Multicultural Children's Literature: A Discourse Analysis

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Abstract
How multicultural issues, specifically race, ethnicity and culture, are addressed in children's books was investigated. Twenty-one children's books were selected based on the presence of multicultural issues in the stories. Through Discourse Analysis, the multicultural issues were examined in the content of the story, and the process, or how the story was told. The following hypotheses were stated: 1) multiculturalism is not an issue of necessity for children's book authors in the United States; 2) an etic, or universal, cultural perspective is a prominent aspect of the conversation on multiculturalism; 3) multicultural issues in children's books happen along a continuum of inclusion; and 4) a link is prominent between the content and process of the stories.

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MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

OF

SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

PACIFIC UNIVERSITY, FOREST GROVE, OREGON

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ABSTRACT

How multicultural issues, specifically race, ethnicity and culture, are addressed in children's books was investigated. Twenty-one children's books were selected based on the presence of multicultural issues in the stories. Through Discourse Analysis, the multicultural issues were examined in the content of the story, and the process, or how the story was told. The following hypotheses were stated: 1) multiculturalism is not an issue of necessity for children's book authors in the United States; 2) an etic, or universal, cultural perspective is a prominent aspect of the conversation on multiculturalism; 3) multicultural issues in children's books happen along a continuum of inclusion; and 4) a link is prominent between the content and process of the stories.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Literature for Review</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Influence Theory</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism and Social Influence Theory</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Method</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Data Collected and Treatment of Data</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Representatives</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULTS</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact as a Reader</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Units: Content and Process Themes</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Representatives’ Coding</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. List of Representatives
INTRODUCTION

For decades, social psychologists have studied the process of social, moral and identity development in children as related to issues of ethnicity and gender bias (Arsenio & Lemerise, 2004). Similarly, clinical psychologists have studied the impact of culture on the psychotherapeutic process, asserting that counseling and psychotherapy are socially influential activities (Arredondo et al., 1996). With this dissertation, I sought to provide one of many possible bridges between these two parallel fields of study by looking at the social discourse on children’s multicultural development in the United States.

Despite advances in clinical and social psychology in the understanding of moral and identity development and the awareness of counselors and psychotherapists, discrimination between racial groups remains. Social Psychology researchers continue to be confounded by the subtleties of racism and prejudice (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Jones, 1998), as the manifestations of prejudice are clear but prejudicial attitudes are obscure. Furthermore, clinicians continue to overlook multicultural aspects of client’s lives in favor of less ambiguous, more socially comfortable, personal characteristics, such as differences in age, gender, or religion (Dovidio & Gaertner; Vedantam, 2005). In addition, these less ambiguous or more socially comfortable characteristics receive greater attention as they pertain to the client, while the same aspects of psychotherapists’ or counselors’ lives are not always considered relevant.

Heesacker and Carroll (1997) assert that a dilemma facing the psychological sciences is the separation between research on social psychology and research on psychotherapy and counseling. According to the authors, this division in the literature
impedes the free flow of relevant research on social issues into the theoretical and pragmatic considerations of psychotherapy and counseling literature, and vice versa. As alluded to previously, a consequence of this separation is that psychotherapists and counselors, while aware of social psychological research, may not see themselves as influenced by the forces social psychologists scrutinize. To combat this dilemma, social psychologists and clinical psychologists could explore ways to examine psychotherapy theories and interventions in a social context, and evaluate social contexts in terms of psychotherapeutic import. I draw attention to this divide to clarify the theoretical issues motivating my dissertation, as will be explained in the forthcoming pages.

While clinicians may be aware of theories of moral and identity development of children, such theoretical considerations may not be seen as relevant to the treatment of a particular client. Similarly, clinical considerations are not necessarily incorporated into an understanding of moral and identity development in the general population. In this way, the two fields remain parallel even as they consider human beings from two separate but related perspectives (Heesacker & Carroll, 1997).

One avenue for connecting the two fields would be to examine the moral and identity development of children in relation to issues of multiculturalism, or as defined by Arredondo et al (1996), issues pertaining to race, ethnicity and culture. All psychotherapists and counselors were children before they were professionals, and as such were subject to the social forces still at work in society today. Within the context of such an examination, the process by which children absorb messages about race, ethnicity and culture through popular media is highly relevant. By investigating the influence of popular media on children’s media experiences with multiculturalism, a connection
between social psychology and clinical psychology is possible. Through this dissertation, I attempted to make such a connection, hoping to focus on common experiences of storytelling in U.S. culture. Greater understanding of the impact of popular media on children would inform clinical use of multiculturalism by psychotherapists, especially in the introduction of such issues by clinicians.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Statement of the Problem

Social influence theory and multiculturalism must converge in order to progress. At present the research described previously is abstract. Without connecting to the experiences of people engaged in cultural interactions, the two fields can arguably be marginalized by opposing theorists who focus on universal aspects of human experience. For this reason, the further investigation of moral and identity development, specifically regarding multicultural issues as defined by Arredondo et al. (1996) must incorporate the influence of social discourse. Societies are essentially established cultures, engaged in the struggle for survival and expansion. How these societies instruct and indoctrinate new members, whether born into or adopted by the culture, is a crucial part of each multicultural experience. As a researcher, I believed that studying the stories told to children about multicultural issues was a relatively unexamined source of influence in U.S. culture.

It is in childhood that the first awareness of racial differences begins (Tatum, 1995). Despite awareness in the fields of social and clinical psychology concerning the impact of context, little research has examined the cultural context that continually influences child social and identity development. The exception to this rule is in the small body of research on the potential 'correlation' between video media and aggression in children. A second, reasonable place to bridge social and clinical fields of study is in the examining of media designed for children. Such media, addressing multicultural issues, could influence the perspective of future psychotherapists and counselors as well as future clientele.
The Purpose of the Study

As a researcher, I proposed to study how children's picture or story books frame multicultural issues. I approached this problem through the analysis of discursive elements in children's picture or story books because the inclusions, omissions, themes and emphases in stories for children provide context clues to young readers exploring the social nature of their world. Many researchers have focused on the experiences of children, gleaned through observation and self-reports. By examining the words and illustrations of children's picture or story books, I hoped to explore the contexts of children's experiences.

I believed that forming hypotheses about children's picture or story books before the completion of the study was premature. Little discussion of the context clues presented to children has appeared in social or clinical psychology research. Therefore, beyond the assumption that children's picture or story books, choosing multicultural issues as a subject, would include the social context of those issues, no formal predictions were necessary. My purpose was to observe and explore first, without overt preconceived assertions about the quality of the texts to be reviewed.

