh at Americans when they talked about how old and dirty everything was, at the same time saying how much they loved Paris - "so chic". Gabriel confessed that he wasn't sure about what cultural differences existed between France and the United States. He said that his family has spent most of their time with the French community in the Bay Area and that everything they did regarding food, daily habits and customs, special holidays, etc., all seemed normal to him.

It was interesting for the researcher to observe how few of the boys had a clear notion of culture. This was one of the concepts which the researcher wanted to discuss during the initial group meeting. He felt that this was important so that all of the participants could relate to this question during their first dialogues.

Charles said that his school made a "token gesture" toward the Chinese

culture: "Once a year, usually around Chinese New Years, they serve a Chinese lunch and hire a dragon to come to the school and parade around the lunch room. They have also had martial arts demonstrations and drumming. Since there are so few Chinese students, we feel embarrassed. It feels like a 'freak show' or something. Everybody else stares and laughs and points and I just want to ask to be excused to go to the bathroom until it's over. My friends keep looking at me and saying, 'neat. wow.' They also make fun of the food and keep asking me to show them how to use chopsticks. I used to try to show them, but it always ended up with their asking me if that's the way I eat at home and making jokes about things. So I stopped. I get so tired of all the stereotypes."

Charles said that this also caused the Japanese students to "get mad" at the Chinese students since the school didn't do anything about Japan - or Korea, or India - or any other Asian country. He was always amused that the people who planned the Chinese event didn't "get it" that China is a huge country and that not all Chinese have the same language, customs, dress, food, or cultural identity. He was excited once when the art teacher announced that she would be showing them some Chinese calligraphy. He was learning to write using Chinese characters at Chinese school and looked forward to "showing off". When the day came for the demonstration, he was horrified that the teacher "didn't really take the project seriously". She just looked at it as "pretty decoration" and "kind of made a joke out of it". She made matters worse by playing Chinese music in the background causing all the others to hold their ears and make fun of it. He did not tell them that his parents used to sing and play this kind of music for a living! When the teacher asked Charles if he knew how to "draw any letters", he said he just nodded, "No".

Charles does take pride in China's emergence in the world politic, but tires of everybody assuming that all Chinese must be Communists, therefore, untrustworthy. Even though his history teacher made sure that everyone understood that Mao's revolution was a relatively recent occurrence, Charles still feels concern about some of his classmates political assumptions.

Justin feels "ignorant" when it comes to his culture. At first, he told the researcher that he "didn't have one because his parents and step-parent all came from different places". The researcher restated what he thought had been clear in the first group meeting: Everyone has ethnicity and culture, period. Some of us are just unclear about where and what. Some of us deny it because we have been told that ours isn't as good as somebody else's. Some people have rich diversity existing within their immediate families and that is wonderful.

Justin seemed to understand this explanation intellectually, but was, at first, unable to apply it to his own situation. Nobody in his family makes any effort to maintain any connection with their countries of origin. His mother doesn't practice or cherish any Philippine customs, his father ignores his Chinese heritage, and, as stated previously, his step-father seems embarrassed about being Mexican. When all is said and done, Justin just wants to "be American". When the researcher asked Justin if he related to any of the ethnic customs discussed or observed at his school, Justin laughed and said that he thought it was all a "silly waste of time".

David was unclear about "how a school respects culture". It was clear that David was not avoiding the issue since he is very proud to be Haitian - even though the researcher felt that he would rather be recognized as Hispanic or "Latin" rather than African. When the researcher gave examples of ways schools acknowledge and respect students' various cultures, David

asked how a school could possibly do "something for everybody". "They'd run out of days. Hey, maybe that would be good."

The two co-learners spent time thinking about how a school - especially one with a highly diverse student body - could actually recognize all of the cultures present in its community. Ultimately, they decided that the first thing necessary for this to happen is "a recognition that everybody comes from some culture and that no one's culture is better than anybody else's. When that occurs, all the students and teachers will be more willing to celebrate the cultures they have time for, and nobody will be hurt if nothing special gets done to honor their culture this time." "They can take turns." The researcher was very excited about David's discovery and was eager for him to share it with the other boys at the final session.

David wasn't sure how he felt about the cultural celebrations that happen at his school. According to him, they aren't presented in any kind of educational context so he never really understands what is happening. It feels to him more like "assembly entertainment" than anything else. He had never associated any of the ethnic presentations with anyone around him. He hasn't been able to relate to any of the cultural celebrations because they haven't "seemed real" to him. He hasn't seen anything of himself in any of them. No one has made any effort to inspire his pride in or curiosity about his or anyone else's culture.

Of all the participants, Jonathan and Raphael are the most in touch with their cultural identity. Both are proud of their heritage and are not affected in the least by any negative remarks or inferences any of their classmates or teachers might make. While Jonathan appeared to be more positive about how others view his cultural practices, both boys told the researchers that their families continue to do the things they "used to do"

even though others may not understand or accept these practices. For Jonathan, the cultural heritage includes his practice of Judaism. Raphael said that he is not as religious as the rest of the family, but admits that many of the cultural aspects of his life revolve around the church or religious themes. Jonathan told the researcher that when he was in his house, he felt like he was "in Russia". "Everything except maybe the furniture and stuff is just the same." The researcher's visit to Jonathan's home following the first dialogue confirmed this feeling. Jonathan feels like he could go back to Russia "tomorrow" and "fit right in". He wishes that his school would worry less about Russian history (which he claims they teach badly) and concentrate more on "the people". He feels that his classmates would enjoy hearing about the differences and similarities between growing up "there and here". He feels that his classmates are "spoiled" and would be shocked to hear how he lived in Russia even though he says they had a "pretty good" life. He regrets the fact that his teachers do not ask him or his family to take part in presenting Russian culture at school. His parents have volunteered to present a program but, so far, they have not been invited. "They always say 'Great idea. We'll give you a call and try to set something up.' but nothing ever happens. You'd think my parents would either get it or give up."

Raphael is angry that his school doesn't want to understand his culture. "They say they are offering a multicultural curriculum, but they aren't." He, like Charles, feels embarrassed when the school has "Mexican food day". "People who aren't Hispanic dress up in stereotypical costumes and play Mexican music and act stupid. Everybody gets the idea that that is how we behave or live all the time. My father came to school in a business suit one day and my friends kept wondering when he was going to change into his 'serape' like the guy in the coffee ads on TV. We don't all talk

through our noses in high pitched voices. We don't eat beans and rice and tortillas all the time. We don't all have a donkey". When he said this, Raphael laughed. This helped relieve the tension that was building.

Raphael said that Central American countries were "all lumped together" in lectures and that the only aspects of those countries that any teachers wanted to talk about were politics or the military regimes. "Textbooks", he said, "are filled with stereotypical drawings and most of the photos show soldiers with machine guns or worse." One teacher tried to explain *The Day of the Dead*, but everybody started to laugh and make fun. She laughed, too, and gave up saying, "Maybe next year!" Raphael says that his family has usually enjoyed a 'pinata' at Christmas even though it did not originate in their country. It is something that children enjoyed in his neighborhood in El Salvador and, likewise, enjoy in his neighborhood in San Francisco. He once thought that it would be fun to show his classmates what a real 'pinata' celebration was like, but decided that they would probably "just try to smash the 'pinata' to smithereens and fight with each other to see who got the most."

Raphael concluded his first dialogue by saying that what bothers him the most is his school's implication that all Hispanic people are below average in most respects. The question about how the boys relate to the socioeconomic background of their classmates and its difference from their own elicited the least response from all the boys. Only Gabriel said that he felt that he was equal to all his classmates in this regard. The researcher ended each of the dialogues hoping that this question might arise again in the second dialogues.

Most of the participants did not have a clear understanding of what culture represents. Like many adults, they tended to confuse culture and

ethnicity. All of them have been told, explicitly or implicitly, that English should be their language of choice since it is better or superior. While all of them expressed the realization that English is essential in order to live their lives in the United States, they resented the inferences that their languages were inferior and that they should somehow disguise the fact that they speak them. Because of this, however, all of the boys expressed a commitment to learn and speak their languages of origin. While the boys resented the fact that their cultural traditions and practices are not better represented at school and sometimes blamed their parents for not insisting on better representation, they were shy about initiating any activity in this area.

The researcher presented a synthesized transcription of the first dialogue, plus a summary of the first group meeting, to each of the participants. He asked each of them to read it over and reflect on themes which they would like to discuss at the second dialogue. These second dialogues were scheduled to occur no sooner than one week from the participants' receipt of their transcripts. In the meantime, the researcher asked the boys to provide the names of family members, teachers, and classmates with whom they would like the researcher to have "mini-dialogues". The researcher explained that questions asked would be similar to theirs but that the dialogues would not be as detailed or as long. The researcher would also allow these supplementary participants to raise their own questions and issues. The boys gave the researcher the names of those they felt comfortable with and this part of the dialogic process was completed.

THE SUPPLEMENTARY DIALOGUES

Overview of the Process

The researcher then began to conduct the "mini-dialogues" with family members. Each of the boys thought carefully before he decided which family members he would ask to speak to the researcher. All of the boys (except Charles and David, who chose their fathers), selected their mothers for these dialogues. Charles had initially chosen his grandmother, but decided that she would find the process "too taxing". He claimed that "...the world moves too fast for her." "Imagine how she'd react to something like this. I'm not sure that she would be honest and open with you until she got to know you. I'd have to translate and that would be difficult for me. My dad will do a better job."

While it is true that the researcher intended, in principal, to ask the family members many of the same questions that he had asked the boys, it was clear that the unique answers offered during the first dialogues altered and reshaped the emphasis of each of the questions.

All of the family members invited the researcher into their homes for the dialogues. The researcher learned from Jonathan, whose home was being visited for the second time, that his family felt uncomfortable with the word "dialogue", so he began to refer to them as "conversations". The researcher felt that he may have learned as much from the participants' home environments as he had from the conversations themselves. He was able to envision each of the boys as they were reflected in the atmosphere he observed in their homes and in the faces and voices of their family members. These visits allowed a better understanding of many of the thoughts and feelings expressed by the boys.

Family

The first of these mini-dialogues was conducted with David's father. David was spending the week-end with a friend from his church youth group, and it seemed that his father would not have met with the researcher if David had been home. His wife stayed and chatted for an appropriate period of time (clearly determined by the couple), then excused herself so that she could "go to the market to do her weekly shopping".

The researcher was drawn to this man. There was something immediately likable and admirable about him. He exuded kindness, simplicity, and honesty - qualities often lost by or taken away from other immigrants. He seemed to be nervous at first, finding it difficult to look at the researcher face to face. The researcher took the time to tell him how very much he liked his son and how bright he had found David to be. As soon as the researcher quoted something positive David had said about him, the father relaxed, smiled, and indicated that he was ready to talk.

He and his wife had grown up in "near poverty" raised by families who were in constant fear of economic and political extinction. "If you're poor and have no important friends, it doesn't matter how many good ideas you have or how smart you are. Nobody cares what you think. We went to school, but most of us believed that it didn't matter how much we learned; we didn't have a real future anyway. Besides, our schools were little more than child care centers. If you compare them with the schools for the rich up on the hill, ours were nothing. The books we had were old and dirty and we had very few supplies. I always thought that our teachers were good because they always seemed to be able to come up with something interesting for us to do and

learn, even if they didn't have the right equipment. They were tough - they had to be. They knew that for us to have a chance to survive, we'd have to be even tougher. They were like us, so we knew that no matter how tough they might be, they cared about us."

He explained that the prejudice he felt most strongly as a boy came from people in his country who were the "same color" as he is. "They were members of the 'elite'; and we didn't resent the white tourists as much as you might think. Most of them were European, and as long as we showed them the proper respect, they treated us OK. Some of them gave us money."

The researcher asked about the issues of language and culture, and David's father said that his family was "trying hard to leave Haitian ways of life behind and become American". He said that he only hoped that if David's school discussed Haiti it would "be fair" and that it would look at "the good things, too". He said that they spoke "very bad French" at home and so he hoped that if David learned French it would be the "educated kind - not like the peasants". He remembers his teacher's telling them that they spoke the "language that was expected from people like us". He would like to have become a doctor so that he could have helped make life better for his neighbors, but that was impossible. He hopes that David will do something "important" with his life. When the researcher asked him if he would like to see David go back to Haiti to help the people there, he didn't answer. He just stared at the ground.

The researcher was offered some of the usual reasons for their coming to the United States: freedom, safety, financial improvement, political stability, etc. The one reason offered by all the participants' family members (with the exception of Gabriel's mother) was a better life for their children.

The next family member with whom the researcher spoke was Justin's

mother. She arranged to meet with him when her husband had taken their daughter to a movie and Justin was at a school function. This was the only time in this part of the process when the researcher felt uneasy about being with one of his supplementary participants. This was based largely on Justin's somewhat guarded and negative portrayal of his step-father.

The woman was clearly nervous and tense. She apologized for their home, saying that her husband "is intending to move us in to a better place as soon as possible". In fact, the researcher thought that her home was very nice and, knowing that she designed clothing, asked her if she had done the decorating. She smiled tentatively and replied that she had, but, of course, she "wasn't really very good at it - except maybe in the choice of colors and fabrics".

Justin's and Gabriel's mothers, though from very different economic and educational backgrounds, have much in common. Justin's mother, very concerned about what Justin had told the researcher, said that she had been "devastated" when Justin's father "kicked them out". "He sent us here to get rid of us. He had a new woman and he just didn't need us around any more. I would have killed myself if it hadn't been for Justin. I was scared to death. I didn't know where to turn. He might as well have killed us himself. If it hadn't been for my church, I don't know what would have happened to us. I married my husband.... ." Her voice trailed off to a whisper leaving the researcher to complete the sentence - silently for himself. Their new child brings them "much joy", but she knows that her husband treats this child "better than he treats Justin". "It's because she is a girl, don't you think?" The researcher did not reply.

She explained that she married her first husband to "get away from the kind of life she was living". She did not elaborate. She said that her culture

was important to her, and that she was trying to be positive about it with Justin. She said that she finds it difficult to talk about "home" when her current husband is around because he "wants us to forget about all that and become American". She also said that Justin was very interested in his cultural traditions, and she wishes that his birth father would help him gain confidence in this. She also wishes that her current husband could relate to his own background with more pride. She feels that this could help him "relate to Justin better". She isn't sure what his school is actually doing about "all of this", but thinks that it is "multicultural". She isn't sure that they would be here in the United States if her first husband hadn't "dumped" them, so "it's hard to tell whether or not Justin is getting what he needs or not". She said that she "just wants him to have a good life wherever he lives and whatever he chooses to do".

The researcher wanted to speak with Gabriel's mother next. Since he had previously worked with Gabriel's brother, he knew that this mother had come to the United States to escape a husband who had also taken a mistress. The difference between her and Justin's mother was that she was in the financial position to come here on her terms and did not have to make any compromises "just to survive".

Her tone and manner are very different. She has no insecurities or doubts. She is very confident and self-assured. She is in charge of her life and the lives of her sons. She did tell the researcher that "the few little problems that we had when we first came here are now almost completely resolved". She acknowledged that she was grateful to the researcher for the suggestions he had made previously when he conducted participatory research with her older son.

She was immediately curious about why the researcher had chosen to

study only male immigrants. She said that she was used to the "man's being the boss", so she hoped that this wasn't going to be "too chauvinistic". The researcher read the portion of his dissertation that explained why he chose to limit this study solely to males. She said that she had never given much thought to maleness. She had been raised with brothers, had married, and given birth to two sons. She guesses that "I have been brainwashed or something".

The researcher was anxious to talk with this mother about her choice of a school for her sons and the economic levels and problems which exist in many private schools. She was clearly not struggling to make ends meet and could address this issue without embarrassment. The researcher told her that Gabriel had said that he thought that her expectations for his school were being met and that he was not surprised that she chose the school she did. She laughed but said that she wasn't sure what he meant.

The researcher asked her what she did expect from her sons' school. She said that she believed in a rigorous education for her sons so that "they can achieve all that they are capable of". She wants them to go to a university and have careers in "the professions". She said that she looked for a school that would be at least as rigorous as the one they attended in France. She also wants them to learn more about the United States "as long as they have the chance". She is not concerned if they don't keep up their study of French history claiming that they can "pick that up later". At first, she listened to one of the teachers who told her that the boys needed to stop speaking French and speak English only. She felt that she might be doing them harm if she did otherwise, but added that she learned later that this is not the case. When the researcher asked her if she thought that the teacher's statement was sufficiently inappropriate to be considered "grounds on which to change

schools", she seemed confused and a little tense.

The researcher felt comfortable asking her if she had felt the need to place the boys in schools in which most of the other students were at the same economic level as they. She said that this was very definitely a consideration. It was important, she felt, that the boys not feel different than anyone else. When she was asked if the boys felt comfortable being in a school in which some of the students were less well off than they, she said she didn't know; "they had always been with children who were in the same economic and social class in France."

When the researcher mentioned the word "immigrant", Gabriel's mother wanted to be sure that he understood that she did not consider them to be immigrants. Those were "other people", "people less fortunate, "people - how do you say - of color?" Hers were children "here from France". When asked if that description would change should they decide to stay here permanently, she said, "No".

Charles' father was the next family member on the schedule. The researcher had met him at Charles' school, but he did not feel that he had really known him. The researcher was invited to come to the restaurant which the family owns. When he arrived, Charles greeted him at the door and took him to a table near the kitchen. The researcher was a little confused because it was well after dinner time and he was hoping that he had not misread the invitation. He sat at the table for approximately five minutes until Charles' father finally came out from the back. "Let's get out of here." They walked the short distance to their beautifully decorated home. Charles and his mother remained at the restaurant to finish and close up. The grandmother was home, but, as soon as she was properly introduced, she bowed slightly and disappeared into another room.

This very cultured and gracious appearing man gestured for the researcher to sit down and immediately offered him tea or coffee. When the researcher declined, the man asked if there was something else he might enjoy. When the researcher again declined, the participant sat down as well.

Since the researcher is a musician, he was extremely interested in learning something about the opera in which Charles' father had performed. He was surprised at how little information was forthcoming. "I thought you wanted to talk about Charles' school." The researcher decided that this man wanted a no-nonsense approach to this conversation, so he proceeded to follow such a format. "Why did you decide to send Charles to _____ School?" "Because we were told that it was the best boys' school in San Francisco, and we wanted him to have the best. We had also been told that all graduates of that school got into the right high schools and then the right colleges. This is very important in my family. We insist that he does good work. No nonsense."

The researcher asked if he felt that the school Charles attended had a good track record on diversity. "I don't know. It doesn't really matter. They all compete with each other for a few slots allocated for minorities anyway. So, maybe it is good if there aren't very many of them." Would he like to see the school pay more attention to Chinese culture? "Not really. We handle that within our family. We insist that Charles attend Chinese school. They teach him all he needs." Wouldn't it be good for the other students at the school to learn something about Chinese culture? "They can read about it or come to Chinatown and soak up culture." Did he think that the school should give Charles credit for his Chinese language studies? "I guess it would be good, but they don't do that. That's fine." Did Charles like the school? "It doesn't matter. He knows that we are doing what is best for him, so he will go where

we tell him to. He works hard and will get ahead. He never said that he was unhappy." Does he think that boys in China and boys in the United States are different? "Inside, maybe not; but Chinese boys know that they must do what their parents ask. When they get married and have families, they will understand how important this is. American boys would do well to learn this lesson."

The researcher was surprised that Jonathan chose his mother instead of his father to be his family link. He had visited their home briefly when he drove Jonathan back from the initial group meeting and found the father to be quite interesting. The researcher soon discovered that the mother was also a fine choice.