In the following pages, I present my findings. First, I present the critical literature review, which I used to link social influence and multiculturalism with the dominant culture of the United States. Second, I describe the method chosen, discourse analysis, in terms of research conceptualization and criteria, data collection, and analysis. Third, I describe the results of my research efforts. Fourth, I discuss the implications of my research, and four hypotheses based on my results.
CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, I begin by describing the selection criteria I used for determining which research to review prior to beginning my research. I then offer a review of literature on multicultural research specifically related to cultural or racial identity development. Next, I present a review of literature on social influence theory relevant to moral identity development regarding multicultural awareness. I conclude the section by attempting to link multicultural and social influence research.

Selection of Literature for Review

As alluded to previously, my review of the literature revealed a divergence between social influence and multicultural research: the impact of social discourse. Searching for available literature on social influence and multicultural research, I conducted first an examination of research cited by works on multiculturalism (e.g. the bibliography of Sue & Sue, 2003 was culled for references, and the references cited within Sue & Sue were explored). These starting works were selected based on the inclusion of research or meta-analyses regarding cultural and racial identity development. Additionally, I looked through research databases for relevant books or articles published on the following sub-topics: social conditioning, unintentional prejudice, and ethnocentric monoculturalism. Key terms included in the database searches were as follows: multiculturalism, social influence, social conditioning, unintentional prejudice and ethnocentric monoculturalism. I located articles and books on these subjects through isolated, as well as combined, employments of these key terms. The references were then examined for a link between social influence and multicultural research. That link was in the discussion, or lack thereof, of the impact of social discourse on cultural and racial
identity development. Research and literature not relevant to this theme were excluded from my review.

Multiculturalism

Special attention has been given to the prejudice of psychological theories in the past twenty years (Arredondo et al., 1996; Hayes, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2003). While psychologists were aware of the potential impact of cultural oppression on counseling services provided to members of minority groups, the American Psychological Association (APA) has only recently endorsed guidelines for cultural competency for psychologists (Arredondo et al.). The importance of this move by the APA cannot be too mildly stated, as it is precisely the implicit nature of prejudice that was challenged by this recognition (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986). By endorsing multiculturalism as an important aspect of psychological sciences, the psychological community has opened a dialogue related to cultural awareness.

The connection I drew between multicultural and social influence research has many precedents. For example, Horney (1926) asserted that Freudian theories represent a male view and are consequently biased (Rider, 2005). Much later, Wrenn (1962) wrote about the influence that counselors have over ethnic minority clients. By pointing out that such an influence is possible, Horney and Wrenn became two of many theorists who indicated that psychological sciences did not have a pass to ignore issues of gender or ethnicity and culture. Moreover, by defining counseling services as a social influencing process, Horney and Wrenn showed how counselors can unwittingly act as enforcers of cultural standards and norms.
Wrenn discussed a concept he called cultural encapsulation at a time when the dominant culture of the United States was asked by members of its ethnic minorities to reevaluate the success of its ability to afford equal rights for every citizen under the law (Wrenn, 1962; Sue & Sue, 2003). Wrenn may have focused his writings on the effect of ethnocentric monoculturalism on counselors and counseling services, but the larger discussion throughout the United States was gathering momentum in the protests and demonstrations for civil rights and the changes in the legislation enacted by city, county, state and federal government offices (King, 1963). Wrenn’s writings represented more of a reflection of the issues of the time in psychological terms rather than an original presentation; a recognition rather than a revelation. Even counselors, people who had chosen a profession of social service, could unintentionally contribute to harmful systemic biases and stereotypes.

Strong (1969) echoed Wrenn’s assertions by placing the counseling process within a framework of social influence. A counselor not only has the power to impose cultural biases and stereotypes, the counselor also possesses the power to influence clients into adopting the perceptions of the dominant culture. Social influence not only implies the threat of ostracism and rejection, but also incorporates elements of indoctrination (Schmidt & Strong, 1971). Whether intentional or unintentional, the counselor’s social power is significant enough in the helping relationship to convince and manipulate along cultural lines.

Pressure for multicultural awareness within the clinical psychological sciences has been building. Derald Wing Sue and colleagues first introduced the concept of multicultural counseling competencies in the 1980s, and resubmitted the competencies
again in the early 1990s (Sue & Arredondo, 1992). The authors of the competencies
detailed the parameters for optimal counselor awareness, knowledge and skills in
multiculturalism. Theorists began to describe the ways in which traditional psychological
concepts, such as transference and countertransference, related to the issue of
counselors with an adaptation of the ancient Greek adage: know thyself, counselor.
Arredondo et al. (1996) defined multiculturalism as a focus on race, ethnicity and culture,
in contrast to diversity, which could embrace multiple aspects of identity including
gender, socio-economic status, age, etc. McIntosh (1998) described the subtle privileges
of the dominant cultural group through the metaphor of an invisible knapsack.

Psychologists began to develop techniques for incorporating cultural information
into diagnosis and treatment (e.g. Hayes, 1996; Hayes, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2003).
Organizational requirements of training programs for psychologists began to incorporate
multicultural competency into the curriculum and practicum experiences of graduate
students (e.g. Peterson, Peterson, Abrams, & Stricker, 1997). Sue et al. (1998) advocated
for the use of multicultural competencies in individual and organizational development.
The possibility that the empirical treatments developed by the APA may not be
appropriate for every ethnic group surfaced as a criticism of standardized treatments
(Bernal & Scharrrón-Del-Río, 2001). The initiative for multicultural awareness in
psychotherapy and counseling advanced significantly at the end of the 20th century.

With an eye on the systemic consequences of cultural bias, Sue et al. (1998)
combined Wrenn's concept of cultural encapsulation and the concept of cultural racism
developed by J.M. Jones into ethnocentric monoculturalism. Ethnocentric
monoculturalism is like a lens through which a person perceives the world and interprets experiences (Sue, 2003). A system of imposed values operating within a social structure, ethnocentric monoculturalism is not simply a bias against any ethnicity, culture or citizens of a country different from one's own (Sue). While any individual from any ethnic background, culture, or country may be biased or may believe in a set of negative stereotypes, ethnocentric monoculturalism cannot be defined in terms of a single individual. Ethnocentric monoculturalism is a systemic phenomenon, through which a dominant ethnic, cultural, or national group holds social power over others (Sue).

Derald Wing Sue (2003) identified five components of ethnocentric monoculturalism. These five elements were as follows: belief in superiority, belief in the inferiority of others, power to impose standards, manifestation in institutions of our society, and the invisible veil (Sue, pp. 101-107). In the first of these components, belief in superiority, Sue describes the elevation of self and nationalistic regard to the position of cultural norms and standards. In discussing the second component, belief in the inferiority of others, Sue indicates the process through which normative cultural standards are used to devalue the customs, values, traditions, arts and crafts, and language of alternative cultures and standards. In the third component, power to impose standards, Sue asserts the dominant cultural group is in a position to impose the standards comprised of beliefs in superiority of self and tradition and the inferiority of others. For the fourth component, manifestations in institutions and our society, Sue's theory is used to evaluate the organizational consequences of imposed cultural standards in terms of the society's members, whether they represent the cultural standard or not. Through the invisible veil, the fifth component, Sue examines the subtle, ambiguous consequences for individuals
living in a society organized under ethnocentric monoculturalism. This ambiguity of prejudice infiltrates all social interactions, whether bureaucratic or personal. Through these five components, Sue describes how the adaptive, functional valuing of one's self and tradition can become a systemic form of prejudice in a society.

The distinction between ethnocentric monoculturalism and negative bias or stereotypes is significant, illuminating the social impact of negative biases and stereotypes enforced within a population. Ethnocentric monoculturalism is a system of advantage and prejudice; negative bias is the result of such a system. Any cultural group engaging in ethnocentric monoculturalism becomes an ethnic, cultural or national group with the power to impose standards regulates its biases and stereotypes at the expense of members and non-members. As Derald Wing Sue indicates, such a group can "influence, mistreat, invalidate, and oppress other groups" with relative impunity (Sue, 2003, p. 104). Elevated to the highest status in a society, biases and stereotypes take on the form of dominant traditions, norms, and legislation.

Bias is a natural aspect of human experience (Turiel, 1998). To be prejudiced is an inherent characteristic of humanity, encouraging group members to bond together in the face of a common competitor, whether real or imagined. Though the group members may disagree and conflict may arise within the group, the fundamental beliefs and pragmatic behaviors of the group remain relatively homogenous (Turiel). The key difference between a commonly held belief serving as a communal bond, and ethnocentric monoculturalism as a system of oppression, is the power of a group to control the individual destinies of group members as well as non-members.
Turiel (1998) notes, as did King (1963), members of a group in subordinate positions and positions of inequality experience their oppression while dominant members may not be aware subordination or inequality exists. Although some theorists may question the awareness of subordinate group members within a cultural framework, their perceptions often express the conceptual outrage due to unequal treatment, and the pragmatic concerns resulting from the realization the expression of their outrage would risk their own well being (King; Turiel). The subordinate members of a group are therefore likely to experience their oppression as if they were outsiders in their own communities.

Social Influence Theory

The concept of ethnocentric monoculturalism emphasizes a shared perspective within a cultural group. As Turiel (1998) indicates however subordinates and members of unequal status within a cultural framework are also impacted by the social arrangements of ethnocentric monoculturalism. The abstraction of ethnocentric monoculturalism is a conceptualized united front of a set of values specific to only one cultural group. Nevertheless, within the cultural group, subordinate members often feel uncertain about their ability to raise moral objections to cultural standards, while also fearing for their safety should they speak out. While children are a subordinate group, they lack the intellectual, physical or economic power held by adults to raise such objections even if they understood they had such a right.

In the United States, Caucasian, heterosexual males between the ages of 25 and 35 years hold a position of relative power (Sue & Sue, 2003). With their higher status, Caucasian, heterosexual males routinely enforce the dominance of their cultural values
interpersonally as well as through organizational structures of the country. Consequently, members of other ethnic groups, specifically African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans and Alaskan Natives, are routinely deprived of rights, resources, or representation in the organizations of the United States, and are subject to minute acts of personal discrimination. While the diversity of the United States includes differences in age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and religious beliefs, the concept of race defines the social order (Carter, 1995). As noted previously, Arredondo et al. (1996) distinguished multiculturalism from diversity, saying multiculturalism referred specifically to ethnicity, race and culture, while diversity covered other differences existing between members of a population such as those mentioned by Carter.

Turiel (1998) argues the subordinate groups of a culture, while holding positions of power over individuals from other ethnic groups, are subjected to similar deprivations with regard to rights, resources, and representation, and are accepted on the basis of willingness to participate in the dominant cultural structures of the society both in interpersonal and organizational actions. For example, Caucasian, heterosexual women also experience the impact of male dominance in society. Furthermore, Caucasian children endure the impact of adult, male dominance within the society.

Thus, while the psychological sciences have made recent progress toward consideration of multiculturalism in theory and practice, there remains an implicit but inaccurate perception by researchers in psychology of the dominant culture as unified in attitudes about multiculturalism. In reality, subordinate groups identify with the values of the dominant culture to varying degrees, and in the case of children, are in the process of developing attitudes about multiculturalism (Turiel, 1998). Social psychologists continue
to struggle toward a connection between the theory and research of social psychology and clinical psychology, especially as pertains to counseling services (Heesacker & Carroll, 1997). A connection between research in social psychology and the practice of clinical psychology would allow a more nuanced perspective in research as well as a more sensitive approach to clinical practice. Recent publications include assertions by researchers to establish such a connection by turning to research on social influence.

Social psychologists used social influence theory to describe the process of counseling (Heppner & Claiborn, 1989; Stoltenberg, McNeill, & Elliot, 1995). In their selected translations of social psychology, Stoltenberg, McNeill, & Elliot point out various ways counseling services qualify as social influential processes. Placing consistent emphasis on the interactions between individual adults, social influence theorists advocate for clinical psychologists to attend to the influential nature of the counseling process.

Multiculturalism and Social Influence Theory

The process of social influence begins in childhood. Adult biases and perceptions do not spring into the world fully formed, but are guided by childhood experiences. However, children begin to notice physical differences between people as young as the age of three, and it is the feature of skin color which young children are most likely to mention to others (Tatum, 1997). Children are not likely to understand adult reactions to racial and ethnic differences because they do not develop race or gender constancy until at least the age of six (Tatum). Thus children are highly influenced by the social messages they receive in childhood, especially as they develop their own understanding about the social network in which they live.
Similarly, Derald Wing Sue et al. (1998) argue no person is born racist, despite the inheritance of the potential for prejudice. Ascribing the development of racism to the comprehensive nature of ethnocentric monoculturalism, the authors insist social conditioning perpetuates the systemic problems of prejudice facing citizens of the United States. At no time do the authors indicate a belief children are intentionally involved in the enforcing of monocultural standards of behavior. Rather, the authors assert children are indoctrinated to perceive and experience in accordance with a pre-established set of values.