The family was honored to welcome the researcher into their home for a wonderful Russian dinner. The food and the fellowship were wonderful, and it was clear that this was a close, loving family. Before the meal was served, the researcher was shown several scrapbooks full of memorabilia from home. There were press clippings praising the parents for their musical artistry, and clippings of personal and historical interest. This provided a nice moment for the family to confess that they are all "a little homesick"! The guest was asked to give the blessing over the meal and the researcher, despite feelings of awkwardness, agreed to accept the invitation. Everyone talked. Both parents, as well as the grandfather, are clearly proud of the boys, and the boys clearly feel no discomfort at showing their affection for their parents, their grandfather, and each other. When it was time for Jonathan to go to his room, he kissed everyone, including his older brother, before he left. His mother said that she was surprised that "he didn't kiss you [the researcher], too". The older brother went to a nearby branch library to do some school work. When asked if this concerned them, the father said that they trusted

him completely. When he was assured that the researcher did not mean to imply that the boy would do anything wrong but was, rather, concerned about the boy's safety on the street, the father laughed and said, "No, he's very safe. He's a big boy and can take care of himself."

The father and grandfather cleared the table and the mother and the researcher poured another cup of coffee and began their conversation. She said that they were so grateful that the researcher was taking this interest in Jonathan. He had come home from the initial group meeting so excited he could barely contain himself. He told them everything that had gone on and everything that everyone had said. At first she said they felt a little "suspicious", but changed their mind when they "thought more about it". "We aren't at home anymore. People aren't spying on us here."

Before many moments had elapsed, the husband came in and sat down at the table. It was clear that this would be a dialogue with both parents. They shared that they really wanted their sons to understand the country in which they were born - the good and the bad. They are concerned that so many negative things about the former USSR are taught in schools that there isn't room for anything positive. They also believe that it is very important that the boys continue to speak Russian. "It doesn't make sense to give it up. It is wonderful to speak many languages." (Both parents speak five languages; six, if you count English.) "Even if they never go back, they can still speak the language and read some of the great Russian literature in its original language. It's better that way."

They are concerned about the economic and social differences that seem to exist between Jonathan and some of his classmates. They feel that he is beginning to show "little signs" of dissatisfaction with them and the way they live. When they enrolled their sons in the school, on the

recommendation of people they respected, they did not know that there would be such "economic and social divisions". The parents are just grateful to be in the United States and feel very proud of what they have accomplished in a relatively brief period of time. They know that the boys respect this accomplishment, too, but feel that "pressure" at school might be swaying their "sense of family loyalty". This is less true for Jonathan than his older brother - "but he is younger".

When the researcher asked if their expectations of private schools are being met, they responded that since they have been in San Francisco, their opinion of public schools has changed a little, but they feel pressure from their friends and people they work with to keep their children in private schools. They want the best for the boys and want to make sure that they have access to all they need for a solid future. They asked the researcher what he thought about this issue, and he replied that this study was intended to help respond to this issue.

Jonathan is learning both Russian and English and looks forward to studying a third language soon. He loves translating for his grandfather, and tells his parents that "kids at school think all Russians are spies and like to hear him speak Russian". They maintain many of their cultural traditions in their home, and Jonathan has often wished that his friends could "learn some of the neat things he gets to do at his house".

Their faith is very important to them - one of the main reasons they emigrated- and the people they have grown close to at the synagogue they attend allow them to feel good about continuing these cultural and religious traditions within the community. The fact that Jonathan has many friends his age - both boys and girls - from the Russian community helps him gain a sense of community, and prevents him from feeling set apart or isolated by

his cultural heritage.

The most difficult mini-dialogue was the one conducted with Raphael's mother. Somehow, the researcher expected that this might be the case based on the initial interaction he had with Raphael. The researcher was a little surprised, as he was with Jonathan, that Raphael had chosen his mother for this dialogue rather than his father. Much of the preliminary reading the researcher had done on the role of the male in Hispanic culture led him to believe that the father would be the family member identified by the son in order for Raphael's family - like Charles' - to maintain *face*.

When the researcher arrived at the modest but extremely well kept building in which Raphael and his family live, he rang the bell which bore the family's surname. There was no response. After several more rings went unanswered, a young woman opened the front door of the building, clearly on her way out. She was startled, and, like any good tenant should, she asked, in Spanish, "May I assist you?" The researcher's blank look must have told her that he did not understand Spanish, so she asked again in English: "Can I help you?" The researcher remembers his feelings of inadequacy at being able to speak only one language and his feelings of disbelief that any one could possibly think that being monolingual is preferable to being bi- or tri-lingual!

The researcher was at a loss to explain his reason for being there quickly or even simply, so he said that the people he had come to see "didn't seem to be home". He would go to a phone and call just in case their doorbell didn't work. The young woman said that that was "a good idea" and cautiously closed the door behind her. As she walked away, she glanced nervously over her shoulder several times, before finally turning the corner and disappearing from view. The researcher had just had a brief experience with what it is like to be the other and to be considered suspicious.

The phone rang and rang, and the researcher went home feeling that he had finally encountered his first failure. The next morning, he phoned again and, after one ring, Raphael answered. When the researcher inquired if he had come on the wrong evening, Raphael told him that there had been a "family emergency", and that they did not have time to call. "Can you come back tonight?" The researcher later discovered that a very close family friend had been taken to the hospital with a ruptured appendix. That family did not speak English, and Raphael's entire family went to translate and lend moral support. This was clearly more important than the researcher's dialogue.

The researcher went back to the now familiar building the next evening and, this time, the door was buzzed open after one ring. Raphael's mother opened the door to their ground floor apartment very cautiously. She did not remove the chain until the researcher was able to provide enough information for her to be sure of his identity.

The apartment was immaculate. It was sparsely furnished but beautifully decorated. Raphael's mother was nicely dressed and spoke English very well. She apologized profusely for their absence the previous evening and poured coffee even before asking the researcher if he wanted any. They sat in the living room looking at each other for several moments before she asked, "What can I do for you?" Had Raphael told her anything about his first dialogue? "Only a little. He seemed restless when he got home that day. I'm not sure what I can add to whatever he told you."

The researcher told her that he sensed that Raphael wasn't very happy at his school. She said that they are aware of this and were agonizing over "what to do about high school". "We thought that private schools were best, but now we have doubts. Raphael says that the others treat him like a "second class citizen". "He doesn't have much opportunity to speak our language. The

school said that he would have, but he doesn't. There's nobody, except maybe the Spanish teacher and a boy, to speak to at his level. He says that the students who are learning Spanish can't speak well enough yet, so talking to them is boring for him. We've also been surprised at how little is taught to the students about Hispanic culture. Mexico is so close, and there are so many immigrants and refugees here. You would think that schools would want to help 'Anglos' learn something about the people they are with all the time." Like other families, they had followed the well intended advice of friends when they decided against public schools. In their country, they had enrolled Raphael in a private school, but it didn't seem to be quite the same as private schools here. "Something got lost in the translation?"

Like Jonathan's family, Raphael's mother is proud of her family's achievement in this country, especially since they arrived with almost nothing and relied on friends to help them get started in their new life. She asked if Raphael had told the researcher about her husband's political situation. When he answered in the affirmative, she smiled and said, "That's a very good sign. He doesn't tell too many people about it. My husband thinks that Raphael is embarrassed and ashamed of what his father has become, while we are extremely proud that, rather than sit around and feel sorry for himself or be angry all the time, he has ventured out and found important, honest work with which to support his family. He was in government before - a lawyer, really - and we hope that he can do something like that again sometime." Would they return to El Salvador? "Probably not. Raphael keeps talking about going back, but he doesn't realize how difficult that would be for us. Nothing would ever be the same. Our house was sold out from under us, I think that's how you say it. We would have to start all over again. Raphael really has a better chance for a good life here. I hope he realizes that some day

soon."

Was Raphael's father hurt by his son's treatment? "I think maybe a little. He always puts on a brave face. Our view of the man in our culture differs from yours. Raphael thinks that his father has failed. He sees him as weak - something less than a man. I just hope that it is Raphael's age that makes him feel this way and that he will change. I know that while we depend on community and friends for support, the other boys in his class try to be individuals. They pretend that they don't need anybody or anything to help them. This makes it hard for Raphael to talk to us about how he is feeling."

It was clear now why Raphael had chosen his mother for this dialogue. She was certainly strong and articulate, but the choice really seemed to have been made as a result of his growing alienation from his father.

Was Raphael disturbed by social and economic differences between him and others at his school? She related that he was probably too proud to let anybody know it, but, yes, this was probably the most bothersome issue for him. "We had wealth and power at home. Things are very different here. It seems to bother Raphael more than it does us. If he were with people who didn't have so much more than he does, it might not be quite so difficult, but we know that he feels like he just doesn't have a chance with the other boys. He talks about it less and less, but I feel that it bothers him more and more. He jokingly used the word 'peasant' the other day. I got angry. My husband just smiles."

It was clear that all of the family members wanted the best for their children. Even though some of them expressed some doubts about decisions they had made regarding the boys' education, all of them felt as though they had done the right thing. Upon reflection, the researcher felt that most of

them wanted the boys to have a better educational experience than their parents and a brighter, more secure future than others in their communities. They seemed willing to watch the participants endure some psychological and emotional distress in order to achieve the educational, social, economic, and personal goals that they had established for the boys.

Teachers

As careful as the participants may have been in selecting their family members, they were even more cautious in their selection of teachers to take part in these supplementary mini-dialogues. When these conversations were completed, the researcher felt sure that he understood exactly the boys' reasons for choosing these particular teachers.

David's homeroom teacher was the easiest to talk to. She had a very positive, secure demeanor which immediately set the researcher at ease. She made talking to a colleague refreshing and interesting and, rather than appearing defensive like some of the others, she seemed to be looking forward to the process. She wanted to hear all about the research and was very excited about what it could represent for her school. She said that the administration had declared that it wanted to diversify the student body and to actively pursue a more solid multicultural approach to the curriculum.

She was also very interested in Paulo Freire's approach to teaching and learning. The researcher gave her a brief overview of his understanding of critical pedagogy and its possible application in the classroom and promised to send her a copy of his reference list.

The researcher, sensing that they could easily spend the entire time talking shop instead of dialoguing about David, decided to read the questions to guide the first dialogue and elicit the young teacher's response. This was

the technique that the researcher would subsequently apply with most of the teachers.

She said that David was a wonderful student and remained cheerful and positive despite the heavy amount of remedial work he had to do to catch up. She had worked hard to make this process as pleasant and productive as possible. She felt that it was very important not to set David apart from the rest of his class. She felt that he had enough "difference" to deal with without having this burden, too. "You know how cruel kids can be. They don't always mean it, but 'kick 'em while they're down' seems to be the rule rather than the exception these days."

She said that her school was probably better than most in diffusing problems caused by the social and economic split which existed even among the Anglo students whose families have lived in the community for years. "This is a problem which just seems to get worse and worse. In the past, some children have made me feel self-conscious about the differences between them and me, but our new head of school is really trying to deal with this issue in a strong, positive way."

She agreed that it was "ridiculous" that David was required to take Spanish instead of French, and said that she would continue to "argue the point" with the academic advisor. She said that she does her best to integrate as much cultural recognition and appreciation into her teaching as she possibly can, but said that she tries very hard not to single children out "to the extent that they are embarrassed". "What we need to do is exactly what we say we want to do - make the student and parent body more diverse. Teachers and staff, too. Maybe we really need to start there. Yes, probably. Some role models. If there were more kids with the same or similar cultures, it would be easier - and make more sense - to bring more into the curriculum. Then there

would be more connection among the kids whose cultures are celebrated, and the rest would have real people to connect that particular culture with? Does that make any sense?" The researcher assured her that it made perfect sense.

The next teacher on the list was Charles' math teacher. This person is a former colleague of the researcher and one who might have proven to be difficult. The researcher felt uncomfortable meeting this teacher at his former school, so they agreed to meet at a nearby restaurant for coffee. After a brief period of catching up, the researcher explained the project. The teacher's body language reflected some tension, and the tension became more pronounced as the researcher read the questions. "I would certainly be interested in hearing Charles' answers." The researcher said that the responses were all confidential, and that fact seemed to upset the teacher.

The teacher spent the next several minutes prefacing each thought with "As you know...". "As you know, the _____ School has a very rigorous academic program which doesn't really allow time for many frills." "As you know, our boys represent the academic elite. We must get them ready to move on to the next level. Our curriculum is very carefully worked out. There is very little room for change." Did the boys also represent the social and economic elite as well? "Of course." Was there room for others to make their way among the elite? "If they are willing to work hard and make changes which allow us to accommodate them, then maybe they will have a chance. But we certainly can't wait for them to catch up. We don't have the time for that kind of thing."

The teacher continued to describe the many wonderful things the school was doing to become multicultural. He told about the various foreign lunches and unusual assemblies that they have presented to "expose the boys to some different things." "That can also really come in handy when they

travel."

Asked how many *boys of color* the school had enrolled, the teacher said that he thought "twelve or thirteen" [out of four hundred]. "We get a lot of them applying, but as you know, our testing is very stringent. Most of them just can't cut the mustard." How many *teachers of color*? "Well, one. The Spanish teacher is from South America, but that doesn't count. Yes, one. All of the janitors are minorities, though."

Before the conversation ended, the teacher expressed his confusion over the researcher's choice of a dissertation topic. "What do immigrant children mean to you?"

Jonathan also selected his math teacher. She told the researcher that she used to teach in a public school where she made "a lot more money", but that she preferred working in a private setting. "The children are so bright and anxious to learn. We don't have the same discipline problems here. If there are problems, they are so minor that we can settle them among ourselves. Rarely do we have to even call parents, though the parents are certainly willing to intervene if needed." This woman clearly loves Jonathan. "Oh, Jonathan. My wonderful, mad Russian."

How was Jonathan doing in school? Has he had any problems adjusting? She was so enthusiastic about his success and progress. She indicated that he had to work very hard to keep up, but that she didn't see this as a "struggle". "He really seems to enjoy making the extra effort. He understands that it will pay off later. His brother was the same way. He may help Jonathan with his studies. Yes, English used to be a bigger problem than it is now, but it's never as big a problem in math as in some other subjects. When all else fails, we can talk with numbers. Numbers are just like a language, you know."

The teacher indicated that there seems to be a "nice rapport" among all of the students from other countries, but that they never "kept to themselves". "The other students make a real effort to involve the immigrant students in all aspects of school life. I suppose they see their parents doing the same thing in other parts of their lives. We also have a large number of Jewish students here, and I think that faith helps to bind children together regardless of where they're from." She said that the school embraced all cultures but did not "make a big deal" out of any one of them. "When something seems natural and appropriate, we try to see that it happens; otherwise, I think that it embarrasses kids. It singles them out and points fingers saying, 'You're different. You are the reason we're doing this'." The researcher told her that Jonathan's parents had said that they had volunteered to help but had felt that they weren't needed. The teacher was puzzled. "They have presented a couple of musical programs which we certainly enjoyed. Maybe they weren't heard. Sometimes people think that they are being ignored when, in actual fact, they just weren't heard. A lot of it depends on who you say it to. Should I pass it on to the administration?" Before the researcher could reply, she answered, "No, better yet, I'll tell Jonathan to talk to the head of the school. He really likes to hear from the kids."

The researcher inquired whether there were several different social and/or economic levels within the school. The teacher responded that this problem is not as pronounced there as it is in other private schools. "Most of our families are right there in the middle. They work harder than they might otherwise just to keep their kids here. Everybody makes an effort to reduce any tensions that might arise because of this. We have a fair number of families who might have a little less, but it isn't divisive. I think the fact that

we don't have anybody who is really in the upper, upper bracket helps to prevent any real class distinctions among students or parents. Just look at the way the kids look. They all look nice, but no one sticks out as being dressed in more expensive clothing than the rest. The competition, if it exists here at all, happens in the academic arena rather than at that level."

Justin's homeroom teacher is a nun. She is one of the few sisters teaching in this parochial school. She is older than any of the other teachers the researcher had met so far. She wears an "up-to-date" habit - "It's less intimidating for the children and much more comfortable for us." - and seems very knowledgeable about multicultural issues. When the researcher asked her if she had done any formal work in multicultural education, she replied that she had been to a number of excellent workshops presented by the diocese and had done a lot of reading on her own. She has most of the Banks' books and has just begun to read Paulo Freire. "He requires a little more concentration. You really have to be awake to get what he is talking about. He's a little radical, but good."

Before the researcher had a chance to make a formal presentation of his project or to read the dialogue questions to elicit her response, she began to talk, following her own agenda. Justin had explained what I was doing and she was impressed with his interest. "Justin really needs someone to talk to. He is such a wonderful young man, but I think that, perhaps, he has a very hard time maintaining his identity. There is a sadness in his eyes sometimes. When I ask him if he is all right, he just smiles and nods. We've tried to work with his parents, but I always feel as though there is a solid wall there. It's hard to break it down. They say everything is fine, and Justin doesn't really do or say anything that really contradicts this, so our hands are tied."

"The mother is very sweet. She has been a part of this parish for some

time now. Her husband is a strange man. He is very proud to be a university professor; he has worked hard to achieve what he has, but he is very rigid. I think that he is too hard on Justin. When the child gets excited about something, like languages or cultural activities, his step-father seems to look down on it, and this diminishes his enthusiasm. The mother isn't very strong, so she doesn't stand up for her son. We felt badly when the family moved to a new neighborhood because Justin had established a solid group of friends here. He was really relating to them, and still does to a certain extent, but it's hard to get very involved when you have that long bus ride every afternoon. His new neighborhood has fewer children in it, and the ones who do live nearby are involved with their own school activities and friends. It's very hard for him. He never really complains; sometimes I wish he would complain instead of holding so much inside."

The teacher told the researcher that Justin was doing very well with his school work and that issues of language and culture didn't appear to cause a conflict for him. "He is determined to be one hundred percent American. When we have had cultural opportunities that highlighted his background, Justin shied away from them. It seems like he doesn't want any one to know what his background is. I think a lot of that comes from his step-father. His mother is interested, but doesn't want to rock the boat, I guess. Other children are really proud of their heritage. I wish some of that would rub off on Justin. Financially, everything seems to be solid. His mother's business is really taking off in a remarkable way. If only the other aspects of his life could be as solid."

The next teacher to speak with the researcher was another former colleague, Gabriel's classroom teacher. Unlike Charles' teacher, she was very pleased to be chosen to be a part of this research and expressed this in her

facial and body language as well as in her verbal comments. It was a pleasure for the researcher to see her again. They met at the now familiar after school location for coffee.

Gabriel's school is divided into two distinctly different divisions managed by two very different administrators. The teacher confirmed the researcher's view that the lower division is making a genuine attempt to deal with culture and diversity, doing as well as it can considering the school's poor record on diversity in student admissions and faculty recruitment. She confirmed that it was difficult to teach about other cultures in an environment in which most of the students (and parents) have no idea "what they are" other than "white American". "There are so few students who visibly represent other ethnicities and cultures and who are aware of where they come from and show pride in it. I'm always reluctant to do something that makes things more difficult for the few kids of color that we have. But we do try, and that's what I think is important. The senior administration gives us very little help or encouragement except to smile and nod when the right people are around. They literally tolerate multicultural approaches because they think that it is expected of them. We all know that the real reason the school exists is to produce more boys who are just like their fathers." "The lower division head and curriculum director are a little more committed to a multicultural approach, so they push ahead - a little. We've got to get away from the food and holiday approach, though. It gives the boys the wrong impression, and they take it less seriously. The whole language issue in the upper division is a nightmare. We tell the kids that they must speak 'foreign languages' to succeed in the international arena, but we call that enrichment. That's what the elite do so they can speak to the natives when they go on long, expensive vacations. But when students who already

speaking other languages (even those which are considered scholarly languages) try to continue speaking those languages, along with English, they are reprimanded. They are punished! None of those kids are trying to avoid speaking and learning English. Why we can't acknowledge their skills and talents and give them some extra credit is beyond me. God forbid we should do something that might help them to feel good about themselves."