Yet, Ridley (1995) states unintentional prejudice may be the most difficult to combat, as it is truly unintentional, and involves a shift away from unconscious rather than conscious attitudes or behaviors. In this way, the majority of children, refraining from overt acts of racial prejudice, learn to contribute to the atmosphere of ethnocentric monoculturalism pervading the interpersonal exchanges and organized institutions of the culture of the United States. For example, a child might learn a negative stereotype regarding a specific ethnic minority group and act to avoid personal danger or ill repute, thereby passively supported the stereotype. Prejudicial values remain essentially ambiguous, and without the presence of clear prejudicial behavior, the influence of prejudice can be rationalized and dismissed by members of the dominant culture.

While the theoretical discussion of the origins of prejudice proceeds, clinical psychologists interested in culturally competent interventions attempt to incorporate multiculturalism into diagnostic and treatment processes. Liu and Clay (2002) present a case study of such an attempt, detailing the considerations and consultations taken to encourage culturally appropriate treatment of a young male client. The authors posit the
multicultural competencies were not meant to provide specific rules of conduct for clinicians. This ambiguity both provides freedom for idiosyncratic casework, but also begs the question of direction in clinical intervention.

In 1996, Arredondo et al. published an article operationalizing the multicultural competencies first introduced in the 1980s, but the APA did not release its own guidelines on multicultural competence until 2002, although it did endorse the multicultural counseling competencies outlined by Arredondo et al. (APA, 2002a). The APA’s guidelines predominantly encourage, without describing specific ways psychologists should act, and are more philosophical than pragmatic. The guidelines assert aspects of multicultural awareness in the language of virtues or aspirations, rather than principles or rules (Meara, Schmidt & Day, 1996). By encouraging awareness regarding the influence of culture, without specific principles or necessary actions, the guidelines remain ambiguous in nature, as level of awareness can vary from psychologist to psychologist with great variability (Meara, Schmidt & Day, 1996; APA).

Even though Arredondo et al. (1996) have operationalized the criteria for cultural competence, there are no specific guidelines for culturally competent practice. The clearest criteria can be found in Arredondo et al., based on the threefold incorporation of the competency awareness, relevant knowledge and culture specific interpersonal skills into psychotherapy and counseling. The American Psychological Association has endorsed the operationalized guidelines put forth by Arredondo et al. without incorporating specific principles into any professional standard, ethical or otherwise (Meara, Schmidt & Day, 1996; APA, 2002a; APA, 2002b). However, whether a counselor’s values are ethnocentrically monocultural or not, the question of specific
actions practitioners should take within an interaction of cultures remains necessarily ambiguous.

Thus, cultural interactions are ambiguous in nature, as each cultural interaction takes place between individuals; infinite combinations of cultural contact yield infinite diversity. The manifestations of intentional and unintentional prejudice are hidden behind the invisible veil described by Sue et al. (1998), as expressions moderated by perceptions of social expectations. Similarly, the interventions of multicultural competent counselors are necessarily ambiguous, as competency is defined in terms of awareness, knowledge and skills meant to guide, but not to dictate, counseling interventions (Arredondo et al., 1996). Regardless of intentions, cultural interactions are dubious due to the complexity of cultural differences between people.

Social psychological research is by no means blind to this cultural ambiguity. Researchers struggle with the study of moral, identity and social development in children precisely because of the equivocal nature of cultural interactions. Arsenio and Lemerise (2004) advocate for the incorporation of emotion into research on children’s moral and identity development to evaluate more fully the experience of this ambiguity. The authors further note insensitivity to emotional cues is likely to influence children’s perceptions in socially ambiguous situations. In this way, the unintentional behavior a child displays in a situation with racial overtones, or undertones as the case may be, can be lost in the ambiguity of unevaluated emotional cues.

Furthermore, Arsenio and Lemerise (2004) report children and adolescents often identify prejudicial acts as unfair, and consequently morally wrong, when presented with such acts in the abstract. For example, the authors describe the reactions of children to the
hypothetical concept of intentional prejudice. When presented with ambiguous social situations in their own lives however, in which prejudice against ethnic diversity is not the main focus of the situation and pragmatic social concerns are allowed to surface, the authors note children and adolescents from high status groups are more biased toward the use of stereotypes in group activities. Children enforce negative stereotypes when forming social groups, rarely attempting to challenge implicit messages learned from parents and community members. (Arsenio & Lemerise).

In ambiguous situations, children are influenced toward implicit cultural biases. As Derald Wing Sue et al. (1998) assert the invisible veil of prejudice acts subtly to define social roles. In this way, children are indoctrinated into acts of prejudice easily rationalized and dismissed in terms of other social concerns. The social influence of minute actions perpetuates the systemic biases of the dominant cultural group, and this social influence is passed on to children in the form of ambiguity, uncertainty, and above all, discomfort.

Obviously, children do not create the ambiguous nature of prejudice and discrimination, despite potential complicity in its perpetuation (Turiel & Wainryb, 2004). Conflict may be a natural aspect of social organization across cultures, but the relative ability of cultural subgroups to challenge specific aspects of the culture remains unclear in the case of systemic prejudice and the culture of the United States (Turiel & Wainryb). However, few researchers to date have explored the ways cultural messages are given to children beyond direct, or indirect, verbal and nonverbal messages of parents and caregivers. Nevertheless, children are exposed to multiple social influences throughout childhood, including literature. Despite this obvious influence, few researchers have
explored the discursive nature of children’s media material, and thereby neglect a primary source through which children come to know and understand the culture in which they live.
METHODS

In the last section, I provided reviews of the literature and attempted to link multicultural and social influence research to show how I determined a study of children’s media would provide a relevant connection between the social and clinical psychology. In the next section, I begin with a review of relevant literature pertaining to the study’s method: discourse analysis. I include this section to indicate how my selection of discourse analysis is crucial to the success of my research. Second, I describe in depth how the data was collected and the treatment of the data. I conclude the section with an explanation of the selection of the books I used, hereafter representatives; I note the inclusion and exclusion criteria I used to select the representatives and specifically identify as well as describe the representatives. Table 1 near the end of this section lists the names and years of publication of the 21 representatives in the study (see also Appendix).

Selection of Method

Qualitative examination of children’s literature was undertaken through the theory and method of discourse analysis. Children of all cultural groups are often exposed to narratives addressing issues of multiculturalism. Narratives influence children even before they are afforded opportunities to engage directly with peers of other races, ethnicities or cultures.