The researcher always felt that economic difference is a greater issue even than cultural difference at this school. Children, he feels, are always more cruel about how much less money someone has than what kinds of unusual foods they might eat at home, or what kind of accent they might be able to detect. The teacher confirmed this feeling and said that she thought that the two issues "were used equally" to make the boys feel that they are "less than". She indicated that she felt so sorry for the parents who were struggling to keep their kids in that school when the boys were "being put down so much - even if it is subtle", and that the school "really even tends to look down on the parents themselves". "The school is so condescending to these folks. It makes me sick. We're just affirming the elitist attitudes of the other boys and their parents - not to mention the teachers who like to think that they are in 'the same league'. In actual fact, many of the boys look at their teachers like they look at their servants."

Raphael's teacher invited the researcher to visit him in his classroom. It was a clear indication that this dialogue would be conducted on his turf. The researcher purposely arrived a little early so that he could get a sense of the school community and, maybe, the mood of the students. It was a warm Friday afternoon and the building seemed unusually quiet. The secretary told the researcher that the entire upper school was in an assembly which had been called at the last minute to discuss some "emergency student issues"

which had arisen the day before. The head of the school wanted to "speak to the kids" before they went away for the weekend.

The children moved out of the auditorium to their lockers to get the things they needed for the weekend. The mood was very somber. The researcher felt that this wasn't usual. He stood by the faculty mailboxes in the main office, as directed, to wait for the teacher. Soon, a young man arrived (looking very stern) and greeted the researcher rather formally, leading him down the hall to an elevator which would take them to the second floor where the man's classroom is located. The teacher said nothing to the researcher; as they walked, he sifted through the contents of his mailbox the entire time. When they reached the classroom, he gestured for the researcher to come in and closed the door. The room looked active. By that, the researcher means that it looked as though there had been lots of good interaction taking place between students and teacher. The whiteboard was filled with writing - student and teacher - and there were many interesting looking displays on the bulletin boards.

The teacher apologized for his being "so distracted", and shared that he had been "shaken up" by the "so-called assembly" from which he had just come. A number of older students had been caught in some kind of drug-related activities off campus earlier in the week, and the head of the school wanted to explain the actions the school had taken in the matter and the actions it would take in the future if any further problems occurred. Was it a good meeting? "Well, you know, the man talked and the kids listened. There was no time for questions or follow-up discussion. We were alerted that this was going to happen, and a number of us felt that he should have met with the students yesterday and given us a chance to talk with the kids during class today. I'm afraid that a lot of rumors will get started over the weekend, and

we'll have all hell to pay for it on Monday. Parents will be justifiably upset, but they won't have anyone to talk to over the weekend. This school doesn't learn. The head acts like it will all go away if he puts some distance on things."

While the conversation continued, a number of students looked in the room, clearly wanting to talk to the teacher. The researcher's sense was that this young man was a friend to his students; whether they wanted to talk about homework or the assembly they had just attended didn't matter. The teacher needed to be available to talk. The researcher suggested that "maybe this isn't the best time". Could they reschedule? At first the teacher was reluctant. Could he be nervous about what he might have to deal with? A couple of seconds passed, and he finally agreed that "later would be better". The two agreed that they would be in touch early the next week.

The researcher thought about all the possibilities for real participatory research that existed in and around this situation. As he left the building, he noticed several small groups of students standing around talking. He also noticed a great many teachers rushing from the building. How many others had stayed behind to help the students deal with this crisis?

On Saturday morning the researcher received a call from Raphael. How had the dialogue with his teacher gone? The researcher explained what had happened, and, immediately, Raphael replied, "Participatory research, huh?" The researcher agreed and asked Raphael "what had happened at school". He told the researcher the same story he had heard from the secretary and the teacher. When asked how he felt about it, Raphael's voice sounded increasingly angry as he explained that the kids who had been involved were "some of the richest kids in school". "This is a game for them. They've got the money to spend. It makes them feel like big shots. When people started to

get wind of what was happening, right away some people started looking at me and some others, like we were criminals. I guess they just assume that Blacks and Hispanics will automatically be involved with drugs. It pissed me off. Where would I get the money to do that even if I wanted to? Maybe they thought I was selling." The researcher expressed sadness that this was what had happened.

On Monday, the teacher called the researcher to reschedule the dialogue. This time, he suggested that they meet some place else. "Maybe it'll be a little quieter some where else." [He laughed.] The researcher suggested the now familiar after school meeting place where he had met his two former colleagues. This would be "a little out of the way" for the teacher, but he said "that sounds fine"; so they made an appointment for the middle of the week.

The two talked for more than two hours. This was, by far, the longest of the supplementary mini-dialogues. The teacher was interested in the research and the methodology, and recognized that this was exactly what he had been doing the previous Friday with his students. He was the most vocal about the researcher's topic saying that he really believed that most private schools "do more harm than good to immigrant children or any children of color, for that matter." He elaborated that he didn't think that these schools "were ever intended to do any more than maintain the 'status quo'." The parents want these kids to "become part of the 'status quo' just when so many of the rest of us are trying to get away from it".

The teacher said that he liked Raphael but always felt like the boy had "a chip on his shoulder". "At first, I was trying too hard to get him to like me. Finally, I just decided to stop worrying about it." The teacher was aware of Raphael's father's story, but said that, in many ways, he wished that he wasn't. "So many times, the school tells us too much about the kids. It's

mostly gossip, and that's not healthy. We don't have a chance to learn about the kids on their terms. Sometimes it's better to let them tell us things when they want us to know them, or when they think we need to know them."

The teacher said that Raphael was looked upon as a kind of hero by his classmates, especially the boys. They respect his honesty and the fact that he does well in school. "Yes, I suppose some of it is like forbidden fruit, but Raphael is also physically more mature than many of the other guys, and that always sets kids apart no matter what their ethnicity. He doesn't act like he is aware of this, though. I sometimes think about telling him how much power he really has with his class, but I don't because I might create a monster."

How does the school deal with the reality of many cultures within the school community? "I think we do as well, if not better, than most. The social studies curriculum in the lower grades seems to be fairly good. They make an attempt to bring in as much supplementary material and as many guest as possible. They stress that all of the children have culture and ethnicity and that, even though they might be different, they were also similar in many ways, and that one was not better than another. When the kids get older, we offer a pretty good ethnic studies option. They can choose Asian Studies or African Studies. I know we should be doing more, but we're trying. Our biggest problem is the numbers. We just don't have enough immigrant children or children of color to give the feeling that we are truly multicultural." The teacher said that he was not familiar with the school's language policy, but felt sure that the students were encouraged, if not required, to speak English only - giving up their own language, if necessary, in order to master English.

When the researcher asked the teacher why they had so few immigrant children, he replied that, traditionally, these schools have given culturally

biased entrance tests. "They pretty much set the kids up for failure. As long as there are enough white kids out there who can get higher scores on those tests, the school fills its enrollment and uses high academic standards or rigor as the reason why more of the other kids aren't enrolled. They say, 'We tried, but we just can't find qualified students.' We both know that's a crock. Even the personal interviews are biased. The evaluator says that the child 'isn't socially adjusted' or 'hasn't learned basic manners', or whatever. The fact that the child is perfectly well adjusted in his home and community doesn't matter. It's our community that the child is expected to fit into. The parents are scrutinized, too. That's part of the process that no one will admit to, but I know that it happens. If parents stick out or appear to be too vocal, it will be held against the child's chances for admittance."

Is the school economically and socially elitist? "Not as much as _____School [the school Charles and Gabriel attend], but it is definitely a factor here, too. We have a little better record on financial aid and scholarships than _____School."

Did the teacher think that this was a good place to enroll immigrant students? "Yes and no. If they are happy here and it's not too much of a hardship on the family, I guess it's OK. Some kids get their culture and language reinforced and appreciated outside of school in their own communities, others don't. Those who don't might have a hard time. Of course, some of them and their families have been brainwashed to think that they need to give all that up in order to become real Americans. That's such a shame."

The researcher was encouraged to discover that five of the six teachers exhibited a very positive attitude toward his research and the students who were participating in the study. Each of them was interested in learning more

about serving diverse student populations, and all of them had made some effort to construct curriculum from a multicultural perspective even though the response from their administrators was not always completely supportive. They had all taken the time to learn as much as possible about their students and seemed interested in them - both as human beings and as students. The researcher felt that the teacher whose attitude and outlook seemed totally unacceptable was probably a typical representative of his generation of upper and middle-class white males and of the institution in which he taught.

Peers

It was assumed that the participants would choose close or best friends for these mini-dialogues. The researcher also assumed that their peers would offer nothing but positive comments about their friends. What the researcher hoped was that these friends could offer a realistic glimpse of the participants' relationships to their school, just as the family members had focused more on their personal life and the participants' relationship to their larger community.

All of the participants chose male peers, and all but one of them chose other immigrant children or children of color who considered themselves non-immigrants. All but one chose a classmate. "Boys need to stick together" was one comment. "This was a neat chance to talk. I want my friend to know about what we've been doing" was another.

The researcher had offered the participants the opportunity to come to the dialogues with their friends if they felt that this would make things easier for everyone involved. Four of the boys came with their friends and two of them remained for the entire dialogue making it more difficult for the researcher though probably easier for the peer. Two indicated that their

friends would rather talk to the researcher by themselves.

All of these mini-dialogues took place at St. Francis' Episcopal Church, the site of the initial group meeting and the final evaluation meeting. Each of the conversations occurred on Saturday afternoons and refreshments were provided on each occasion.

Gabriel's friend was born in the United States of French parents. He is completely bilingual and very comfortable in both English and French. He is one year older than Gabriel and is the child (mentioned along with Gabriel's brother) in Gabriel's story about the teacher who wouldn't let him go to anyone who spoke French when he was feeling desperately confused upon arrival at his new school speaking no English whatsoever. This young man is also a former student of the researcher and was very comfortable talking with him. The child related the same story with some glee saying that "Gabriel was really scared. He kept running around like he was crazy trying to sneak a word to one of us. That teacher was so mean. He didn't even know how to ask to be excused to go to the bathroom. The funny thing was that she just let people go. He didn't understand that and thought that he needed to ask permission."

This young man actually feels more isolated from his French cultural heritage than Gabriel does. This is partly because his parents came to the United States early in their lives and have not kept the same degree of connection to their French background. Their son would really like to know more and do more. Unlike Gabriel, he was allowed to take French because the school did not feel that there was any danger of his "getting confused between the two languages". So, while he has kept his French at a fairly high level through school and speaking it quite a lot at home, he has not maintained any French customs. "My mother doesn't even do any French cooking. I gave

her a French cookbook for Christmas last year, but that didn't help." He said that Gabriel was adjusting to the school and seemed to be doing well with his studies. Gabriel's peer confided that he would like to see his friend's family life improve. "Gabe and his brother really miss their father. Even if it means going back to France for good, I hope that they can get to see him more. I can't believe the number of times we need our dads - even just for school projects and things. No offense, but their mother doesn't know how to do much."

Justin's friend came to the dialogue alone because he lives very close to the site chosen for the meeting, and because Justin assured the researcher that he wanted his friend "to be completely honest". The friend told the researcher that he and Justin were like "brothers" and that he is "so glad" that Justin's parents did not make him change schools when they moved to their "swanky" neighborhood. "I have been expecting him to change any day. I just keep my fingers crossed that we can finish eighth grade together." The good things that the researcher had learned about Justin's school were verified by this boy. He is Mexican and has been at the same school since he enrolled in first grade, and feels that his culture is appreciated there. "I like it because they know that all of us Hispanics are different. We are the same in some ways, but different, too; just like everybody else."

The boy is aware that Justin isn't very happy at home, and thinks that "school is a good place for him." When the researcher asked him to be more specific, he said that "Justin doesn't know who he is sometimes. When I bring up something about Mexico, he changes the subject. I was at his house just once, and his mother was arranging some flowers. She started talking about how she learned to do that when she was young, and Justin made me leave the room. I know that his step-father is also Mexican. I was very excited to meet him, but he wasn't very nice to me. Justin said that he was an

American now, and that he had left Mexico behind. When I asked Justin where his real father lives, he changed the subject. Then our teacher said in class that Justin's father was living in Hong Kong, and that made him really mad. It's hard to run away from your family, so I guess school is safe. "

The peer said that Justin really likes school and spends more time than the rest of his classmates doing his homework. He only wishes that Justin didn't live so far away. He would like to see more of him.

Charles' invited a new classmate to dialogue with the researcher. This boy has just recently arrived from Hong Kong. His father is moving his business from there to the United States prior to Hong Kong's return to Chinese control in 1997. He attended what he called "a very posh private school" there and speaks English perfectly. He told the researcher that he and Charles had "a lot in common" and that they liked each other instantly. He also speaks Cantonese, the same dialect that Charles and his family speak. When the researcher asked him if he and Charles speak Cantonese together, he replied that they did and that he was glad to find someone at his new school with whom he could communicate in that way. "There are some things that just work better in Cantonese. Sometimes, we speak to each other in our language at school. It makes our classmates a little nervous, and some of our teachers tell us to stop. They say it's not polite to speak a language unless everyone understands it. We are going to try to do something together for Chinese New Years this year. Charles told me that the school's celebration is a joke. Maybe we can make it better."

How did the two friends view each other's family and the ways they each lived? He told the researcher that his family had "more money than Charles'", but that "that's no problem". In fact, the boy said that he probably comes from a wealthier family than many of his other classmates, and that

they would "probably be surprised". "They would not expect that to be the case." Does he look down on them? "No, but I think they look down on me sometimes. Maybe I need to brag and show off more."

He feels that Charles actually lives more like they do in China, and that his own life style is more like people in San Francisco or Europe. He has travelled more than Charles and likes to share this fact. Are the two boys rivals? "No, just friends. Sometimes we feel like 'us versus them', though." Why did his parents send him to this particular school? "Because they heard it was the best." Did he agree? "I'm not sure. I don't see what's so special about it. I think we learned more at my school in Hong Kong. We all spoke at least two languages. There was nothing great or unusual about that. We all pretty much felt that we would be following in our father's footsteps, so there wasn't such a big deal made about the future."

David chose an African-American boy from his neighborhood. The two are good friends, and David spends whatever little bit of free time he has with this boy. David's father brought David and his friend to the site, but David chose not to come into the room. This young man was perhaps the most outgoing of the peers. When the researcher tried to move the conversation forward, it was clear that the boy would talk when he was ready!

The researcher asked how it worked having his friend go to school in another town. "He should be going to my school. We have more fun. I guess it's because he's smart, but I'm smart, too. The brothers need him to help us when we have fights."

The researcher, aware that David had shared his Haitian background with his friend, asked him where his ancestors were from. The boy replied, "Sacramento". Where were they before that? He didn't know. "Maybe from Africa." His reaction to the initiation of this discussion was a little nervous

and embarrassed. How did kids in his [public] school find out about their ancestors? "They ask their folks, I guess."

What was the difference between his school and David's? "His is real nice. They have lots of computers and a neat gym. They have grass on their field. Mine's OK, but not as good. They have more money than we do." Does that mean that David has more money? "No. He doesn't have more than me, but he goes there just the same. He gets help." Has he met any of David's school friends? "No. They live too far away. David said they were nerds and that I wouldn't like them. I might not. I don't know." Were there other differences between him and David? "No. Just school. Oh, he goes to a different church and his dad is stricter than mine. My dad doesn't live with us, but I see him a lot. David has lots of chores to do."

Does David's friend speak another language? "No. I have enough trouble with English. I hate English. We have to read all these boring stories and stuff - and do worksheets. I hate worksheets."

Jonathan's friend attends both his school and his synagogue, but not his Russian language class. He is an interesting mixture of German and Irish and his family has been in the United States "for ever". "My dad knows a lot about our family. Somebody keeps a family tree. I don't know much about it." He is fascinated with Jonathan's Russian background and likes to hear him tell stories about his experiences. "It's really exciting. I feel like I'm travelling or something. I don't have anything that interesting in my past. We're pretty dull compared to him."

How did Jonathan fit in at school? "Fine. Why?" The researcher explained that some immigrant students may find it hard making an adjustment to schools in this country. "Oh, well, Jon isn't what I'd call an immigrant, exactly. He looks just like people here. He has a little accent, but

unless you hear him talk, you'd think that he was just like me." The researcher probed further. "Does a person's looks make a difference in how you feel about him?" "Well, no, I guess not, but most people have a first impression about people when they see them." Is that fair? "Maybe not, but it happens." Do people change their minds about Jonathan when they hear him talk for the first time? The participant wasn't sure. "Probably some do".

Does this young man like his school? "Yes. It's a lot better than the public schools. They are scary. You never know what is going to happen to you there." When asked if he knew anyone who had had problems at a public school, he said that he didn't but felt nervous when he saw "some of the kids who go there". When the researcher asked if looks made a person scary or dangerous, the boy said, "Yes". Do some of the scary kids speak accented English? "Most of them." Would he still like Jonathan if he went to a public school? "Yes, because he's not scary and he's nice to me."

Raphael brought a Spanish friend for this mini-dialogue. Raphael made sure that the researcher understood that the boy was from Spain. When he was asked why this was important to know, Raphael said, "He speaks proper Spanish, too, and comes from a very good family. He and I think alike. We are the only two at school who think this way. I also really like his family. His father is very successful in business, and they live in a really nice house. I like going there sometimes."

The friend was very self-assured and demonstrated a clear understanding of the researcher's study. He said that private schools were fine for people like him. When the researcher asked him to elaborate, he said: "My family is descended from Spanish nobility. My father does business here; otherwise, we would be living in Spain. It is important that I go to a good school and do well there so that I will not disappoint my family. People who

are not as well off shouldn't go to private schools because we tend to think less of them. It's not because they don't have as much, but because they can't do as much. They slow us down. It's also no fun to go to their houses. They don't have any good computer or video games. It's boring. Our parents don't have anything in common, either."

The researcher asked how he and Raphael had become so close. "Raphael is different. His family used to be very important, so, even though he doesn't have as much money as I do, that's OK. He is smart and helps me with math, and he has a girl friend. I make sure that nobody gives him any grief." Had he been to Raphael's house? "No. I don't even know where he lives." Had he met Raphael's family? "Yes. They are nice. They don't have a very good car, but that's cool. I think his father drives that old car to work somewhere. They probably have another one to use when they go out." The young man said that it was fine with him if the school didn't let him take Spanish as his foreign language. "My parents will hire a tutor if I ever really need one like I did in English for a little while after we came here. We speak Spanish at home and I have a Spanish babysitter." The school's disinterest in his culture does not bother him either. "I go to Spain all the time. I have my life there and my life here. They are different. It doesn't matter if people think that all we do is play the guitar and go to bull fights. I know better." Did he want to know about other people's cultures? "Not particularly. If I really want to know something, I can always go there to find out."

The peers were basically supportive of their friends. Each of them was very much like the participant who chose him. The researcher felt that the emotional tension and competition that seemed to exist between some of the participants and their peers was probably normal among young friends, but sensed that this was probably uncommon in some of their cultures of origin.

These boys were becoming more individual and less communal. Euro-American boys tended to look at their ethnically different friends with some admiration and awe based solely on what the researcher sensed was their perception of the differences that existed between them; sometimes these differences may have been viewed as *exotic*.

The researcher believed that the supplementary dialogues were very important to the research. They confirmed his initial belief that children tell the truth. The consistency of participant and supplementary themes suggested that, for the most part, the boys were being as honest and informative as they were able to be and as their understanding of their realities allowed.