Discourse analysis is an ideal method for the evaluation of social contexts, as its primary purpose is to deconstruct the implicit assumptions within language (Parker, 1992). A discourse is a “system of statements that construct an object” (Parker, p. 5). Analyzing those discourses leads to a method, based on observation, for examining how
language structures ideology, ways of being, and ways of relating (Parker). Human beings use language to navigate their social existence; discourse analysis investigates the way communication shapes social contexts.

Shared social contexts imply a shared symbolic representational system (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). As Potter and Wetherell note, discourse analysis began with the philosophical assumption “all utterances state things and do things” (p. 17). Discourse analysis emerged as a method for supporting this assertion (Potter & Wetherell).

Ritchie (2003) contends by prioritizing cognitive conception and the social actions that could follow, discourse analysis draws on a variety of sources out of necessity. Discourse analysis provides a method, but perhaps more importantly grounds the researcher in a theoretical conception of the nature of symbolic exchange within a culture (Willig, 2003). The method of discourse analysis allows the researcher to return to the basic foundation of observation in order to investigate the ways in which culture, social concepts and social order manifest in individual lives.

Thus, the analysis of discourses need not be confined to linguistics and the constructs behind words. Willig (2003) notes discourse analysts argue reality “can be ‘read’ in any number of ways” (p. 161). Furthermore, Willig goes on to emphasize that by using discourse analysis we look “at the ways in which social categories are constructed and with what consequences they are deployed” (p. 162). Discourse analysts have regarded advertisements, fashion systems, architecture, and nonverbal behavior as texts to be read and understood (Willig).

For these reasons, an analysis of the multicultural literary material from which children draw their first conclusions about ethnicity, race and culture required an
examination of discourses. Simply put, discourse analysis provided a theory and method for pursuing the context in which multicultural issues are presented to children. By analyzing the words, illustrations, narrative devices and plot structures and characters of children’s picture or story books, a clear perspective on discourses in children’s literature was possible.

Method of Data Collection and Treatment of Data

The method of discourse analysis as outlined in Willig (2003) formed the foundation of the study. Following Willig, the discourse analysis of the selected representatives proceeded in four stages as follows: 1) reading; 2) coding; 3) analysis; and 4) writing. These four stages provide a foundation for the process of reading and analyzing the discursive social dynamics present in any narrative, including children’s picture or story books. To these four stages, I added a consultation after I had finished the coding process and before beginning the analysis stage. As a researcher, I felt the need to corroborate the substance of my observations as much as possible. I consulted with a colleague familiar with qualitative research and specifically with discourse analysis. I will discuss the results of this collaboration in detail later in this section, and also in the Results and Discussion sections of this dissertation.

In the first stage, reading, the collected representatives were read at least once in their entirety without any attempt at analysis to allow me the opportunity to experience the texts as a reader. In this stage of the project, the emphasis was on developing an awareness of what the text is doing, what stories are being told, and how those stories affect me personally. In this stage, I detailed my reactions to various texts in a journal, hereafter reaction journal, which was kept alongside the coding analyses. I will discuss
the results of this first stage in the Results and Discussion sections of this dissertation. The remaining three stages of coding, analysis and writing, as outlined by Willig (2003), provided a basis for the collection and treatment of data. I describe, in detail, the process of coding and analysis as related to this dissertation in the Results and Discussion sections of this dissertation.

Willig (2003) asserts the need for "coding before analysis" indicates a complete discourse of any text is not possible. Once I, as a researcher, conceived of the primary research question and representatives chosen for analysis, specific aspects of the texts were already considered more relevant than others. The introduction of my own biases into the research was unavoidable, as I did not approach this project free from bias. A different researcher with a different research question could analyze these same texts and produce different results.

In the second stage of the project, coding, the representatives were considered transcripts ready for coding. The coding process involved the selection of material for analysis with specific emphasis on the following research question: how do these texts introduce and explore issues of multiculturalism? Relevant language, illustrations, narrative devices and plot structures and characters in the text were selected for analysis. As a researcher, I presumed very little of the text's material would be excluded from the coding stage of the research project because the books were selected for the presence of issues related to multiculturalism.

First, the texts were divided into thematic units. These units were determined by changes in the story as the narrative develops. For example, a typical narrative may proceed from exposition to rising action through climax, falling action and resolution.
One or more thematic units could then represent each of these narrative sections as necessary.

For each thematic unit, I identified content and process themes. A content theme was the overall idea of the thematic unit of the story. A process theme was the method through which the content was introduced, described or resolved within a thematic unit of the story. These thematic units were then grouped for each story, and main content and main process themes were developed based on the frequencies of repeating original themes.

For example, the first content theme of the book Paperboy (1997) encompassed the beginning of the story. The thematic unit described a boy’s preparation for his early morning paper route, and was given the content theme of “morning preparation”. The illustrations showed a child of color, approximately 8 to 10 years of age, living in a quiet suburban neighborhood, in a three-bedroom house, with his two parents, his sister and his dog; the dog proceeds to accompany the boy on the paper route. As the boy’s ethnicity was introduced through illustration only, the narrative contained no illusion to the relationship of the character’s ethnicity to his environment. The thematic unit described a supposedly average child in a supposedly average neighborhood waking up to prepare for his morning paper route. Thus, this thematic unit was assigned the process theme of “culture as universal” to describe the way in which the boy’s cultural diversity is uniformly treated.

As a final stage in the coding to determine the main content and main process themes for each representative as a whole, the content and process themes were grouped to derive main content and main process themes. The derivation of main content and
process themes provided overall categories for the representatives, and clarified the
analysis process. A main content theme described the perspective of the story content as a
whole (i.e. emic, etic, or culture as background), while a main process theme described
the method by which the perspective employed race, culture and ethnicity in the story
(i.e. culture as integral, culture as universal, or culture as background). This part of the
coding process is discussed in detail in the Results and Discussion sections, and the main
content and main process themes for each of the representatives are listed in Appendix.

In addition to the coding process outlined by Willig (2003), as a researcher, I
presented the texts, the initial thematic units and themes assigned, and the main content
and main process themes for each text to a colleague familiar with discourse analysis and
qualitative research methods for comparative analysis. I decided to add this step in order
to provide a degree of oversight to my coding of the representatives. My colleague had
completed graduate coursework in qualitative research methods, and specifically in
Discourse Analysis. I determined my colleague’s role would be threefold: 1) to act as a
secondary reader for the texts; 2) to verify the assignment of thematic units based on
narrative flow of the representatives; and 3) to collaborate on the coding process,
illuminating oversights and limitations. The colleague read the texts for comparison with
the coding keys described above, illuminating irrelevant inclusions and relevant
omissions. Once this comparison was completed, I again evaluated the texts and the
coding as a researcher in order to determine the relevance and accuracy of the primary
coding key for a second time.