THE SECOND INDIVIDUAL DIALOGUES

Overview

The participants had each been given a summarized transcript of their first dialogues and the researcher's analysis. Conducting the mini-dialogues with family, teachers, and peers before the second participant dialogues allowed time for them to read and reflect on these summaries before meeting again. All of the second dialogues had been scheduled immediately following the first ones, and the researcher reminded each of the boys of his appointment. All of them replied positively and enthusiastically, and all of them agreed with the researcher's assessments and with his stated generative themes. The themes which seemed to be common to all the participants were:

1. Differences between participants and parents regarding the importance of and necessity for attending private schools.
2. The expressed need of all the participants to feel that their cultures are better acknowledged and more fully appreciated by their schools.

3. The sense that economic and social distinctions between the participants and their peers are being made in their schools.

These themes also emerged and were corroborated in the supplementary dialogues. The questions to guide the second dialogues, submitted to each of the participants for prior reflection, were:

1. What are the benefits of attending your school?
2. How do you feel about the way your school acknowledges students' languages and cultures?
3. Do you feel social and economic pressure applied to students at your school?

The following summary is organized around these questions in the order in which they were posed.

Benefits of Attending their Schools

Each of the boys felt that they received some benefits from attending their respective schools. They were also quick to describe drawbacks as well. For some, the lists were quite different from those of their parents.

David felt that one of the benefits for him was the opportunity to make his parents "happy". "If I'm happy, they are, too." He said that he sometimes pretends to be more content at school than he really is. He feels that he is probably getting a good education, though he also believes that his neighborhood friends "learn a lot, too". He wishes that he could go to a school closer to home so that he could see his friends more often. He believes that he benefits from being with his classmates, but he isn't "quite sure why". There are times when he says that he feels like he has to lie about things he does. He tells his parents one thing, and that makes them happy; but, at

school, he tells his classmates something different so that he doesn't "stick out" "I sometimes make up what I did over the weekend or what I got for Christmas so I can seem as 'lucky' as everybody else. When I get home, my mother asks me what my friends got for Christmas. I tell her something so she won't feel bad." This deception seems to be the primary drawback for David.

Justin feels that it would be better for his mother if he "went to a better private school". "If I went to a more expensive school, people would think my mom was doing better in her business." He wishes that he lived in his "old neighborhood" so that he wouldn't have to ride the bus so far each day. He would also like to see his friends more than he is able to now. He appreciates what his school and church have done for him and his mother, and thinks that his teachers are "really great". "They love me and try to help me." When the researcher pressed him to find some cultural benefits connected with his school, he was, at first, unable to think of any. Later, when discussing the second question, he was able to say to the researcher "I guess that the way they teach about people and their countries and things would be a benefit." He wishes that his father would be more interested in where he went to school and that his mother and step-father would "just agree" on where he should go to high school. Having them feel good about that will be "a benefit".

Charles feels that the fact that he will be able to go to "the 'right' high school and then the 'right' college" because he attends the "right school", regardless of how well he does, is a benefit. "There are lots of kids who do better in school than I do and want to go to, say, University High School, but they don't go to a school with as good a reputation as mine, so they don't have as good a chance at it as I do."

While Charles is discouraged that his school has so few Asian students, he believes that, to some extent, he suffers less from being stereotyped than other Asian students in other schools. He realizes that there is an expectation for Asians to excel in math and science and maybe "martial arts", and he has not felt that kind of pressure at his school. He says that he "gets nervous" when the media project that image to the public. He was especially nervous when Lowell High School was being criticized for its predominantly Asian student body based on the student's excellence in those areas.

He hopes that his school will not pay attention to this controversy. "That could be a problem no matter how you look at it. They might think that I should be doing better or they might think that I should work harder in other areas." When the researcher asked him if he felt that he was buying in to some of the stereotypes by not admitting that he played the piano, he said that he "had never looked at it that way". "Wow, maybe so."

Jonathan is very emphatic about the benefits of attending his school. He is a very contented young man and, even though the researcher believes that the reason for his happiness has more to do with his family than his school, he views all aspect of his life as being positive and positively linked. He enjoys his teachers and his classmates. He likes the school's building and fixtures. He appreciates many of the curricular advantages that he and his peers enjoy. When the researcher pinned him down on what aspects of his daily life caused him to be so enthusiastic, he admitted that he tended to "lump" his synagogue and his Russian language classes together with his regular school, and that it was possible that it was the positive aspects of the latter two which really motivated his enthusiasm. The drawbacks which he experiences at his school are outweighed by the benefits of the other two institutions.

Gabriel likes his school. He is a very social child and enjoys the social opportunities the school provides. He sees his growing circle of friends as a real benefit and feels that the fact that the discipline is a little less rigid than it was in France is an advantage. He likes the fact that his teachers have been very "loving and kind".

They have done their best not to make him feel uncomfortable about any deficiencies which he may have had when he arrived, and despite the problems of culture and language which he acknowledges, he feels good about himself. He truly enjoys being with children who are at the same social and economic level as he and his family. He seems oblivious to a world in which other children are not as comfortable and well cared for as he is, and when the researcher tried to introduce this theme into the dialogic flow, Gabriel went on talking about something else.

In France, his school was a little less opulent. Even though the students were very much the same, the fact that they did not have as many "things to play with like computers and athletic equipment" seemed to put *school* in a different context for him. There, it seemed more like work; here, it seems more like "play". School here stimulates Gabriel's imagination, but the researcher senses that there is also some "fantasy" involved as well. For him, his school has become his "anchor". This will probably continue to be the case as long as his parents have not resolved their marital conflict which continues to dominate much of the family's interest and energy. When this issue has been resolved, the researcher feels that Gabriel will begin to focus his concentration and energy, and view his life from a fresh and more substantial perspective.

The researcher did not expect Raphael to name many benefits, if any, based on their previous interactions. This was not entirely the case. It became

clear to the researcher early on in the conversation that Raphael, unlike most of the participants, was aware of almost everything the supplementary participants had shared with the researcher. It appeared that he had chosen people for these mini-dialogues who would be open, for the most part, about what was said. The researcher became curious about what had transpired when it became clear that Raphael's attitude, including body language and tone of voice, had changed a great deal since they had last met face to face. He was much more animated and actually smiled. When the researcher began to tell him what had been discussed in the mini-dialogues, Raphael proudly announced that he was aware of what "his people" had "said about him".

This was a totally unexpected turn of events. At first, the researcher was a little unnerved, but he quickly understood that this kind of event was to be expected in participatory research. There are no rubrics set in concrete. It is a dynamic process and, while this kind of interaction may not be expected, it is perfectly acceptable if it leads researcher and participant to their ultimate goal - transformational change.

Raphael said that he would "still prefer to be in another school" but as long as he was where he was, he "might as well take advantage of some opportunities." When the researcher asked him to elaborate, he said that he knew that the kids who went to this school generally did very well after they left it, and guessed that he probably would do well, too. He admitted that some of his classes are "good" as well as some of the teachers. He said that he could imagine that he was learning something about "getting along" with other people in many different situations even when things did not always "go" his way. He confessed that he understood that his parents had sacrificed a lot to send him there and he is "grateful". The fact that his school does not pay as much attention to his "community" as he feels it should is still a

problem, but he admits that he might be a "little too sensitive" about that and that maybe he should do something to "make a difference" rather than "sitting around griping about it".

Raphael indicated that he "really respects" the young teacher who had spoken with the researcher, and that he "feels weird" about the way he has been treating his father. He also said that he wishes that his "community" would develop a better attitude about the neighborhood "outside the Mission". "Sometimes it seems like we are just as prejudiced and closed as the people we complain about."

Languages and Cultures

The next issues to be raised were language and culture. All of the boys had something to say about this aspect of our research. Some of their reflections were compatible with their responses to the question about benefits at their schools, others were slightly different.

David reiterated his feelings about Haiti. His parents have told him very few really positive things about their lives before coming to the United States. He knows that his father went to a "very strict" school and that his parents think that the French they speak is "low class". He is aware that there are people - both Haitian and European - who live high in the hills and that his family lived in Port-au-Prince. He knows that his family was very poor in Haiti and that some of his relatives live in the Dominican Republic. He also seems to have learned that to be "Hispanic" is better than "African" and he vacillates about his ethnicity. When he talked about his father wanting to "become an American", the researcher pointed out that "he already is"; people from the Caribbean are from "the Americas", therefore, "American". David had never been told this before. When he had thought about this for a

second, his whole being brightened. All of a sudden, David couldn't wait for his class to study Haiti. "So when we study American History, we should be learning about Haiti, too?" David would like to learn to speak French so that he can "go to Haiti and talk to the people on the hill without being embarrassed". The researcher talked a little about language variations and dialects, and told David that "whatever anybody speaks is a language". "All languages are different. The British speak a different English than people in the United States, but they can understand most of what the other is saying. Some may think that the British speak better English than people in the United States, but that just isn't true. They are just slightly different. People in France could probably understand much of what people from Haiti are saying if they really wanted too. Neither French is better than the other. They are just different."

David also expressed that he was uncomfortable with some of the customs that people in Haiti have handed down from generation to generation. He wasn't sure that he would want his friends, especially those at his school, to learn about some of them. "They are really old fashioned and kind of dumb. Everybody would laugh." Could David think of any customs that his friends observe that he thinks are strange? "Well, the Easter bunny?" Does he think less of his friends for collecting Easter eggs even though he thinks it is a silly custom? "No, I just don't want to do it." Why, then, would any of his friends think any less of him for things his family might do? David shrugged his shoulders.

Justin, like Gabriel, feels that his school is his anchor. It is clear that he will not identify with his cultural inheritance as long as there is a kind of "culture war" going on within his family unit. He lives in a household in which one person tries to hold on to some tradition and another denies

anything other than the tradition he is building for himself in San Francisco. As soon as something or someone persuades Justin to explore his heritage, a stronger force tells him that "it is silly or stupid". Whenever his cultures of origin come up at school, he pretends not to notice, or has nothing to do with any of it. When he seems interested in learning a language which might help to solidify a relationship with his stepfather, the way he is learning it creates a barrier between them, and he regrets ever having begun to learn it. He would like to learn to speak his mother's and his birth father's languages, but neither of them is able to help him sustain his interest or excitement. Justin seems to feel that "all these cultures" are partly to blame for his confusing and troublesome family situation. No one at his school has been able to help him gain the confidence he needs to continue looking at himself and his background with pride. Even his friends, through their own examples, cannot seem to help ease his discomfort in this matter. When the researcher asked Justin what his school could do to help him gain some pride in his cultures, he replied that "they are doing fine; I'm just not interested. I want to be an American or a United Statesian, or whatever you want to call it."

Charles would like to see his school talk about China and other Asian countries in such a way that makes them seem a little less "unusual". "When they discuss European countries or even South American countries, they talk like they are on this planet. When they talk about China, it sounds so exotic. The word oriental really fits the way they talk, though they don't use that word. Everything sounds like rugs or birds or clothing. They make it seem like the people are totally different than other people." The researcher asked if that had to do with perceived physical differences. Charles said, "maybe, but I think it's more than that. The culture requires that Chinese people behave a little differently, so that the way we lead our daily lives makes us seem fragile

or weak. Like China dolls?"

Charles knows that Asian languages are complex, and he doesn't expect that too many of his classmates would care to learn them. The researcher suggested that many schools and colleges were teaching many Asian languages since more business was being transacted in Asia. Charles smiled and replied that the researcher "must mean Japanese". The researcher said that he thought that other languages were being taught in addition to Japanese. "Why can't I get credit for the work I do at Chinese school, then? I'd probably apply myself better and pay better attention if I thought that I was going to get some credit for it."

Charles said that he didn't really mind continuing some Chinese customs in his home as long as "everybody doesn't interfere". When the researcher asked him to clarify this statement, he said that he didn't want all his classmates "poking around in his life and making fun of things". If he can decide what he shares with people, that is fine; otherwise, it is intrusive and bothersome. The researcher inquired about Charles' perception of similarities and differences in various cultures, and he said that there were few similarities between his culture and the cultures of his friends. There were more similarities between the various Asian cultures. Is this true of European and African cultures as well? "There might be more similarities between African and Hispanic cultures, maybe?" What about between Asian and, say, Russian as opposed to Asian and German? Charles seemed genuinely interested in thinking about this question. The researcher suggested that he and Jonathan might want to discuss this at our final meeting.

Jonathan would like to see others in his school study Russian. "I think they would like it. It is very difficult, but the smart ones could get it and would feel very proud when they mastered it. Then we could talk about secret

things that nobody else could understand." In the meantime, he is glad to continue his own study of his language outside of school and feels pride in this accomplishment. He is also very proud of his family's continuation of their Russian way of life at home. He is also very aware that their ability to practice these traditions and their ease and comfort in doing so is due, in part, to the support of the large Russian community that welcomed them to their new city and, especially those at their synagogue. Are Russian customs very different than those of his European, Asian, or American friends? "Yes and no. We have Jewish traditions which are a little bit different in Russia than in other parts of the world. Basically, they are the same, though. At home, we practiced some Russian Orthodox traditions, too, because our friends did. It was sort of like the Jewish people here celebrating some of the things about Christmas like the Christian people do. In Russia, it was just as difficult for Orthodox Christians to go to church as it was for us to go to the synagogue. We all stuck together." What about some other customs? "The dress is different. People here may think that we wear national dress all the time. We don't. It's like Chinese people. They have ceremonial costumes for certain special occasions, but they don't wear them everyday. We're the same. Our food is basically the same. We eat what we grow. We don't have as much variety there as we do here, but even that was starting to change before we left. They were bringing more things in from other areas. The biggest difference is how our families are. I mean, our whole family does more together than the families of some of my school friends. We don't think so much about kid's things and grown up things. We all do the same kinds of things." Does it bother him when his parents do the same things he and his brother do? "No. My grandfather does the same things, too."

Gabriel believes that everyone knows about France and that everyone

would like to learn French. The researcher felt a little uneasy with this part of the dialogue because he didn't want to alienate Gabriel, but, at the same, he really wanted to try to demonstrate the similarity between Gabriel's imperialistic attitude and the attitude of many who believe that everyone knows about the United States and that everyone wants to speak English! The researcher said that when he had studied in France years ago, he thought that the notion that France was the center of the universe had disappeared from the thinking of most French people. He related that the French people he had met on several subsequent trips to France had been much kinder about language issues and much more tolerant of his American ways. Gabriel replied that he believed this to be true but still felt that France was the most popular country for tourists and that that must mean that people know about his country. Did they know everything that he knew? "Of course not. They only know what they see or what they read or what they are told. That's not all there is." Would he want to be judged on what everybody thought about France? "No, especially if it's bad." How about the language? "French used to be the language everybody learned if they wanted people to think that they were well educated. Maybe that has changed. Most French parents have their kids learn English as their foreign language. I guess it all depends on where you live and what you want to do later."

Gabriel feels that his school does a good job talking about France, especially in the language classes; but, he doesn't think that they place enough emphasis on other cultures. Even though he enjoys feeling superior because he is French, he is aware that there are some students at his school who never hear their countries or cultures discussed. He told the researcher that he has heard teachers say "nasty things" about some cultures and he is pretty sure that there might be someone from that culture in the room. He also thinks

that "it would be good" if everybody who spoke another language had a chance to speak it at school or study it for credit. When the researcher asked him why French and Spanish were the only modern languages some schools offered, Gabriel said that he couldn't understand that. He can understand why French would be taught, but he can't understand why Spanish would be the other language. The researcher asked him what he meant. "Well, I thought that Spanish was kind of lower class."

What cultural customs did his family observe that might surprise his class mates? He couldn't think of any. "Do museums and things like that count? We have a lot of landmarks and great buildings and gardens and things like that which I guess are a part of our culture, but that isn't the same as doing something." When the researcher, partly in jest, wondered aloud if things like bringing fresh, warm French bread home for breakfast each morning or singing with a linguistically influenced nasality were cultural customs, Gabriel was quite insulted.

Raphael, who seems to have gained some confidence during this process, answered this question with much less militancy and much more concern than one might have expected. While he tended to come across angrily in the first dialogue, his anger appeared to have turned into strength in the second. He was passionate in his expressions of pride in his culture and language. He feels very strongly that people are very hostile to any Hispanic person who comes from a country other than Spain. He says that it is as though the other countries have no history. He feels that schools must be fair when they discuss ancient civilizations, and that they must include Central and South America and Mexico along with Greece and Rome. How does he feel about ancient African civilizations? "They should be included, also. Asian, too." As they continued their discussion, Raphael said that it isn't so

much that these cultural aspects of civilization aren't mentioned; "they just aren't discussed in great detail or very seriously. If there is any kind of real discussion, it stops at a certain point as though everything and everyone from then on wasn't really connected to those important beginnings."

The language issue is important to Raphael. He doesn't really care if his school gives somebody credit for the language they speak or study outside of school, though that would be nice. He would just like to feel that people regard his language as being as "good" or as "important" as English. He even understands that certain kinds of business and technology may use English as the "International language", but feels that there is no reason to make some languages seem inferior or less intelligent. He is aware that many people, even in the Hispanic community, create a kind of hierarchy of Hispanic cultures and "ways of talking". He hopes that he has not been guilty of this. When the researcher felt comfortable enough to share that he had felt Raphael was being a little elitist at times when he described the way his family had lived in their country, he acknowledged that he realized that he had been doing that because he was feeling that his father was so "badly treated". He said that he is beginning to think that it doesn't matter what you have or where you live as long as you are "proud of who you are". "If you feel good about yourself, it doesn't really matter what other people say or think. It would be nice if everybody respected everybody else, though." Could he think of someone who fit his description? "My father is a good example. No matter what he has gone through, he keeps doing his best. He is proud of what he does, and doesn't care if other people recognize that his work is good. Even when I have been snotty, he has just smiled and kept on doing his thing. His culture and language are very important to him, and he maintains them. He wants me to maintain them, too. The secret is to just keep holding your head

up if people try to make you feel bad about who you are or where you come from. We are just as good as they are. We may be different, but we are just as good. I need to keep remembering that. I used to convince myself that I am better than they are to make myself feel better, but I'm starting to see that I don't have to do that. I start acting like they do and I don't want to do that."

Social and Economic Pressures

The final question asked of each of the participants concerned social and economic pressure they feel or observe at school. David wasn't sure about this question. He said that he often wishes that he had some of the things his school friends talk about. Like what? "Oh, games and toys, and stuff like that. They have lots of video games and CDs and computer equipment that I don't have, but that's OK. I understand why we don't have some of that stuff. We will someday, though." Did his classmates ever go out of their way to make him feel bad about not having as much? "No. Not on purpose. I do feel bad sometimes when I feel like I have to lie and tell them that I have the same stuff as they do at home. I'm glad we live too far away. If they ever came to my house, they'd know I lied." Does he miss being invited to his friends' houses on occasion? "Not really. They would invite me if I lived closer." Would he invite them? "Probably not. It would be hard for my mother. She has to work and couldn't get ready."

Justin feels that his family is competing with people for economic and social status and he isn't sure who they are competing with. When they lived in their former neighborhood, they had as much as everybody else. Now they have less than the people in their new neighborhood, but pretend that they have as much. If he has a friend from school visit his home - an infrequent event - they are impressed with what they find. If he should invite someone

from his new neighborhood into his home, he feels that they would be comparing his home to theirs, and he feels that it would be a negative comparison. He is glad that he doesn't go to school in this neighborhood where everyone would be better off than he is. "I feel torn in half. I'm better off than some and worse off than others. It makes it hard just to feel good about the way things are. My mother would be content wherever we were as long as everybody was safe and healthy and we had food and clothes. My step father keeps wanting more. When we do a little better, he's still not happy. I think he blames my mother for not working harder. My father doesn't do anything to help." Are there times when he feels inferior because he has less? "No. I never feel inferior. But sometimes, I just want to run away from everybody and everything and just be happy being who and what I am."