The third stage of the research project, analysis, involved an analysis of both the
coded material gleaned from the texts and my experience as a researcher of the coding
process. Three dimensions were explored, as outlined by Willig (2003), in order to “facilitate a systematic and sustained exploration” (p. 165). These three dimensions were as follows: 1) context; 2) variability; and 3) construction. The construction of the linguistic style, as seen in terminology, grammar, metaphors, figures of speech and themes across different contexts (e.g. story, illustration, characterization, etc.), was part of this process (Willig). Variability, or frequency of recurring themes in the 21 different texts was also explored along with the variability and treatment of those themes.

Finally, the fourth stage, writing, involved “the attempt to produce a clear and coherent account” of my interactions as a researcher with the selected representatives” (Willig, 2003, p. 166). This process involved the re-evaluation of coded material and analysis when relevant, as “writing up discourse analytic research is not a process which is separate from the analysis of the texts” (Willig, p. 166). At multiple points in the writing, I found it necessary as a researcher to revisit thematic units to understand the connection between the individual units’ content and process themes and the main themes.

Description of Representatives

The participants were 21 books (hereafter representatives) of general children’s picture or story books written or illustrated so as to include multicultural issues. These representatives were taken from the lists of the Caldecott Medal winners and honors books of the last fifteen years, between 1990 and 2005. The books were individually selected based on their discussion of multicultural issues, namely race, ethnicity and culture. Altogether, the 21 representatives comprised a sample of general children’s picture or story books on multicultural issues taken from the public domain at the end of
the 20th century and in the first part of the 21st century. Table 1 lists the names and years of publication of the 21 representatives.

The decision about whether or not a picture or story book addressed multicultural issues was based on each book's content. As a researcher, I examined both visual and linguistic content. For example, a book including pictures of people or children of color was deemed to address multicultural issues. Similarly, a book with a story line discussing race, ethnicity or culture was deemed to address multicultural issues.

The Caldecott Medal winners and honors books were chosen for the study as the initial selection group because of the distinguished position the Caldecott Medal award holds in the public domain of general children's picture or story books. A division of the American Library Association (ALA), the Association of Library Service to Children (ALSC), gives Caldecott medals and honors. The Caldecott Medal awards are the second oldest award in the United States given to general children's picture or story books, the first being the Newberry Award given to literary works of fiction written for children. Established in 1937, the Caldecott medal and honors are awarded as follows:

To encourage original and creative work in the field of books for children. To emphasize to the public that contributions to literature for children deserve similar recognition for poetry, plays, or novels. To give those librarians, who make it their life work to serve children's reading interests, an opportunity to encourage good writing in this field (ALSC, 2005).

The Caldecott Medal is awarded annually to one book, and honors are given to between one and five books annually as deemed appropriate by the Caldecott selection committee. The Caldecott selection committee is made up of 15 members of the
ALSC. To be on a selection committee, ALA members must not be involved in authoring or publishing children’s printed media, and may not be involved in publishing or advising on publications of children’s non-print media (ALSC). Selection committee members also may not serve on the ALSC selection committee while on a Division Board or the ALA Council.

In addition to this mandate about avoiding conflicts of interest, the committee members must be able to attend the summer and midwinter meetings held by the selection committee and have access to children’s printed media throughout the year. The selection committees for the Caldecott medal and honors winners each year are composed of 7 members each elected annually from a slate of no fewer than 14, a chairperson elected annually from a slate of 2, and 7 members appointed by the vice president (Randolph Caldecott Committee Medal, 2005). Committee members are chosen based on experience, and “represent a broad range of geographical areas as well as sizes and types of libraries” (Randolph Caldecott Committee Medal). Also, “members may include school and public librarians, university educators and professional reviewers” (Randolph Caldecott Committee Medal). However, members cannot serve on the selection committee more than once every 5 years.
Table 1

*List of Representatives*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Child's Calendar</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Henry</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoky Night</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming on Home Soon</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lon Po Po: A Red Riding Hood Story from China</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So You Want to Be President</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin's Big Words: the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Talking Eggs</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Faithful Friend</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More, More, More! Said the Baby</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tar Beach</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather's Journey</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Paperboy</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibet Through the Red Box</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Northwest</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Cotton</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hush: A Thai Lullaby</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector 7</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yo! Yes!</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Books are selected based on three primary criteria: 1) consideration of the following: execution of artistic technique, pictorial interpretation of story, fit between illustration and story, delineation of story through the pictures, and recognition of child audience; 2) each book must be self-contained and not dependent on other media for enjoyment; and 3) each book is to be considered as a picture book (Randolph Caldecott Committee Medal, 2005).

These criteria indicate any book may be eligible for a Caldecott medal or honor; thus the criteria are general. Caldecott medal and honors winners are known throughout the United States, not only as the most renowned prize given to children’s picture or story books, but also as the recipients of a prize granted to no more than 6 books every year; thus, the prize winners represent children’s picture or story books which remain in the public domain long after publication. Furthermore, school and public libraries, as well as private industry booksellers due to the award’s distinction purchase the Caldecott winners. Combining both generality in criteria and reputation for recognizing quality, the annual Caldecott medal and honors winners are highly visible in mainstream culture.
RESULTS

In the Results section, I present the products of the first three stages of my research: reading, coding and analysis. First, I offer as a reader the impact the representatives had on me, and discuss how this influenced the coding process. Second, I describe as a researcher how each text was coded, from the assignment of thematic units to the generation of main content and process themes, to give an overall description of the coding process. Third, I provide a detailed description of the coding process for each representative, to thoroughly explain the coding process. Fourth, I discuss the main content themes in order to illustrate the various perspectives from which the representatives’ contents written. Finally, I specify the main process themes I derived and show the various perspectives from which the representatives’ processes were developed.

Impact as a Reader

A full list of the participants is included in Appendix of the dissertation. The presented results stem from the analytical component of this study. Nevertheless, the first stage of the analysis involved reading each of the representatives as a whole before coding and analyzing began. This stage consisted of gathering the representatives and reading each one individually.

The first representative read was *A Child's Calendar* (2000). Comprised of poems describing activities supposedly particular to every month of the year, each of the twelve months is explored in terms of a child’s participation. This book had a profound influence upon me, because it gradually became clear during the reading and coding the author was presenting a series of activities particular only to a particular cultural orientation (e.g. December is paired with Christmas, rather than Hanukkah or Kwanzaa). Despite this
orientation, children of all different ethnicities were included in the illustrations, which repeatedly depicted a multi-ethnic family. Thus, the author employed what became a frequent theme among the representatives: employing a kind of surface acknowledgement of ethnic differences, set against a background of a specific culture, implying a false sense of collective identity.