Charles says that his family has as much money as most of his classmates. "Maybe more than some." How much they have doesn't seem to be the issue nearly as much as "how we got what we have". "It's like the people who are doctors and lawyers or famous actors earn better money than my parents who earned theirs in a restaurant. It doesn't matter that somebody used to be very famous. If you're not that way any more, it doesn't count. It's like my parents' money is worth less than theirs. We could have a house like theirs, but we choose to own a large condominium near the restaurant instead. There aren't any houses there. Some of the people at my school put a lot of emphasis on where their fathers went to college. If their fathers went to Yale or Harvard or places like that, they are better than somebody who went to San Francisco State or something. I don't know what they would think if they knew that my parents didn't go to university in China. They served apprenticeships. That's how artists learn their craft in China. It's like college." The researcher told Charles that many European musicians learned their art

in the same way and that the United States seemed to place greater emphasis on college degrees. He liked hearing that. Did he feel that he had ever been excluded from anything because he didn't measure up somehow? "Everybody except three of us took dancing lessons in the sixth grade. It's the social thing for all proper young gentlemen to do. My family didn't think it was important; it wasn't because we couldn't afford it. I think that I haven't been invited to some parties because I didn't go to midweeklys." Did he think it had anything to do with having a different cultural background? "Maybe. They probably didn't want to be bothered to get chopsticks."

Jonathan knows that his family does not have as much money as others. He knows that he doesn't have as many "things" as others. He is sure that he has been excluded from social events because of this, but he says that he doesn't care. "Once I heard somebody say that the reason I hadn't been invited to a friend's birthday party was that I wouldn't be able to afford to buy a present." Friends outside the Russian and Jewish community treat him differently. He isn't sure whether this has anything to do with money. He knows that his parents aren't involved in some of the same activities as other parents. "It's because they don't have time, not because they don't have the money. They work hard. They're too tired to go out all the time. Musicians don't make a lot of money anyway. That's true everywhere - not just here." He feels that some of the separation he feels is due to his parent's lack of contact with other parents. "Parents like to get together and compare their kids. They like to figure out who is better in school than everybody else. They like to talk about trips and shopping and stuff like that. My parents do sort of the same thing with their friends, but it doesn't seem so competitive or snobby."

Gabriel enjoys the celebrity of being from France and being the son of a

member of the French government. He enjoys the fact that he comes from a family which has as much and does as much as everybody else, yet he still feels some social isolation from his peers. He says that it is because he hasn't been in the United States as long, but as they talked, the researcher sensed that he is often being excluded just because he is different. He told a couple of stories about the frustration expressed by friends' parents who had difficulty understanding him when he spoke, and one story about his discomfort with the fact that a friend had a French nanny. "His mother thought it would be cute if I spoke French with the nanny. She acted like I was the nanny's son or something."

Gabriel confessed that he often pressured his mother to buy him things that his friends had so that he wouldn't feel left out. Did his mother buy the things he wanted? "Yes. She wants me to be happy." Did his mother ever feel left out of anything because she's from France? "If she has, it's because they are just jealous."

Raphael says that he used to be very jealous of his class mates who had more than he did. "It doesn't bother me as much now. I guess it's OK to have things if you can afford them, though I think some of them have more than they could ever need or use. I guess it makes them feel more important if they have a lot of things. I had nice things at home and I have nice things now, but not lots more than I need. Even if we had lots of money now, I don't think my parents would waste a lot of money on silly things. They are trying to teach me values about things like that. Sometimes, the ones who have the most get bored very fast. I enjoy playing and reading and doing some things that don't cost money. I go to activities in my neighborhood which are free. Some of the kids at school do exactly the same things some place else and pay lots of money for them. They act like theirs is better, but I know that's not

true. I used to get mad. Now I don't."

When asked if he had been excluded from any activities because of economic or social difference, he replied that he had been on a number of occasions. "They probably think that they are being kind by not embarrassing me. They think that I can't afford some things and they are right, but I wish they would ask me anyway so I would think that they would like me to come. It would be better to be able to say 'no'. I don't have to give a reason. Maybe I'm busy. It makes it seem like they don't like me. Sometimes, like at lunch, they are all talking about gifts or trips, and they all stop talking when I come to the table. They don't want to make me uncomfortable. It would be OK for them to keep talking. If I don't like it, I can always go to another table. I hate feeling like they are keeping secrets or making fun of me or something like that."

Was there anything he really needed that he didn't have? "Not really." Did he feel that he was less a person because he wasn't always included? "No." Did he feel that his parents were bad people because they didn't have as much as some other people? "Heck, no."

THE FINAL GROUP MEETING

Transcripts of the second dialogues were presented to each of the participants for correction and reflection. The final group meeting was scheduled and the boys were asked to think about all that had gone on during the research, and to come prepared to talk a little about how they felt about the process and about how they might have changed during the process. The researcher told them to think about ways their schools might change to help them and others with immigrant backgrounds to have a better personal and educational experience.

The participants entered the final group meeting with a good deal more confidence and ease than they had the first. It was nice to see that, even though none of them had spent any time together since their first meeting, they seemed to communicate with each other in a much more connected way. They were cheerful and relaxed; they had all gone through the same process with the same researcher, and this fact had bonded them. They entered this final stage of the research having formed the community of immigrant students which the researcher had predicted. His only hope was that they would continue to maintain this sense of community throughout this meeting and, perhaps, in the future.

The researcher invited the boys to have some refreshments - a cake upon which the baker had written "POWER" - and some fruit juice. At first, no one wanted to cut the cake. Everybody looked at it for a long time. It was clear that the researcher had requested this specific word, but nobody seemed to understand exactly what it meant. Finally, the researcher said that he hoped it would make sense at the end of their meeting, but, "in the meantime, let's eat".

The researcher began the final dialogue sharing some of the facets of the research that had been particularly important to him:

1. Each participant had stuck with it. He shared that some researchers who had done work with adults had not been as lucky as he had been.
2. Each participant had grown and changed, if only slightly, during the research process. (He said that they could talk about that later.)
3. Each participant had strengthened and solidified relationships with at least one other person during the research process.
4. Each of the participants had allowed the researcher to really get to know them and their communities during the process. Some

had even been proud to do so.

5. All of them had learned more about themselves and their cultures during the process, and all of them had indicated that they would like to see some improvement in the relationship of their schools to them and their culture and ethnicity.

The researcher then restated the generative themes which he had extracted from their time together, and reminded them of the questions which he had asked in the first and second dialogues. He also described common themes which he felt had arisen during the supplementary mini-dialogues:

1. Families loved their boys and wanted nothing but the best for them. They all wanted their sons to have better lives than they had had, and wanted to make sure that the schools they attended helped achieve this goal. All of them were grappling with ways to help the boys maintain and cherish cultural identity and language proficiency, but were often at a loss as to how to accomplish this.

2. Many teachers admired and respected the boys for their ability to work hard to correct any problems which may have gotten in the way of their integration into their schools and their success in the classroom. Several teachers expressed frustration with the administrative decisions which often prevented immigrant children and other children of color from feeling pride in their cultures and sharing that pride with others. Most all of the teachers had expressed interest in our process and wanted to discover new ways to bring cultural awareness into their classrooms. In fairness, only one teacher had offered disparaging opinions about immigrant students in the life of that particular school.

3. All of their peers think that they are terrific kids. They admire their friends' differences and want to learn more about them. Some felt inspired to learn more about their own ethnic and cultural backgrounds because they are so interested in the participants' backgrounds.

And now it was the participants' turn to share. No one was shy.

Everyone began to talk at once. The researcher wished that he had a video camera. Audio taping could not possibly capture the energy and animation being exuded by these boys. He let the cacophony "happen" for a bit. He enjoyed watching them relate to each other so excitedly and so pleasantly. Raphael and Charles were the oldest, and the other boys seemed to acknowledge that fact by directing many of their remarks to these two leaders. The researcher finally called everybody to order. They all laughed and each one began to share his individual experiences and feelings. There were stories about the reactions of their classmates and teachers to the fact that they were participating in the process. David said that his teacher asked for a report all the time. She told him that she was jealous that he got to take part in such an important project. She had asked him to share information about participatory research with his class, and he felt that most of the students thought it was "neat". He said that his parents were proud of him for doing such a good job. They were talking more about their own parents and other family members because he had been asking them more questions about his ancestors.

The researcher felt that Justin had reached a real 'plateau' in his ability to deal with his difficult home situation. He was able to tell the other boys how he felt about his parents' divorce, his step father, his new sister, and his unwillingness to deal with cultural issues. "It's too confusing for me. I don't know which parent to be loyal to. If I speak Spanish, I get in trouble. If I talk about my dad, my mother gets upset. When she tells me about her own childhood, it sounds awful. I don't know what to do." Raphael looked at Justin and said, "Just be yourself, man. Don't try to please other people. Find out who you are, then the rest will be fine. It's OK to investigate your own family tree."

Charles was able to relate that he had become more comfortable with his family. He had been a little embarrassed by their Chinese ways for a long time. He was afraid of what his friends might say. He was afraid of being laughed at. Now he doesn't care what anybody thinks. "They are doing a lot for me. I should be nicer." He would like his school to be proud of the fact that they have some immigrant students and to become more diverse. "Think of all the things that kids could learn from each other. People are better than books." He said that he was going to take more interest in Chinese school from now on, and take more pride in his ability to translate for his grandmother.

Jonathan said that he never really thought much about culture or language because his were so much a part of his life with his family. What they do at home is so "natural" that he thought that everybody else did the same thing. The fact that the school doesn't call more issues to the students' attention hadn't occurred to him before, but he is very aware of it now. He said that he was surprised to find, when he started talking to others, that many children know nothing about their backgrounds and do not seem to do anything unique to their ethnicity or culture. He thinks this is "too bad". He hopes that schools will start to help students learn more about themselves and to share what they learn with their friends.

Gabriel looked at Justin and told the group about his parents marital problems. He cried when he told the group that his father had left his family to live with another woman and then moved her and their new child into an apartment directly across the hall from his family. "You think your family is mixed up." He said that the only thing he had to hold on to was being French. The arrogance which he had exhibited so often was a trait he had acquired to put people off so that he wouldn't have to reveal anything he didn't want to

reveal. He cried and felt no embarrassment. The other boys really comforted him in a remarkable way. They were demonstrating that they were men without needing to exhibit some of the 'macho' behavior that one might have expected from young adolescents. No laughing. No raised eyebrows. No nervous conversation. Just concern for their new friend.

Raphael shared that he had been very angry at his father for allowing others to "chase him out" of their country. He had viewed this as a sign of weakness and felt that his father had given up a part of his culture by allowing this to happen. Raphael had come to feel that he himself was weak and powerless, so that each time any one said or did anything that he objected to, he "got mad and sulked" rather than confronting the situation in a proud, positive manner. "I think I may have actually strengthened the stereotype that some people have of Latino men rather than dispell it." Since he began to participate in this research, he has been much more observant of others and has discovered that he has much to be grateful for in his relationship to his family and community. He is eager to discuss how schools can actually help others to feel good about their culture and ethnicity.

Did the boys feel better about themselves at school than they did before? All of them said that having gone through the process helped them to feel "less nervous" about being themselves around others. They also indicated that they felt a little better about being "different" than their peers because they had come to feel more positive about their families, their countries of origin, their Bay Area communities, and themselves. They all felt, however, that schools need to do a lot more to help them feel this way, and they agreed that more diverse student bodies would help with this. Would they worry about involving their families more in activities at school. The answer was unanimously "no, as long as they want to, and as long as

they understand that there will be some people who might treat them differently."

A wonderful sense of pride and determination had arisen and the group was ready to begin discussing ways to implement solutions to problems generated in the dialogues. The participants felt sufficiently empowered to suggest some action to create changes in their respective educational communities.

The recognition of problems, the desire for change, and the willingness to work toward transformation is more than sufficient to have met the ultimate requirements of participatory research. Changes happen slowly and occur over time, so the participants discussed the need to be patient. They realize that they may encounter resistance and reluctance, but they have gained strength and resolve within their community of researchers and, in some cases, their families and neighborhoods. They left this meeting with the desire to continue their search for social justice in their lives and the lives of others.

What suggestions did the participants make which could help them deal with diversity in a more positive fashion?

1. Begin solving problems at home before tackling the problems at school. Demand that family members talk about their feelings concerning culture, ethnicity, and diversity. Try to reach an understanding about the reasons parents send their children to their respective schools. Don't pretend. Be honest. Tell your family exactly how you feel about yourself, them, and your school no matter what the immediate reaction might be.

2. Talk openly to classmates. Don't assume that they are "against you" or are "looking down on you" because you are different than they are. If you are puzzled about their behavior or something they have said, ask questions. "Get to the bottom of it" no matter what the immediate reaction might be. Be as interested in their cultural backgrounds as you would like them to be interested in yours. Don't allow anyone to tell you that they

have no culture or ethnicity because, "you know better". Be prepared to help them define *American*.

3. Try to understand "where your teachers are coming from". Be aware that some of them are being directed by others who may not be "on the same wave length". Most all teachers are "creatures of habit", and, while some may be unable to change for a variety of reasons, many are anxious to change but aren't sure how to go about it. You can help them make this change by showing them how much their changing means to you and the others in their classes. Be polite and always let them know when you appreciate something that they have said or done.

4. Form a committee of immigrant students and students of color, and any other students who might be interested, to discuss specific ideas for improving awareness at your school. Understand that some things are beyond your immediate control, but don't let that discourage you. When you have decided on a plan, try to find a teacher who would be willing to get involved by endorsing your ideas and taking them to the administration. Try to enlist the help of the student council, if that seems appropriate. Take this opportunity to involve your parents. Remember that they have more experience with their culture and ethnicity than you do. This could give them the opportunity to gain further respect within the school community and with other parents who they might recruit to help with specific projects. By involving parents and other family members, everyone becomes empowered simultaneously.

The participants then discussed some specific plans the *cultural committee* might make.

1. Find as many special occasions to celebrate as possible. Stress that not all events have to be commemorated with food and costumes. Sometimes posters in the halls, special library displays and "interest sections", an announcement at assembly, an article in the school newspaper or literary magazine, or a brief word from a teacher for whom the occasion is relevant, is more than sufficient. Be proud of what you are doing.

2. Try to enlist students and parents to help plan those events for which food and costumes would be particularly important. Make sure that the presentation does not confirm stereotypical ideas or

opinions. Make sure that whatever is presented is explained carefully so that every one understands its importance. Try to involve as many students and teachers in the event so that they are involved as participants not just spectators. Help them "feel" why the occasion means so much to people. Always be willing to listen to criticism, no matter how it might bother you. It is important to honor and respect other people's opinions. Be prepared to evaluate each of these occasions or events so that you can do it better next time. "Keep notes that can be used after you have graduated".

3. Involve individuals within the specific ethnic and cultural communities as much as possible. Try to get appropriate students, faculty, and staff to "identify" with individual events or presentations. It is good for the students to know that there are people among them who observe these customs and for whom they are important. Don't be afraid to speak your languages. Demonstrate how proud you are to speak it.

4. Be honest. Don't sacrifice truth for impact. Some things "are the way they are" without being "fancy, exciting, or colorful". Don't worry about "turning people off" if you are committed to what you are doing.

5. Invite teachers, department heads, curriculum coordinators, librarians, assembly coordinators, and other administrators to meet with you to explain the curriculum and to answer any questions and concerns you might have. Enter this discussion in order to "learn rather than confront". Listen, but don't be afraid to ask questions. Ask them if they would be willing to meet with you again after you have had a chance to reflect.

6. Meet with your committee again. Share your new knowledge and feelings with as many people as possible. Get their impressions and ideas. Make a list of questions concerning curricular and cultural issues (including those about language) which you can discuss at the next meeting with "the powers that be". Remember to be patient, and know that change frequently occurs very slowly. The fact that you are creating dialogue and opportunities for reflection and evaluation with others is the important thing. This, alone, is *change*.

7. Understand that changing an institution's admissions and curricular policy may be very difficult, if not impossible. Parents can be most helpful in persuading the board and chief administrators that greater diversity among students, faculty,

and staff can only be considered a benefit to the educational community, as can a variety of languages.

8. Stay aware and involved, and take every possible opportunity to keep others around you informed and interested. Be confident, and celebrate the power and strength you feel as you search for "peace, equity, and justice for all."

Parents began to arrive to pick up their sons. The final meeting had lasted much longer than the researcher had anticipated. The research had been successful, not so much because of the data gathered, but because the participants had all grown and become substantially more empowered through reflection on the circumstances of their lives and the lives of others. They gained strength talking to the researcher, family members, teachers, peers, and to each other. Their voices had been heard by others, and they found that they were able to hear their own voices resonating in the voices of the others. They had made new friends. They had formed a small, new community of different but similar immigrant students. The researcher and all the participants agreed to keep in touch with each other, and to continue sharing their experiences - gathering strength and inspiration, one from the other. As they said their "goodbyes", all of the boys agreed to meet again - soon.

CHAPTER V: CONFIRMING AND ANALYZING THE DATA

CORROBORATIVE DATA

The researcher decided, on the recommendation of a member of his dissertation committee, to invite other male immigrant students who had graduated from private elementary schools and were now continuing their education elsewhere to meet with him to confirm - or deny - the data gathered during this research. The researcher invited his participants to help him recruit these young men. Three boys, each known to the researcher or one of his participants, volunteered to meet with the researcher all together as a group: Jonathan's brother, Daniel, a sophomore at a private co-educational high school in San Francisco; Geoffrey, an Asian-American student who attended a private single-sex elementary school in San Francisco, and is now a junior at a San Francisco public high school with a large Asian student population; and; Mikail, an African-born student - now enrolled as a freshman in what is usually referred to as "an exclusive private college" - who attended single-sex parochial elementary and high schools in San Francisco. None of the three young men were concerned about preserving their anonymity, and the researcher was not concerned about maintaining "neutrality" regarding the meeting place. The group met at the researcher's home on a Saturday afternoon, and the discussion lasted for approximately three hours. It was taped in order to help the researcher reflect on its content, but no transcript was prepared as part of the research process.

The researcher explained the purpose of the study and the methodology used. He explained that while studies had been conducted in this general area of inquiry, few, if any, had been done involving either

immigrant elementary aged boys or immigrant students attending private schools; none which combine the two elements exist.

The researcher also felt that it was important to explain that while he had chosen to use the term *emotional well being*, he was not attempting to make a clinical psychological examination of his participants. When he asked the boys what the expression *emotional well being* meant to them, their response was unanimous: "It means feeling good about yourself." "It says that I'm not unhappy or worried. I can hold my head up and not worry what other people think about me." "It means that I'm happier and less tense or scared." They had offered an excellent operational definition using what Freire describes as "a comfortable means of expression - a grammar and language of the people." (Gadotti, 1994) They understood that it is an ordinary every day term describing a crucial aspect of every human beings' existence, one which can be proudly displayed for all to witness or hidden away and disguised. They recognized it as an aspect of a boy's life which could be demonstrated or described simply and without fear of any negative repercussion or moral judgement. It is just what it is.

This simple understanding of a concept which might seem to be unmeasurable or too clinically fragile for use with children validated for the researcher his reason for using the term *emotional well being*, and reminded him that in expanding the work of Wilhelm Wundt, "the titular father of scientific psychology" (Cole, 1990), Vygotsky had in fact, proposed that there are two kinds of psychology - the clinical kind that is studied and measured by scientists, and *Volkerpsychologie* (psychology of the people) which is both descriptive and historical and views cultural variation as a primary factor in the construction of positive self-image (Cole, 1990). This view would seem to validate Cavanagh and McGoldrick's (1996) positive *self-image* contained in

one's personality, Kendler's (1963) positive sense of *self*, and the researcher's *emotional well being*.

The three boys seemed quite interested in the topic and indicated that they would certainly be willing to share their own experiences in independent elementary schools. At first, the researcher chose not to give them any detailed information about what his participants had revealed so that they would not feel automatically compelled to confirm the researcher's data. (It is likely, of course, that Daniel's brother shared some of the findings with him.) It was interesting to observe how very confident and collegial these boys were during this conversation.