The last representative read was *Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Northwest* (1994). Following in the tradition of stories about the Raven, an archetypal trickster hero from Native American mythology, this book's author described how the sun came to be in the sky providing all living creatures with light. This book, too, had an important influence on me and the following coding and analyses. During the initial reading and coding, the story integrated culture in a unique fashion. Prior to the reading and coding of this representative, a relatively dichotomous coding pattern had been employed, in which representatives fell into one of two categories. However, with the reading of this representative, it became clear a third category was emerging, in which cultural integration not only represents a cultural perspective, but uses that cultural perspective to describe an awakening process in a character, a community or, as in the case of this representative, a world.

Both of the previously mentioned representatives influenced the coding and analysis process. As the representatives were read and coded as they became available to me, I cannot explain the effect these representatives had, although I am able to describe it. Suffice it to say I may have been more open to the impact of these two representatives because of the stages at which they were met. The beginning of the data collection held an excitement and eagerness, which was gradually diminished as the representatives
became available. Similarly, the final representative was read and coded during a phase of completion, carrying with the excitement of accomplishment.

Through the reading of the representatives, the impact on this reader of the representatives as picture or story books significantly influenced the following coding and analysis process. As detailed in a reaction journal kept alongside records of the analyses, the impressions the books made were often strongly emotional. Seven of the representatives impressed this reader favorably upon the first reading; these books were as follows: *Lon Po Po: A Red Riding Hood Story from China* (1990), *The Talking Eggs* (1990), *Tar Beach* (1992), *Smoky Night* (1995), *Duke Ellington: the Piano Prince and His Orchestra* (1999), *The Faithful Friend* (1999), and *Coming on Home Soon* (2005). Favorable impressions included strong emotional feelings in line with the content of the stories, such as sadness or happiness, as well as reflection on the picture or story books after the first reading resulting in sustained appreciation of narrative themes or story telling devices. When a favorable impression occurred, the picture or story book was flagged to alert the colleague familiar with Discourse Analysis to the presence of the current researcher’s strong reactions.

Five of the books impressed this reader negatively; these books were as follows: *More, More, More! Said the Baby* (1991), *The Paperboy* (1997), *Sector 7* (2000), *So You Want To Be President?* (2001) and *Martin's Big Words* (2002). The same process was followed for books impressing this reader negatively as was followed for books impressing this reader favorably; the books were flagged for later analyses as described above. Further discussion of the influence various representatives had on this reader will be included in the “Discussion” section of this dissertation.
The remaining representatives, nine in number, were described in ambivalent terms in the reaction journal, as evidenced by both positive and negative comments describing the impressions made by the reading of the representatives. These books were also flagged for later analyses as described above.

Thematic Units: Content and Process Themes

From the 21 representatives, 179 thematic units were distinguished. As each thematic unit had one content theme and one process theme, 179 content themes and 179 process themes were also distinguished. Per representative, the average number of themes was approximately 8.5 themes. Per representative, the modal number of thematic units was 9 themes. Per representative, the median of thematic units was approximately 11.5 themes.

Initial thematic units were determined based on the story line of the each text. The initial thematic unit for each story was the introduction of the story. Each subsequent theme took shape as the story progressed. Thus, thematic units were reflective of the individual components of the story line. Each thematic unit was given one content and one process theme. A content theme represented a thematic unit’s content, or subject matter. A process theme represented a thematic unit’s process, or method of relaying the content, or subject matter.

After the initial coding of each representative, the content and process themes for each representative were analyzed to produce main content and main process themes representative of the content and process of each picture or story book as a whole; per representative, 21 main content themes and 21 main process themes were assigned. These
main and content themes were then grouped for analysis of the representatives as a whole.

Main content and main process themes were derived from each representative based on the perspectives of content and process themes. The orientation of the content themes to multiculturalism determined the main content theme, while the orientation of the process themes to multiculturalism determined the main process themes. Thus, the main content and process themes represented the perspective of the story on multiculturalism, and the perspective of the story-telling method. Further discussion of the coding process, as well as a detailed description of each representatives’ coding, occurs in the Discussion section.

Description of Representatives’ Coding

What follows is a description of the coding process for each of the representatives. Proceeding alphabetically, as a researcher I first describe through summaries of story content each of the representatives. Next I provide an explanation for how the representatives’ contents were separated into thematic units and how each of these units was coded for content and process themes. Last I detail how I moved from individual analysis of the representatives to overall analysis of the representatives as a whole.

*A Child’s Calendar* (2000) is a book about the months of the year as seen through the eyes of living children. Beginning in January, each of the months is described in a poem accompanied by an illustration until the end of the year in December. For example, the author and illustrator’s description of January included pictures of children watching the sun through clouds when the neighborhood and surrounding town are covered in
snow. For this first month, the author described a cold, icy scene through which children are allowed to play, but only when wearing the appropriate clothing to protect them from chill. Similarly, the author depicts the month of December with children preparing for the Christmas holiday, with presents and wrapping paper, accompanied by a poem describing the excitement of the time of year for children. Each of the author's descriptions of the months examine life from the perspective of children, and each of the illustrations centered on the activities of children, even when adults were present. Children of different ethnicities, as well as parents of different ethnicities, were consistent throughout the illustrations. No direct reference to ethnicity occurred in the text itself.

This book's thematic units were easily distinguished; each month's poem and illustration were considered one thematic unit. A content theme for the unit described the overall situation in the illustrations and the poem, while the process theme described the overall method for employing the content. The process theme also specifically addressed how race, ethnicity and culture were employed in the thematic unit. When the book's content and process themes were grouped and main content and main process themes derived, the main content themes were determined according to the perspective taken in the narrative in relation to race, culture or ethnicity (e.g. etic perspective in which the "child's calendar" is for all children). Similarly, the main process themes were derived from the perspective of the books in relation to race, ethnicity or culture (e.g. culture as universal in which all children share the same culture) (See Appendix).

*Coming on Home Soon* (2005) is a book about a little girl who lives with her mother and her grandmother in a small house in the country. The little girl's mother leaves the house in order to travel to a distant city (Chicago) and get work on the railroad.
The family is very poor, and without the mother's knowing "black" people are allowed to work on the railroad, such a trip would not be contemplated. While waiting for her mother to return, the little girl rescues a stray kitten to care for, and anxiously awaits a letter from her mother. Eventually, her mother returns home, but only after she and her grandmother talk discuss the importance of family in comparison to the grandness of the world.