All three agreed that their experiences in private elementary schools had both positive and negative influences on their future educational realities. The two who have continued to be enrolled in private institutions shared that they had experienced the least numbers of conflicts or "surprises" as they continued their educational journeys. They felt that this educational progression from one private institution to another had been for them the "safest and easiest educational path to follow". "Almost everyone in a private high school in San Francisco also went to a private elementary school. Most of those who didn't probably moved to the City from out of town. They have their own unique problems catching up academically, but nothing like it would be if they were coming from a public elementary school here." "The kids who go to private high schools from public elementary schools have a very hard time. They just haven't had the same opportunities." When the researcher asked if these opportunities were academic only, all three of the young men answered negatively. "No, they haven't had some of the extra curricular activities or some of the social things outside of school that the rest have had. No one has time to help them catch up. So they always fall behind.

That doesn't mean they're not smart, though." "One area where they really are behind is technology. My school insists that almost everything be done with the computer. I don't know how anybody can keep up if they don't have a computer at home."

The fact that the boys used the words "safest" and "easiest" indicated to the researcher that they had discovered an important coping mechanism and had used it often enough to be able to name it. "Play it safe." "Make it easy for yourself." "Pretend to be working harder than you are." "Nobody will notice."

For instance, the student who went on to a private college said that the longer he was involved in private education "the easier it got." "After awhile, you don't worry so much about getting in. You went to the right school, so they let you in; and you will probably graduate with no problems, too. You can always pay for extra help if you need it." This young man has learned that being in the right environment and having money can help create solutions to most problems. This confirms the researcher's observation that once immigrant students have survived in independent schools for an appropriate period of time, the institution feels that they have passed the test and will then be willing to help them continue to make their transitions.

Asked if their culture and ethnicity became barriers for them in their private schools, they replied that "that can be a problem if you let it." When asked to elaborate, Mikail said that he learned early on "not to rock the boat". He shared how difficult life had been for an African-American friend at his college who was on scholarship and who had not "learned the rules". "He resisted and fought back every step of the way, but it didn't do him any good. It only made it worse. The more he called his blackness to everybody's attention, the more hostile people seemed. The more he called differences to

people's attention, the more people resented the differences. Once he finally learned to keep his mouth shut, everything was fine."

Was "keeping his mouth shut" the kind of thing he had hoped to learn in college? "Look, graduating from this college is going to give him 'a leg up' for the future. Somebody should have 'clued him in'. If he doesn't like the system the way it is, he should go somewhere else." While they nodded in agreement, Daniel and Geoffrey seemed troubled by this statement.

The researcher had not used the words "race" or "color" with his six participants. They had not used them, so he did not use them either. While two of the older boys chose not to make any direct reference to "color" or "race" in conversation with the researcher, it became clear by the words that were used during the discussion that, even though the researcher had asked about "culture" and "ethnicity", all three of the boys may also have been talking about "race" and "color".

In her book, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* (1994), Gloria Ladson-Billings talks about the role of "color" and "race" in culturally relevant teaching. She describes teachers and students who are unwilling to embrace racial differences in the classroom. She believes that by pretending that these differences do not exist, they are also pretending that privilege and disadvantage do not exist and, therefore, accept the 'status quo' as inevitable (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Through trying to avoid issues which they may have felt the researcher would find controversial or unpleasant, the six participants may actually have been attesting to the effective and purposeful teaching strategies of their respective educational communities. By not raising the issue, the researcher may have been doing the same thing. If immigrant students join their peers and the adults at their schools in trying to pretend that differences do not exist

between them, they will be all the more troubled and concerned by the prejudice and discrimination they experience at the school. The inability to cope with or even explain their feelings of inferiority and inadequacy could more than likely create further need to pretend that they are something they are not.

The researcher asked Geoffrey to discuss his transition from private elementary school to a public high school. He explained that his particular public high school was atypical. It was "very close to being private" since it was fiercely competitive to get in - "just a whole lot less expensive". He said that he felt "very fortunate to have gotten in", and that, if he hadn't "made it", his parents probably would have sent him to a private school. Which environment does he prefer? "My high school is much larger - bigger building, more kids. The classes are larger, but the teachers are really great. The academic standards are about the same, and I learn a lot. I guess I like high school better because there are more kids like me there. I know that there are people in San Francisco who think that there are too many Asians at my school, but I think it's great. It's the first time in my life that I don't feel like I stick out in school. There are people there, including teachers, who come from the same background that I do and understand some of the differences that exist between us and white people. When I tell my friends that I can't go somewhere, I can tell them the real reason why. They understand because the same thing happens to them sometimes. It's usually a family reason that comes out of my culture. White kids would think it was stupid."

Did Geoffrey and Daniel think they would go to private colleges or universities? "It probably doesn't matter quite as much at that level. Our parents probably aren't going to worry about some of the same things - like

safety - when we get to that point". "A lot of it depends on what I decide to major in." "If I don't go to a private college, I think my folks expect me to go to one that at least has a good name - like Berkeley." "Private colleges are really expensive, so I'd have to get scholarships. I think my grades will be good enough, but there might be other reasons why I might not get good scholarships. Who knows?" Asked if they thought that their immigrant status would hinder their chances for a scholarship, all three said that "it would depend on the college." "It might help in some schools."

Were these boys "happy" in elementary school? Geoffrey was the first to reply, restating what he had already said. "No, because I didn't like feeling different. In my elementary school, I was the only Asian American in my grade which consisted of two classes. I always felt like a freak." Did the school do anything to help alleviate this feeling? "Not really. They featured Asian cultural activities sometimes, but that singled me out all the more. There just needed to be more of us for me to have felt more confident. Where I go to high school, there is a large number of Asian students - I think we are in the majority - and that feels really good. I don't feel superior to anyone or anything like that, I just feel like I 'fit in' better. I can be more myself."

Mikhail confirmed this, but said that as he continued to be "in the minority" in high school and college, he "just got used to it". I learned early on that I couldn't hide the differences between me and the others by pretending they didn't exist. Sometimes, I acted silly to get people to like me. Sometimes, I acted like I thought they would expect me to act coming from the African American community. When I look back, I'm ashamed. I was really confirming all the stereotypical ideas that they probably had about us. But, it seemed to work at the time. I had to work very hard to keep my grades

up. Sometimes, it felt like I had to do more than the others, but eventually people accepted me, and everything mellowed out."

Daniel said that his family and the Russian Jewish community were so "tight" that he was "pretty happy" at school even when he "felt left out". "I didn't look different, but when I spoke, the other kids looked at me differently." "There was something sort of exotic about being Russian. Everybody thought my parents were spies. I used to make my accent even thicker than it was to help maintain that image."

The other two confirmed that they would have had many more problems if their families had not been so supportive and convinced of their decision to enroll them in their respective schools. Daniel and Geoffrey continue to speak their languages at home and elsewhere in their ethnic communities. They both would have preferred to have had more opportunities to speak those languages in elementary school since they believe that they would have "felt strength in their differences if they could have connected their ethnic backgrounds to a living, vital language." Mikail always spoke English - "the language of the colonizers" - and his "British accent" has, he feels, been an asset at the schools he has attended. Did he ever make his accent thicker? "Yes. When he said that, I really related. I liked to make people think that I was British - from England. When I first came here, I kept making up stories about how I was the son of a British diplomat and that my mother was from African royalty. I certainly didn't want them to think that I was African American. I really had to juggle my stories and felt very nervous when my parents came to school or when friends came anywhere near my house. I once told a kid that we lived where we did because my Dad was 'undercover'. I felt superior. I guess I really felt inferior. Anyway, I've changed, I hope."

These three young men said that they felt their greatest problems in elementary school were the result of the social and economic competition between all students, not just those who "looked different". "It was good sport for some of them. They could play that game and it didn't really matter to them who won or lost. Everybody won in the end. I just couldn't compete. The stakes were too high, and I really resented that." "It was good practice for the real world, though." "We just didn't live in the same world as my classmates. They did things on week ends that I still haven't done. All of those things cost money which we didn't have. It still happens today, but it doesn't worry me anymore." Were there things they couldn't do because they were immigrants? "Probably. By the time I felt like I was a part of the school, the other kids sort of protected me. Their families all wanted to seem open and liberal, so I think they went out of their way to make sure that I was included in most everything. At first, other parents kept trying to 'treat' me to everything. That made me very uncomfortable, so eventually my parents had to ask them to stop doing it. My folks did as much as they could to make sure that I could do pretty much whatever I wanted to do, but there was a limit." "I didn't think that being Asian was keeping me out of anything at the time, but when I look back, I can see that there were probably some things. Like 'Midweeklys'. I doubt that there were any Asians there." "African Americans either." Daniel joked: "Well, I went to 'Midweeklys', so there. We didn't learn any Russian dances, though."

Had any of them told lies in order to avoid conflicts or to diminish the differences which existed between them and their peers? They all looked at each other and laughed. Daniel said that Jonathan had told him about this theme and he was amused that Jonathan had said that he didn't lie as much

as the others. "He just doesn't recognize it any more; he thinks some of it is o.k.. He justifies that kind of thing as normal now."

The other two agreed. They said that they have "developed a pattern of deception" which they aren't even aware of anymore. Mikail was the first to admit this. "Everybody does it. People of color, immigrants, the poor, the homeless - we just have to do it more often than you (the researcher) do. It's a way to survive. If people tell us that we aren't as good as they are often enough, we begin to believe it. We have to find ways to protect ourselves. We need to think of ways to help us feel better about ourselves. Nobody wants to feel like _____. You do what you have to do. You tell everybody how much you have, or how well you did, or how important your father is, and pretty soon they believe it. So do you, and that's the important thing. You believe it, too. You feel like something."

The conversation continued to document Ladson-Billings' (1994) premise that acknowledging differences, embracing and celebrating them, and then moving on creates high self-esteem and greater esteem for others as well.

Since the three had confirmed the key themes derived from the participant and supplementary dialogues, the researcher was inspired to share the *suggestions for change* which the six participants had formulated. While he read the various points (Chapter IV, above), the researcher felt very proud of the work the boys had accomplished.

Initially, the older boys were silent. Geoffrey spoke first. "That's really amazing. I don't know if I could have come up with something like that when I was in elementary school." Mikail agreed, saying: "It certainly might have helped if I had had the opportunity to have worked on something like that when I was their age." Daniel didn't respond but looked surprised and

proud that his little brother had been a member of a group that had been that thoughtful.

The researcher suggested that none of the six participants would probably have been prepared to come up with a list like this by himself. It was the collective nature of the group that gave each of them the confidence, wisdom, and strength to contribute to it in its present form. He explained that this is what he feels is the beauty of the dialogic research process, and, in fact, that the community that the boys had developed, so essential to Vygotsky and Freire, was fundamental to each of their individual constructions of the *self* of Kendler (1963) and Cavanagh and McGoldrick (1966) and to their collective and individual sense of emotional well being as defined by the researcher. The three agreed that these six participants were very lucky to have begun "putting it all back together" at such a young age.

What additional information did the researcher gather during this corroborative conversation?

The researcher is pleased to observe that, no matter what their elementary school experiences may have been, immigrant children do survive. If survival is all that is expected and required, then they have succeeded. He feels that the older boys have become exactly what Justin says he wants to become - American. They have allowed the system to slowly erase their outward sense of pride in their ethnicity, language, and culture. They are aware that this has happened yet manage to create the illusion of contentment, and, over time, have justified its occurrence by pretending that differences do and should not exist, struggling to prove that they are the same or at least as good as everyone else, and seeming to believe that "it's for the best".

Early in their educational experiences, they decided, to some extent, consciously or unconsciously, to disengage themselves from their personal identities - their ethnosystems - as they made transitions apart from those who shared those identities. They learned to play the game and ride the fence. They did what they needed to do and said what they needed to say in order to survive in a society that for the most part rejected their differences and accepted them only as long as they agreed to change - to become like those in the majority.

The three older boys, like so many others, have, as suggested by Ladson-Billings (1994), allowed the relationship between what are thought of as dominant and minority cultures (with minority being subordinate), established politically, economically, and socially before they ever enrolled in their respective schools, to become the 'status quo'. Perhaps unaware of their duplicity in creating this 'status quo', they have helped to perpetuate this relationship so that they can maintain at least some cultural connection - a kind of "fugitive" connection - with their smaller, more personal ethnic community of which they are a part away from school.

Many of the schools have encouraged the perpetuation of this relationship by emphasizing the similarities among and between cultures rather than, in addition, celebrating the differences and discussing them openly and honestly. This emphasis confuses, embarrasses and isolates students all the more.

They have been taught that to speak a language other than English excludes them from sharing any political, economic, or social power (Freire, 1973). Therefore, they have become voiceless and powerless at the same time, and they have accepted it because "that's just the way it is".

The participants - David, Justin, Charles, Jonathan, Gabriel, and Raphael - , like their older counterparts, have begun to recognize the slow deterioration of self which, unless stopped immediately, will rob them of their sense of emotional well being. Through their participation in this research and in what the researcher hopes will be many more dialogic processes in the future, they have, individually and communally, gained and exhibited respect, love, humility, hope, faith, confidence, freedom, creativity, and, finally, in its truest and best sense, individuality - all important aspects of emotional well being.

EVALUATING THE PROCESS

Each of the participants, in one way or another, was voiceless when he began his work with the researcher. Being voiceless caused the participants to feel isolated, separate, and alone. All of them, except, perhaps, Jonathan, felt isolated to a certain extent from their families. Each of them also felt separated from other students in their schools. Through dialogue with the researcher, each of them gained strength and confidence, if only in being able to say what he felt to the extent that he was able to do so. Equally important, the boys were able to select people from their lives to speak on their behalf, even if they may have suspected that these supplementary dialogues might have caused them to be even more vulnerable.

And finally, the boys formed a new community among themselves. Even though they only met twice as a group, it was clear to the researcher that they had bonded in a unique and very important way. The researcher learned later, in fact, that some of the boys had been in touch with one another between the two group meetings. They probably had not discussed anything terribly important or profound, but simply reconnected in order to be

supportive of one another as they continued making their transitions from their home culture to the culture of their schools. Not only did they all have certain aspects of their individual lives in common, but also the research itself. During this research, they were able not only to observe the commonalities among them but also to begin to observe and display the differences as well. The contrast in their degree of confidence and the quality of their sharing between the first and second group meetings was marked. Their self-building equipment, continuing the construction of their individual ethnosystems, which may have been interrupted by their enrollment in their schools, seems to be mended and functioning once again.

All of the participants seem to have begun a process of critical reflection on their lives. They have all learned more about themselves and about others. Some of this knowledge was buried in their subconscious for a long time. Some is new knowledge - created during the research process. They have discovered that knowledge produces power and that, indeed, positive transitions begin to occur when knowledge and power are present.

The boys seem anxious to share this newly created knowledge (this power, this voice) with their schools, their communities, and their families. They are anxious to help others create new knowledge about themselves as well. The boys are better prepared to embrace differences among and within cultures. Together with others, they are creating a new language of themselves, one which will guarantee, as much as possible, the emergence of an emotional well being contained in and inspired by their selves. This is every child's right. This is the essence and the goal of Participatory Research. The participants were anxious to create a list of suggestions which, if studied and taken seriously by independent schools, will help those institutions achieve and maintain a better informed, better trained, and emotionally

healthier ethnic, cultural, and linguistic environment. In fact, the participants were more than eager; they were prepared and ready. Feeling the power to make these kinds of suggestions is, according to Vygotsky (1993), essential for the proper psychological and emotional development of children.

The researcher expected to do lots of leading in this phase of the research, but, except for the refining of language, he needed only to listen and learn. No expert could have offered better advice than that which the boys offered to each other and to their schools (Chapter IV, above) - advice which they offered after they had a chance to listen to their own voices and the voices of others in the dialogues and the group meetings. It was amazing to hear them talk about the importance of family, community, and school to their development of a healthy understanding and appreciation of their cultures. It was equally gratifying to hear them stress honesty and openness in their relationships with everyone in their lives.

The fact that they recommended forming a cultural committee confirmed the beliefs of Vygotsky (1993), Freire (1973), and others such as Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1963) that connection between people is essential to learning and that a group can attain power better than an individual working alone. They had also identified the importance of involving teachers, administrators, elected student officials, and family members in their plans as a way of preventing any "us against them" confrontations. Their emphasis on discussion, conversation, dialogue, and talk, convinced the researcher that, even if only subliminally, they have acknowledged the importance of this research and may be eager to do similar research soon allowing it to work for them again.

REVIEWING THE GENERATIVE THEMES

The researcher identified five major themes which appear to be common among the participants. At first, some of these themes may seem to be identical, but because they manifest themselves somewhat differently from participant to participant, and frequently overlap, the researcher felt that it was important to retain them separately. The themes explored here are: 1. the boys' personal reaction to their school environments and their assessment of their parents' motivation for sending them there; 2. the boys' feelings of physical and cultural isolation at school; 3. the parents' stated reasons for sending their sons to their respective schools; 4. the boys' wishes that their cultures should be better acknowledged at their schools, their conflicts about revealing aspects of their cultures to their peers, and the involvement of families and ethnic communities in supporting their wishes; and, 5. what the researcher perceives as the boys' dishonesty and evasion in dealing with the 'status quo' and its effect on their emotional well being. As noted in Chapter One, John Ogbu (1994) suggests that one of the primary reasons so many come to the United States as resident immigrants rather than as sojourners is their wish for an excellent education for their children. This intense desire, coupled with the often false notion that public schools, especially in urban areas, can harm and alienate their children, is often in direct conflict with the perceptual realities of the children themselves. Why parents believe so strongly in these schools and work so hard to be able to afford private school tuition became an important theme throughout the research process - for both the boys and their parents. It was interesting to observe that the boys seemed better able than their parents to suggest reasons why their schools

were not necessarily the best option because of what scholars might call "culture loss" or, perhaps, more aptly, "culture prevention".

Many of the boys seem content with their schools on what the researcher might call a superficial "kid" level. They have an opportunity to spend the day in freshly painted, attractively carpeted buildings with well equipped libraries and computer and science labs, they are surrounded by other boys who are as physically active and playful as they are and who, despite occasional scuffles, offer no real physical threat to their peers. They eat a well balanced lunch at their schools, and their teachers are generally friendly. In his first dialogue, however, Justin observed that, as "nice" as his school is, he still continues to feel "like a guest" - welcome, but not really "at home".

On equally personal levels, Justin, Raphael, and Charles feel strongly that their parents have sent them to their respective schools for "all the wrong reasons". They feel that their parents are aspiring to attain something that they really want for themselves rather than for their children. Jonathan, Gabriel, and David agreed with the older three boys that their parents may be trying to dispell stereotypical myths about their cultures but, in fact, may actually be doing more to perpetuate them. While all the participants agree that their parents feel that their schools are providing them the best chances for their futures, most of them said that since their schools have so few children of their or other ethnicities and pay so little attention to the cultures which are represented in their respective student bodies, they would prefer to go to a school where most of their classmates are more like them in their ethnic, social, and economic realities. They would have more in common with their classmates, and, because they would feel more comfortable in the classroom, they feel that they would also do better academically. This verifies

Handlin's (1962) data and confirms Ladson-Billings' (1994) belief that children do better work and feel better about themselves when differences are identified, acknowledged, and celebrated in the classroom.

A theme which frequently emerged in conjunction to this one is the feeling of isolation experienced by the boys in their schools. For David and Justin, and to a certain extent, Charles, the physical distance between their schools and the neighborhoods where they live prevents them from feeling close to anything - school, home, or friends. For these children, it seems important to build a small personal community in which friends overlap among and between their various worlds. Knowing that their school friends live close enough to visit them outside of school provides them a sense of security. Likewise, it is the researcher's impression that they would feel more comfortable taking part in extra-curricular activities which required them to stay after school or to come back to school on occasion if they lived closer to the school.

The parents' reasons for sending their sons to private schools are fairly uniform: good education, personal safety, better contacts and opportunities for the future, etc. Most of them are outwardly confident in their decision to send their son to a private school, but Gabriel's mother, on the other hand, had no response when confronted with a school related issue which might, in hindsight, have proven her wrong. Charles' father justified the appropriateness of his decision with "filial obedience", and Raphael's mother said that they had doubts about continuing their son's enrollment in a private high school, especially in light of his reactions to his current elementary school. Only Jonathan's mother expressed honest, immediate doubts about her decision. After living in San Francisco for a time and continuing to feel the pressures exerted by her friends to continue the private school route, she

felt just uncomfortable enough that she sought the researcher's advice in this matter.

Another important theme which emerged during the dialogues is each boy's wish that others in his school could recognize and appreciate his culture. The researcher believes that the "maleness" within each participant also needs and appreciates some admiration for all that his culture represents.

It is clear that all of the boys have retained their home languages to one extent or another and that all of them continue to have some contact with their cultural traditions in some way. What became clearer throughout the process was their desire to somehow merge their domestic linguistic practices and their observances of cultural traditions with their ongoing, everyday school activities. They seem at odds with their schools about this issue, and each child demonstrates a different coping strategy. Some, like Raphael show their discontent with verbal animosity and antagonism, while others simply withdraw, remaining silently distant and detached. Charles, for instance, chooses not to "get involved" with anything other than the school's essential requirements.

In addition, it became clear that, while most of the boys do not want their parents to "get involved" at school, they look to them for, and expect, their support in promoting additional cultural awareness at their school. Jonathan, for instance, is frustrated that his school does not ask his parents to become more involved in making a presentation about their homeland, and Gabriel looks to his mother to help him gain permission to study French at his school. The boys need to feel connected to their parents and home in order to make emotionally positive transitions from their home cultures to the dominant culture at school.

The involvement of parents (or lack of it) in the life of their sons' schools seems to be closely connected to the degree to which the boys are able to proudly present their homes and ethnic communities to their classmates. While, as previously mentioned, distance prevents some of the boys from involving friends in their neighborhoods, homes, and families, the researcher feels that, if the participants are secure in their personal life styles relative to those of their peers at school, they would find ways to involve their friends in their lives apart from school no matter what the distance might be.

Gabriel, who lives as far away from his school as some of the other boys, has friends over to his house all the time. The difference between Gabriel and, say, David, is that Gabriel and his friends appear to be socially and economically compatible, while the perception of David and his family is that they cannot possibly compete with David's peers socially or economically, and that they could not possibly offer anything of interest to any of those children. The parents must also be willing to welcome their children's friends into their homes. The researcher wonders if the distance of the homes and communities of so many of the families to their schools may have been deliberately planned (perhaps subconsciously) in order to avoid any possible conflict in this matter.

To discuss their home cultures and linguistic practices with teachers and peers at school is difficult for most of the boys. Even though Charles said that he wishes his language could be recognized and appreciated at his school, he is reluctant to discuss his attendance at Chinese School with any of his peers. Gabriel, who said that he feels "superior" because he is French and very much wants to speak French and get credit for it at school, is reluctant to describe his private French lessons to any one. Only Jonathan, who is

fortunate enough to be surrounded by a family and community which are quite proud of their ethnicity and are intent on its preservation, is eager to "show off" for friends. It is apparent to the researcher that this "extended family" - ethnic in his neighborhood and spiritual at his synagogue -, something common, and considered essential to "growing up", in most cultures, provides Jonathan with comfort and confidence. His activities at an ethnic/religious cultural center also help to establish and maintain his strong cultural identity.

The researcher can not help but feel, like Guillen (1942), that the other participants could certainly benefit from this same kind of nurturing, but non-isolating, ethnic and religious community. Vygotsky (1993), Freire (1972), and Ashton-Warner (1963) also support this important connection between the celebration of a child's cultural inheritance and his or her physical and emotional environment.

Jonathan's pride in his country, language, and customs and his lack of embarrassment of his neighborhood or domestic circumstances could also be the result of his understanding that his family is "better off" in the United States than they were before they came here. His parents have been able to continue their careers, and are doing well in a profession which will never "make them rich". In Raphael's case, on the other hand, he feels very uncomfortable with the fact that his parents have "fallen" in status since they came to the United States. Even though he is aware of the political reasons for his parents' decision to flee their country, he still wishes that the family could have maintained its social, political, and economic status. To bring friends to his home would force him to deal with this issue and to wrestle with the family's new social, economic, and political reality. Charles is embarrassed that his parents, no matter how successful they might be in the United States,

"just own a Chinese restaurant". His perception of his parents' lives as artists in China versus their more common and mundane existence in San Francisco prevents him from expressing pride in his heritage and sharing it fully with others.

David has difficulty acknowledging his African ethnicity because he has somehow acquired the notion that, in the hierarchy of "the other", it is preferable to be Hispanic. The researcher feels that David even believes that it is "only right" that his African self would speak "poor French" while his Hispanic self can certainly learn "correct Spanish". The need on his part to climb the ladder of ethnicities indicates to the researcher that he feels inferior to his mostly Euro-American peers and prefers to ignore this dilemma by avoiding social contact with others at school. Ladson-Billings (1994) would suggest that David has, perhaps unconsciously, decided that Hispanics often have lighter skin making being Hispanic more desirable.

Justin's confusion about his cultural identity comes from the anxiety and fear he feels at home and from the doubts his family raises about his background. Whenever he attempts to learn something about himself or to endear himself to those he loves by making a cultural connection, he is thwarted by an insecure mother, barely able to cope with her own personal problems, a step father who is ashamed of his country of origin, and a father who abandoned him. He has come to believe that none of his cultures could possibly be worth pursuing since they seem to have caused such unhappiness in others. It is no wonder that he finds it so difficult to "be himself" with his peers and rejects any attempts his teachers and friends make to create cultural connections for him at his school.

Peace and harmony at home seem to produce a relatively secure participant. Justin and Gabriel, each in his own way, are uncomfortable with

their cultural and linguistic identity because, to a certain extent, their families are also uncomfortable with this aspect of their own lives. Charles and Raphael appear to come from solid family environments, yet, in both cases, the father is regarded by his son as a failure.

Charles' father may have masked his own disappointment in his life in the United States by being blunt, gruff, and matter of fact with the researcher. It may have been easier for him to exhibit stereotypical behavior and espouse stereotypical Asian philosophy - saving face - than to be vulnerable during his brief mini-dialogue. Likewise, while the researcher believed that the reason Raphael chose his mother for the mini-dialogue was because he was embarrassed by his father, it may have been, in reality, because he wanted to prevent the researcher from observing the father's own embarrassment and shame. Raphael knew that his mother would put on a good face and support the position of her husband, and yet, while she was relating how little Raphael's discomfort bothered her husband and how she hoped that Raphael would "understand some day", the researcher wondered if she might be expressing her own disappointment in her husband as well.

In each case, whether the birth father is absent or not, the researcher senses that the relationship between the participants and their fathers is not as secure as it might have been if they still lived in their countries of origin. This emotional stress may very well be the result of the difficulty adjusting to differences in concepts of maleness discussed in Chapter I, above.

Like Jonathan, David, the youngest of the participants, seems to have a loving and fulfilling home life. His parents have, perhaps, had the least amount of formal education in the traditional sense. (Charles' parents did not attend college, but were enrolled in a highly prestigious apprenticeship, which is the only training available to people who choose to enter their

former professions.) David's parents took advantage of as much education as was available to them in their country and were the product of a system of institutional and internal racism which told young people that "they didn't really have a chance to succeed, so why bother to aspire to anything more". David, like his parents, seems to be gaining a healthy curiosity about his ethnicity and culture, and, together, the family seems to be gaining strength and pride in their heritage.

The social and economic differences between the participants and their peers emerged as themes, but they were not as pronounced as the researcher had previously anticipated. On the surface, having and doing less than others did not seem to bother most of the boys as much as had been expected. While Raphael is conscious of being and doing less here than in El Salvador, and Gabriel is conscious of continuing to maintain the same life style he had known in France, the rest of the boys seem to do and have as much as they always have. They are aware of the fact that there are differences, and they often feel the need to compensate for them in their daily social interactions, but their lives do not seem to be totally disrupted by the absence of possessions and experiences they have never known. The researcher suspects that this particular perception of difference may change as the boys grow older as it did for the three corroborating young men.

The strongest and, in many ways, the most disturbing common theme, especially in the second dialogues, is the manifestation of dishonesty used by the participants as a coping technique when negotiating the differences between themselves and their peers. The number of times the participants confessed or alluded to lying or pretending or "hoping that no one would find out" was surprising - and alarming. It is important to understand that the researcher was very careful to use words used by the participants

themselves. The words they used were far more morally negative than ones the researcher might have chosen. This situation clearly confirms Ogbu's (1994) discussion of involuntary minority children who, embarrassed and ashamed by what they perceive as their inferiority, act out, behave inappropriately, or lead a kind of "double life" while "playing the game" and "riding the fence" in order to survive in their schools without losing their cultural identity. Examples of this deception among the participants are numerous. Even in the first group meeting, the boys were pleased to be able to use pseudonyms so that, not having to worry about who might recognize them, they could be more "open and honest". In the first dialogues, all of the boys couched any negative points they made with something positive as though they felt that this was necessary to please the researcher. They were "playing the game". In discussing their families' expectations of their schools, some of the boys confided that their parents were being somewhat deceitful since they were more interested in watching their sons "climb the ladder" than getting a good education. In some cases, it was felt that it was really the parents themselves who were "climbing the ladder" instead of their sons.

Justin talked about "doing his best" to please his parents even though he would rather be "somewhere else". The researcher notes, both from the gathered data and his personal experience, that schools often demonstrate and encourage this double-standard-like deception. Often, schools appear to make an effort to celebrate diversity without bothering to tell the students what they are doing or why! David confirmed this fact when he told the researcher that he frequently doesn't understand why his school has certain assemblies. In a sense, this, too, is dishonest.

To avoid having to deal with culture and ethnicity in public, several of the boys, like Charles and Gabriel, quickly deny knowing about something

from their ethnic backgrounds which is actually very familiar to them. David denies and misrepresents his ethnicity because his parents have tacitly encouraged him to do so, and Justin tells everyone that studying other cultures is "silly". He would rather tell people that he is "American" than explain his ethnic background, because he lives with people who deny or lie about their own ethnicity and cultural identity. Gabriel paints a dishonest picture of his own "French arrogance" in order to avoid confronting the difficulties his parents are having in their marriage and his own fear and confusion caused by this problem. Even though Raphael is proud to speak Spanish, he is quick to disavow his country's possible collaboration in the production of programming on Spanish television stations which his classmates might ridicule.

Gabriel was anxious to point out how pretentious some people from the United States are regarding their knowledge of France and her culture. He even suggested that this may come from a sense of insecurity they experience when they travel, yet he could not recognize this as a possible reason for his own "arrogance". Charles would rather "get excused during lunch" than suffer his classmates stares when Chinese drummers perform at his school, and wouldn't think of explaining that his parents were opera singers in China, even though he would rather see them do that instead of owning a restaurant. Raphael complains that his school doesn't do enough to celebrate his culture, but when it does do something, albeit poorly, he, at first, said that he would "rather walk away than try to fix it".

In the second dialogues, the boys seemed to feel more comfortable being up front about this issue with the researcher. David talked about pretending to be more content at school than he really is in order to please his parents. He also told the researcher that he frequently lies to his parents about

things he does at school and to his classmates about things he does at home. He also said that he doesn't want his classmates to know about some of the cultural traditions his family observes.

Justin feels that his attending a more upscale high school might help his mother create a better image for her business. He pretends not to notice when his cultures are discussed at school so that he won't have to deal with his identity. Charles has discovered that it doesn't matter how well you do at school as long as you attend the "right school". He is also aware that he tries not to "buy into the stereotypes" concerning Asian academic success, not because stereotypes are unfair, but because he might have to work harder to maintain an image or a standard others have set for Asians!

Raphael seems to be enjoying "riding the fence" and "playing games". His choice of supplementary participants who would "inform" him of what was said in their dialogues, and his claim that he "might as well take advantage of..." are signs of this. In fact, the researcher wonders, after much reflection, if Raphael's entire second dialogue, even though he demonstrated an enormous attitudinal change, might have been somewhat dishonest - perhaps even a bit of a hoax.

Social and economic differences were discussed a little more intensely in the second dialogues. Again, the boys indicated a general need to "lie to" or deceive their friends in this aspect of their lives. David is glad, for instance, that his classmates live far away so that they can't come to visit him at his home. They would become aware of all the things he told them which aren't true.

Justin expressed confusion about his family's need to pretend that they have more than they do. While he wishes that he lived closer to his friends, he is glad that he doesn't go to school in his neighborhood; this might require

him to pretend to be something he isn't. It was heartbreaking to hear him talk about running away just to be able to be himself. Jonathan and Charles are aware that parents play the same deceitful games as their children when it comes to social and economic realities. This realization seems to have prevented these boys, in part, from falling into this particular trap, even though Jonathan mentioned that, while his parents sometimes did the same thing, "it wasn't as bad as the others". Gabriel's mother always buys him what he wants, so he doesn't have to pretend about anything in this regard.

In the supplementary dialogues, parents often indicated that they themselves "hedged" occasionally when it came to being totally truthful, and some of the peers, especially those who attended the same schools as the participants, provided ample reasons why the participants might feel sufficiently pressured to lie about their lives rather than face what they would perceive as humiliation and embarrassment at the hands of their classmates and their families and, perhaps, teachers and administrators as well.

ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

By analyzing and continuing to further synthesize the data which determine the generative themes, the researcher offers the following answers to the initial research questions:

- 1. How is the emotional well being of elementary aged male immigrant students affected by their enrollment in independent schools?*

Based on the data gathered in this study, it seems that the emotional well being of the participants, particularly those who have little or no family or community support, had, at first, begun to deteriorate during their enrollment in independent schools. However, the dialogic research process

itself, encouraging and facilitating the creation of new knowledge and, eventually, a sense of power, seems to have offered the participants the tools required to begin making stronger, healthier, and more permanent cultural transitions from home to school. These successful transitions help to solidify their sense of emotional well being.

Kendler's (1963) and Cavanagh and McGoldrick's (1966) theories of *self* and this study's theoretical framework fashioned from the work of Vygotsky (1993) and Freire (1973) inform readers that a child's education, which begins at home, should include and support ethnic and cultural practices which become an integral part of the child's being or self. When the child leaves home for the first time to attend school, his self expects that certain cultural practices will continue to be observed or, at the very least, acknowledged and, perhaps, appreciated by those in their new environment. In order to maintain the happiness and emotional health which the child brings to school from home, it is incumbent upon the educational community to make sure that this expectation is met.

If the school's student body as well as its faculty and staff are sufficiently informed culturally, initial and obvious differences which a child observes between him or her self and others are not so pronounced as to cause immediate trauma or other emotional distress. If the environment includes others from the same ethnic and cultural groups as the newly enrolled children, the students feel the same nurturing support they feel at home and affective educational progress can be maintained and continued. Children are then able to notice smaller, less obvious differences as well as the many similarities which exist between and among cultures. In a supportive environment, children feel comfortable with similarities and differences and may modify Ogbu's (1973) *accomodation without assimilation*

to become *accomodation without acculturation* or, perhaps, more directly, *accomodation* as well as *assimilation*.

2. *What specific actions on the part of independent schools may hinder the development of emotional well being?*

A few immigrant students in an independent school allows the institution to ignore or deny a child's ethnicity or cultural identity. By pretending that "everybody's the same" (which may be interpreted to mean "everyone should be the same"), the schools persuade children that "same is better", and, slowly but surely, these children begin to abandon the cultural practices which they have acquired at home from parents, grandparents, and others in their extended communities. Without both peer and adult role models to help identify and affirm cultural differences at school, children may place further barriers between themselves and others in their lives causing even greater emotional distress for all concerned.

Unless administrators, staff, and teachers are willing to intervene and lead, mainstream peers can easily make the lives of immigrant students miserable. If, for instance, as seems to be the trend, private schools do not require uniform dress for all students, small items of clothing from specific cultures, which may seem perfectly normal to immigrant children, can become the source of ridicule and shame. Ethnic food can become strange and exotic, and, unless sufficient time has been spent establishing the educational importance and significance of various cultural practices, something as well intentioned as an ethnic musical program can be an embarrassment to members of a particular cultural group.

Whether or not children's languages, ones which have subtlety, expressiveness, beauty, and utility to them and their community, are ones which the school recognizes as being suitable for study (hence, legitimization)

and credit, the ridicule of those languages by others in the environment can cause, perhaps, the child's greatest emotional distress. To be told that one's language is vulgar, not a real language, not as good as, or unnecessary must surely be devastating. To be told to reject the home language and to start speaking English to be successful in school and in life is unconscionable and unacceptable.

Maintaining the 'status quo', private schools may quite accurately make immigrant students painfully aware of the economic and social differences that exist between them and their classmates, and children may begin to feel that their personal worth is being undermined. The net result may be that they begin to lie in order to persuade others and, eventually, themselves that they are as worthwhile as their peers. It takes courage and strength for anyone to resist feeling the need to be like everybody else and to be unique; this is especially true for children who fight just to maintain the healthy self which has taken them so long to establish.

3. What can independent school personnel do to help renew, create, or support emotional well being?

This study's findings seem to suggest that, even though immigrant children may be few in number in independent schools, school personnel learn as much as possible about the ethnosystem of each student. It is unacceptable, for instance, to assume that similar ethnosystems (those of children growing up in Mexico and, say, El Salvador) are identical, because, as has been observed, there can be vast differences even among people living in the same ethnosystem. Children appreciate the fact that their teachers and others are making an effort to understand them and the way they live their lives outside of school. While encouraging all students to share with others by discussing their ethnic and cultural realities, the school should accept the

fact that these children and their families are sharing this valuable information from an *emic* perspective (the view of a person who is a member of the culture being studied), and that this perspective is usually more reliable and valuable, even if it may not be as elegantly stated, as one from an *etic* point of view (the point of view of one who is not a member of the culture being studied).

Regardless of what programs may already be in place to assist immigrant children with language differences, issues, or problems, school personnel should also celebrate the linguistic diversity which immigrant students provide for the school. While some educators may wish that credit might be given for formal training a child receives outside of school in his language of origin, all of them should encourage fluency and conversation in both the language of origin and English. Schools which understand that language is an essential part of culture and which encourage students to speak and share their languages must not forget that some children from other cultures spoke English in their countries of origin; this similarity must not be allowed to diminish the importance of their culture and all it can offer to the school's enrichment.

Independent schools, many of which have been formed on the foundations of power and wealth, must make an effort, if they really welcome immigrant children and want them to succeed, to neutralize social and economic differences between immigrant and other students. It should make no difference whatsoever which students are receiving scholarships or other kinds of financial aid when fiscal and social planning occurs. If just one student is excluded from any activity because he or she cannot afford it and other arrangements cannot be made for full participation, the activity should not take place. If just one father or mother can never participate in parent

functions because their work schedules preclude it, a new time for these functions should be determined. Likewise, parents, families, and ethnic communities and centers should constantly be nurtured and supported by schools with the understanding that the child's emotional well being is nurtured and strengthened through the support and cooperation of all these agencies working together. By getting to know these various cultural communities, the school will also have an opportunity to observe maleness and its function and role in each specific culture. This awareness can help the school as it guides each male immigrant student in making a healthy and comfortable transition between his culture of origin and his new social environment.

CHAPTER VI: RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

What have the six participants told the researcher about themselves that, when properly evaluated, reveals aspects of the male immigrant reality in private elementary schools which should and must be changed in order for these children to become productive and contributive human beings who, through their various life experiences, have grown a positive and healthy self?

What factors in their lives prevent them from offering the best of themselves in the social, political, and economic framework of the United States, withholding from them and others in their communities much needed acceptance, recognition, and gratitude?

Even though these immigrant students may not look like those from previous immigrant waves, even though their languages may not resemble the ones with which the ears of previous generations grew familiar, and even though the countries from which they come may be suffering different and perhaps greater social, economic, and political dilemmas, these immigrants simply want the same thing that all immigrants throughout history have wanted: a better life for themselves and their families.

The previous immigrants who were more quickly assimilated into the mainstream looked like us, and came from the same familiar and comfortable Western European countries of our own origins.

Those who didn't look like us - people from Africa or Asia, for instance, - tended to be regarded as "less than" because they had been forced or enticed to come to the United States to perform slave labor - the labor no one else would perform.

Today, the means of recognition are blurred, and it becomes more and more difficult for those among us who may be xenophobic to recognize "the good guys". As the fearful become more aware of their shrinking majority status, they tend to cling closer together, rejecting all but the very few who walk, talk, and act the same as they do. The more an intelligent and persuasive discourse is offered to help dissenters understand that the new immigrants can only strengthen and improve the social, economic, and political structures of the United States, the more they retreat, building higher and thicker walls around themselves to keep the others out.

These walls take on many different guises. Citizens vote to deny undocumented immigrants - who very well may have even greater and more compelling reasons to flee to a new land than those who are documented - educational, medical, and other humane services and benefits. Legislators, encouraged by a growing number of rich and powerful religious and political organizations, decide that English should be the only language spoken in the United States. Shop keepers install more sophisticated security devices to protect their merchandise, and raise their prices to exclude or take advantage of many of their customers - especially those in poorer neighborhoods. The Immigration and Naturalization Service behaves rudely and indifferently to all who carry foreign passports, and the government builds more and more prisons.

Young immigrant males, described in this study as involuntary minorities, may encounter these and other strong and insurmountable walls as they make their daily transitions. Even their educational institutions, which should be providing a safe and healthy environment for them, seem to be failing them and casting them aside, hoping that they will just remain silent and cooperative. When these children leave school discouraged and

defeated, preferring the comfort and sense of identity they find among friends on the street, the schools just throw up their collective hands.

The alienation these young people experience is overwhelming. Many (especially urban) public schools which have been mandated to serve the cultural and linguistic needs of immigrant students often seem to be failing - though frequently for obvious yet inexcusable reasons such as inadequate funding. Independent schools, to which many immigrant children are sent by parents who work very hard to pay tuition, may pay lip service to creating diversity and may even try to maintain what they consider to be a healthy and stimulating multicultural environment for their students, but, because they have no unified or prescribed plan and their teachers are generally poorly trained or even disinterested in Ladson-Billings' (1994) culturally relevant teaching, they also fail. Because the social and economic barriers between the new immigrant students and other students who have been attending these schools for generations is so much greater than it might be with children in public schools (public being the common denominator?), the private school immigrant children may encounter even greater difficulties obtaining and maintaining emotional well being.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

Guided by the data gathered, the suggested answers to the research questions, and the specific suggestions generated by the participants in their final group meeting, the researcher hopes that independent schools might adopt the following suggestions, all very similar to those made by other researchers (Trueba, Cheng, and Ima, 1993) (Trueba, Rodriguez, Zou, and Cintron, 1993) (Zeichner, 1992) (Delgado-Gaitan and Trueba, 1991), in order to ease immigrant students' transitions into their new educational

communities and support and encourage the sense of emotional well being with which the children arrived:

1. Conduct an examination of the school's philosophies and methods regarding student and staff diversity and multicultural curriculum.
2. Hire a more diverse staff (including administrators) - one which is aware of and well prepared for a multicultural curriculum - knowing that immigrant children will respond better to fine role models from their various ethnic and cultural communities.
3. Make sure that ethnic and cultural groups are sufficiently represented on all committees and boards in the school community.
4. Introduce multicultural programs which utilize resources and activities from students' ethnic and cultural groups and which help strengthen immigrant students' awareness of *self* as they gain a better sense of their cultural identity and values.
5. Continually help teachers and others on the staff gain cultural awareness and sensitivity as well as the ability to encourage students and their families to share their *emic* perspectives as they create new knowledge about themselves and each other.
6. Encourage the school to explore aspects of prejudice and bigotry which may be present in the community and help immigrant and other students to deal with these realities.
7. Allow the community to acknowledge and correct any and all historical errors regarding the realities of ethnic groups. This should include honest and open discussions of colonization, cultural dominance, and oppression in all its various forms.
8. Encourage students to involve themselves in cultural and ethnic activities outside of school and invite them to share these activities with others at school.
9. Be prepared to discuss the differences which exist in schools in this country and in the students' countries of origin.

10. Encourage students to acquire and celebrate the cultural and linguistic skills used and enjoyed both at home and in the school community. This is both essential and basic to multicultural education.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

During this research process, the researcher has recognized several opportunities for further research:

1. A detailed comparison of the realities in and expectations of the political, economic, and social atmosphere in the United States between current immigrants and those from previous waves.
2. A more thorough study of gender differences and expectations within and between cultures, both pre- and post-immigration, as well as gender specific relationships between immigrant children and their parents.
3. A comparison of public and private schools' integration and expectations of immigrant students.
4. A comparison of single-sex and coeducational private schools' integration of immigrant children.
5. A survey of goals, policies, and purposes regarding immigrant students in various kinds of private schools.
6. A study which observes the emotional well being of immigrant males from the same private elementary school.
7. A study combining various elements of this study and numbers three, four, and six which examines immigrant students from single cultures or ethnosystems.
8. A study combining various elements of this study and numbers four, five, six, and seven which researches female immigrant students in independent elementary schools, and one which compares male and female realities.
9. A study, similar to the one conducted with the older immigrant males, which examines the presence or absence of

the generative themes derived from this study in an adult population.

CONCLUSION

In their discussions of the emotional problems experienced by immigrants, Daly and Carpenter (1988) help establish Ogbu's (1973) theory that depression, anxiety, and paranoia, coupled, possibly, with anger, resentment, and deception (depending on the age and circumstances of the immigrant) are the result of many of the same kinds of experiences the participants shared with the researcher in this study. When immigrant ethnosystems, established by and through their cultures of origin early on in their lives, and in which recognizing and accepting differences between and among cultures is an essential aspect, are denigrated or disturbed, it becomes more difficult for immigrant children to make successful transitions into their new communities. Likewise, the building or, in some cases, the rebuilding of the self described by Kendler (1963) and Cavanagh and McGoldrick (1966) is disrupted or completely prevented, and when all of the coping mechanisms the children may employ in order to cling to and preserve their cultural identities have been exhausted, they could feel completely defeated and may, simply, drop out.

Some of the participants in this study - particularly Charles, Justin, and Raphael - appear to be, in many obvious ways - especially in the use of what they call "lies" or "deception" - getting close to the edge. It may take them a little longer to step over this edge, because, unlike many of their brothers and sisters in less privileged schools and in less supportive environments, they do have strong family and community support for which all of the participants, to one extent or another, expressed awareness and appreciation.

The final question which remains to be asked and answered is, "Is this additional support simply prolonging a waning and ultimate collapse of self and of emotional well being which will prevent making successful transitions?"

If the answer is to be "NO", schools and their personnel must understand and embrace the idea expressed by Ira Shor (1992) that empowerment for making transitions requires cooperation between them and the immigrant children's other communities. Each of the children's various environments has many important and valuable things to teach the others. Foremost among them is the notion that "everyone has culture and makes culture every day. Students all come to school with culture and language from their other communities from which they take values and to which they add their own culture-making actions." "Schools must reflect the knowledge and experience told to them by their students as the starting points of their curricula." (Chapter IV, above)

Through dialogues which inevitably lead to this crucial reflection, immigrant male students will surely find their muted *voices* and, joining them with those of others, continue to make successful transitions as they build and strengthen positive selves - bringing them a vibrant and satisfying sense of emotional well being.

APPENDIX A.

[Explanatory letter to prospective participants]

Researcher's name

Address

Phone

Dear _____,

I am currently working on a dissertation (a long research paper) which I am writing in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at the University of San Francisco.

I have chosen a research topic which, I believe, is extremely important to education, to you, and to me personally. The topic has emerged from my observations as a teacher in private schools over a period of nearly fifteen years on both coasts of the United States. It concerns the emotional well being of immigrant boys who study in private elementary schools.

I am interested in how boys in fifth through eighth grades from various cultures (countries) feel about their lives in this country, especially in the schools they attend.

The process I will use to obtain information for my study is called *Participatory Research*. It allows me the opportunity to have conversations with a small number of boys (individually and perhaps together) concerning their feelings about their lives at school. The boys become *co-researchers* since they are equally responsible for the content of the conversations, the analysis, and the outcome. This kind of research is very flexible, but it does require that the participants and the researcher (that's me) create a plan through which the community (probably the school) might be changed or improved in order that the participants might feel even better about themselves than they already do. Parents, teachers, and friends may also become involved in the process.

I am pleased and honored to invite you to become one of my participants. Please give it some thought. If you have any questions, please let me know. I will be anxious to hear your decision as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX B.**[Explanatory letter to participants' parents/"mini-dialogue" participant]**

Researcher's name
Address
Phone

Dear _____,

I am enclosing a copy of an invitation/explanatory letter which I have just recently sent (given) to your son. In it I explain that I am working on a University of San Francisco Doctoral Dissertation for which I am investigating the emotional well being of male immigrant elementary school students in private schools. The students should come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and be in fifth through eighth grade classes. For the purpose of this study, I will include newly arrived or first generation immigrant children. They may be second generation immigrants, but it would be helpful if least one parent was born outside of the United States.

Through our conversations (dialogues), we will attempt to discover how the boys feel about themselves in their school communities. We will have the chance to explore culture, class, and language at home and at school, and, at the end of the process, make some formal recommendations for improvement or change in the educational environment.

It is my hope that the boys will identify one family member -a parent or grandparent - to participate in a "mini-dialogue" concerning the reaction of the family and, perhaps, the culture of origin, to the boy's life at home and school. If you give your permission for your son to participate, you might want to begin thinking about this opportunity for family input.

This research can be conducted in the strictest of confidence and anonymity if the boys and their families wish. Nothing will be evaluated or reported without the boys' collaboration or approval. Thank you for your consideration.

Please indicate your approval by signing this letter and returning it to me. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX C.

[Explanatory letter to participants' schools]

Researcher's name

Address

Phone

Dear _____,

I am enclosing copies of letters I have sent (given) to students at your school (*names of the students*) and their parents.

I have taught in single sex independent schools on both coasts of the U.S. for nearly fifteen years and feel well qualified to investigate aspects of student reality in such institutions.

I am currently writing a University of San Francisco Doctoral Dissertation titled: *Transitions to U.S. Private Schools: Perceptions of Six Immigrant Elementary School Boys*.

The methodology requires selecting a small group of participants who, through dialogue and reflection, will enter the research process as equal collaborators in investigating a problem which has been identified by them or by the researcher on their behalf. Another essential component of the methodology is a mandate for improvement or change in aspects of the individual (or institutional) reality in order to promote the best interests of the participants and others in the same circumstances.

I feel that this particular topic is one in which all educational organizations and leaders should be interested, and I hope that you will offer your enthusiasm and support for the research by joining the parents in encouraging the boys to participate in this study.

We may wish to ask one of your faculty members to help us by participating in a "mini-dialogue" concerning his or her academic expectations and observations of these immigrant students.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please let me know. I would appreciate your indicating your approval by signing and returning this letter.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX D.

[Explanatory letter to faculty "mini-dialogue" participant]

Researcher's name
 Address
 Phone

Dear _____,

Your student, _____, is currently involved in a research project which I am conducting as part of my Doctoral Dissertation at the University of San Francisco. (I am enclosing copies of pertinent letters which I have sent to students, their parents, and school administrators. These letters will help to explain the specific nature of the research and its goals.)

In previous research of this kind, I have determined that it is very helpful to dialogue with a child's teacher in order to contrast and compare the child's reality with the way it is perceived by people who are crucial in their lives. _____ has indicated his enthusiasm for having you take part in our shared research.

As the other letters have indicated, all responses, while recorded, transcribed, and analyzed, are completely confidential and even anonymous if that is preferred.

We hope that you might be willing to spend a little time discussing _____'s work and progress in your class and to provide some indication of your expectation of him and others like him.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. I will call you after you have received this material to discuss the possibility of our meeting for this crucial "mini-dialogue".

Thank you for your interest and support.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX E.

[Explanatory letter to peer "mini-dialogue" participant]

Researcher's name

Address

Phone

Dear _____,

By now, your friend _____ has probably told you about the research he and I are involved in and our hope that you, as his friend and one attends the same school, might be willing to spend a little time talking to me about _____ and about your perception of him both in and, to a lesser extent, out of school.

Immigrant students are being enrolled in private schools in the United States in large numbers, and it is important that the promise that these schools offer to these young people be fulfilled. In order for this to occur fully, some aspects of the educational process may need to be changed, improved, or overhauled in order to enhance the educational experience of all concerned within the school community.

We all have so much that we can learn from one another. This research is intended to help facilitate that shared learning experience. Talking about your friendship with _____ and your observations of his daily interactions with families, administrators, teachers, and other students will be crucial in affecting change in _____'s life and the lives of others like him.

Please ask _____ any questions you might have or give me a call at the number listed at the top of this letter. Be sure to share your excitement with your family and encourage them to ask questions and offer suggestions as well.

I look forward to your positive response and to our "mini-dialogue".

Sincerely,

APPENDIX F.**[Explanatory letter to potential dialogue sites]**

Researcher's name
Address
Phone

Dear _____,

I am currently working on a dissertation which I am writing in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at the University of San Francisco.

I am investigating the emotional well being of male immigrant elementary school students in private schools in the United States- specifically the San Francisco Bay Area. The students who will participate in the research come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and are in fifth through eighth grade classes at several private schools.

The methodology requires group meetings and individual dialogues between the students and the researcher. The conversations and subsequent reflections will help all of the participants to suggest changes which, if implemented in their respective schools, could bring about positive changes and eventual transformation of the immigrant educational experience.

It is essential that the dialogues take place in an environment which is approachable, familiar, and comfortable, yet not the sole domain of one of the parties engaged in dialogue. The participants in this research suggested that the libraries near their homes had small rooms where this kind of conversation might take place.

A participant will bring this letter to you requesting time and space for his dialogue. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX G.

[A Thank-you letter to all participants]

Researcher's name
Address
Phone

Dear _____,

May I take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for taking part in my participatory research on the emotional well being of male immigrant elementary school students in independent schools in the U.S.

This study brought me great personal satisfaction and joy due, to a great extent, to your involvement. All who entered into dialogue with me and all who supported the process in so many important and varied ways can take pride in the fact that, together, we have created a climate for change in the ways private schools welcome immigrant students into their communities.

We are aware, of course, that change occurs slowly over time and, sometimes, with great difficulty, but the new knowledge which was derived in this study virtually guarantees a much needed and anxiously awaited transformation.

If any of you would like to obtain a copy of the recommendations for change the participants wrote, I would be more than pleased to send it to you.

Again, many thanks for a job well done.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX H.

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Answer only the questions which are relevant to or comfortable for you.
Share them with your families if you wish.**

Name	Age
Address	Grade
Phone	School

What is your country of origin?

How long did you or your parents live there?

When you (or they) left home, did you enter another country first? How
long did you (they) stay there?

What mode of transportation brought you (them) to the U.S.?

What do you (they) remember about your first encounter with the INS?
The facility? The people? Other?

Where did you (they) stay when you/they first arrived here?

Did you or other members of your family speak English on arrival?
If not, how did you/they get along?

Did you leave family members behind? Who?

Did you enter school here immediately?

Describe your first day at your new school?

Compare your school here with other schools you have attended?

Facility

Neighborhood

Number of students

Reaction of students to you

Quality of teachers and their reaction to you

Curriculum

Homework

Grading systems

Enrichment opportunities

Relationship of your family to the school

Relationship of family and teachers

Distance from home to school

Transportation to school

Is there a public school close to your home?

What kind of kids go there?

How would those kids react to your school?

Are you glad to be here or would you rather be there?

Describe advantages and disadvantages

Share your feelings about the U.S.

Share your feelings about San Francisco.

Your neighborhood

Your school's neighborhood

Do you feel safe at home? at school?

Do you feel safe when you travel in the city?

How often do you return home to your country?

How do you feel when:

you leave here?

you arrive there?

you are there?

it is time to come back to the U.S.?

What experiences do you have with the INS each time you leave and return?

Are you a U.S. citizen?

What is your status?

Will you become a citizen?

Why?

Why not?

If you answered *no*, would your feelings change if you could be a "dual citizen"?

Describe your country of origin: history, geography, favorite aspects, least favorite aspects, etc.

APPENDIX I.

[Sample "mini-dialogue" questions for family members, teachers, and peers]

FAMILY MEMBERS:

1. Was your family's coming to the U.S. in any way related to education?
2. How important is education in the life of your family?
3. Why did you choose to send your child to a private school instead of the neighborhood public school?
4. Are there any public schools in the City in which your child could get a good education?
5. How do you think your child is doing in school?
6. How does your child feel he is doing in school?
7. Does he seem to enjoy school?
8. Tell me some of the positive and negative aspects of your child's schooling?
9. Is your culture and language being acknowledged and utilized at the school? Is this important to you?
10. How are you ensuring that your language and culture is maintained in your child's experience?

TEACHERS:

1. How is _____ doing in your class?
2. What was your expectation of _____ when he entered your class for the first time?
3. Contrast the expectation versus the reality?
4. Is language a problem in communicating with _____?
5. How do his skills compare with others in the class?
6. How are _____'s attention and concentration in class?
7. How does _____ relate socially and personally to others in the class?
8. Does _____ demonstrate any characteristics which you would tend to attribute to his ethnicity or culture?
9. How does _____'s family relate to the school?
10. Have you had to make any changes in the way you teach to accommodate _____'s learning style?
11. How do you think _____ is feeling about himself at school?

PEER:

1. You and _____ are in the same class at school, right?
2. How are you both doing?
3. Is _____ a good student?
4. As far as you know, has he had any problems adjusting to the school? Has he been accepted by other students? Teachers?
5. Do you know what country _____ and his family are from?
6. Do you think that _____ is proud of his cultural heritage?
7. Does _____ speak a language other than English?
8. How does the school feel about that? Does he ever have the opportunity to share his culture or language?
9. Have you spent time together outside of school?
10. How has that been for you?
11. How are your lives outside of school similar? Different?

APPENDIX J.

[USF Human Subjects Approval Form]

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

*Institutional Review Board
for the Protection of Human Subjects*Date: May 19, 1995Principal Investigator: Philip B. ManwellStudy Title: THE EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF MALE IMMIGRANT
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN THE U.S.:
A PARTICIPATORY STUDY.

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco has reviewed your application to involve humans as research participants.

Approval Number: 95-05-19-44

is approved contingent on changes noted
on appended letter from the IRBPHS.

Please inform the IRBPHS in writing within 30 days that these changes have been made. Data cannot be collected from the subjects until changes have been implemented.

Approval Number: _____

 approval is denied

Type of Review:

Exempted
 Expedited
 Full
 Renewal

Please Note:

- An approval expires 12 months from the date noted above. At that time, an application for renewal must have been filed with the IRBPHS if the study is not completed. The approval number should be used in all grant applications, correspondence, consent forms, etc.
- Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.
- Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of the participants must be reported to the IRBPHS within 10 working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the Chair of the IRBPHS (extension 2416).

Gerardo Marín

Gerardo Marín, Ph.D.
Chair USF's IRBPHS

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