This book's thematic units were derived based on the flow of the narrative. For example, during the sequence in the book when the little girl rescues a stray kitten, the thematic unit covered several pages of text and illustration because the main content theme of the pages remained the same: caring for an abandoned kitten. Similarly, when the girl and her grandmother walk outside of the house talking about the grandness of the world and the importance of family, the thematic unit covered more than one page of text and illustration because the content theme was the same: the importance of family in a world of grand proportions. The process themes for each of these thematic units sought to evaluate how race, culture and ethnicity impacted the telling of the story (i.e. whether it served as a foundation for the story, whether it was integral to the story, or whether it was never directly addressed). When the themes were grouped to derive main content and process themes, the overall perspective of the content and the overall method of the process were determined (See Appendix).

*Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* (1999) is a book about the life of Edward Kennedy Ellington, who was known as "Duke" and became an influential composer, arranger, orchestral leader, and piano player in the 20th century. The author of the book asserts he played a form of music called "ragtime" and this music was distinct
for him in his relationship to the sounds of the music and the purpose of the music (i.e. to
unite others in celebration). Following Duke through childhood from his first interest in
music to his gradual development as a piano player and band leader, the author describes
how he moved from hearing the music in his own mind and playing it himself to
composing music for an orchestra and leading the orchestra himself.

For this book, the thematic units followed the flow of the narrative content. As the
Duke moved into and out of phases in his life, so the thematic units began and ended. For
example, the sequence focused on how Duke and his orchestra performed the music was
considered a single thematic unit, despite the fact the sequence featured passages
centering on specific band members. Performance was the content theme remaining the
same, and so the sequence, including several pages of text and illustration, was
considered to be one thematic unit. A single content and a single process theme were then
derived for the unit, as for all other units, based on the overall content of the unit and the
overall method in which race, ethnicity and culture were employed in the unit. When the
content and process themes were grouped to derive main content and main process
themes, the main content theme was determined based on the perspective of the
narrative's content (e.g. emic perspective as the Duke's experience with music was
related subjectively through illustration and text), while the main process theme was
determined based on the overall method of employing multicultural issues in the text (e.g.
culture as integral, as the specific musical form and specific development of Duke's
artistry were related through the lens of a particular cultural perspective) (See Appendix).

*The Faithful Friend* (1996) is a folktale from Haiti about a young Haitian and a
young Frenchman who are raised together as brothers. In the story, the young Haitian,
heir to his father’s plantation, falls in love with a woman and sets off to court her. His faithful friend, raised as his brother, accompanies him and aids him through the arising hazards. A considerable amount of Voudou mythology is incorporated into the story. For example, on the way to the next town where the main character will court his bride to be, they meet a man who dies suddenly, and take the time to have him buried properly. Later in the story the man reappears to assist the young men who helped him to a proper burial. The primary examples of the Voudou influence occur because the young woman in the story is the daughter of a sorcerer or magician, who dislikes the idea of his daughter marrying and attempts to betray the betrothed by summoning three witches in the forest who cast spells against the lovers which the faithful friend must counter.

The thematic units into which this story was divided followed the narrative of the story. As the story’s exposition described the two friends growing up inseparably, the first thematic unit was distinguished. When the two friends decide to bury the dead man they encounter, another thematic unit was distinguished. Likewise, thematic units were set with each visit from the witches, and then again for each countering by the faithful friend. The thematic units matched the flow of the story, so as the story changed focus, the thematic units marked the shifts. Single content and process themes were then derived for each unit. For example, when the two friends meet the dead man, the content and process themes of the unit were set as follows: 1) The Dead Man; and 2) Culture as Background. The process theme described how the meeting of the dead man was not the main action of the story, but made a particular meaning of the incident relevant to the narrative. When the content and process themes were grouped, the main content theme was based on the perspective of the narrative, emic, as the narrative was based on the
story was told from a specific cultural perspective. The main process theme of Culture as Integral was determined from the way illustrations, setting, narrative, characters and plot were dependent on a specific cultural reality shaping every element of the narrative (See Appendix).

*Grandfather's Journey* (1994) is the story of a man born in Japan told by his grandchild. The story relates how the grandfather decides to leave Japan and travel the world, finally settling in San Francisco, California in the United States. After living in San Francisco in for many years, the family moves back to Japan. When war breaks out between the United States and Japan, part of the family returns to the United States. At the end of the story, the narrator, grandchild of the main character, talks about his understanding of his grandfather's love for two different countries who oppose one another in many ways, and the feelings resulting from being from, and living in two different cultures.

As with the other representatives, thematic units matched the narrative flow of the story. As the grandfather set forth on his journey the first of the thematic units was set, and subsequent thematic units took shape in relation to the first. A single content and process theme were assigned to each thematic unit. For example, when the story discusses the war between Japan and the United States, the content theme for the thematic unit was "war" and the process theme was "cultures in conflict". When the content and process themes were grouped, the story was given the main content theme of emic as the story was told from a subjective, bi-cultural viewpoint. For the same reasons, the main process theme was Culture as Integral (See Appendix).
Harlem (1998) is a poetic description of the Manhattan neighborhood in New York City whose population is predominantly of African American ethnicity. The story's description is poetic as punctuation, style and grammar are used to evoke aspects of the relationship African Americans have with Harlem. Also, the story makes specific reference to historical events such as the careers and speeches of Marcus Garvey and Malcolm X. Illustrations are similarly used figuratively; the initial pages contain no text, but simply the image of a window looking out on the neighborhood.

The thematic units into which Harlem was separated were related to the flow of the text, rather than the illustrations. As the text was written prior to being illustrated, the text formed the principal core of the story. The initial pages containing no text, however, were considered to be the first thematic unit, and subsequent units followed. Each individual unit was then assigned a single content and process theme. For example, the eighth thematic unit, on pages 26 and 27, contained text making reference to Harlem as “a journey on the A Train that started on the banks of the Niger and has not ended” and “sometimes it is an artist...painting...his own heart” (Myers, 1998, pp.26-27). The content and process themes for this thematic unit were as follows: 1) Internal and External Journeys; and 2) Harlem as a Symbol. When the content and process themes were grouped, the main content theme for the text was emic, as the story is told from a specific, subjective perspective, and the main process theme was culture as integral (See Appendix).

Hush: A Thai Lullaby (1997) is a book of simple poetic style about a mother attempting to put her child to sleep. Various sounds outside make the mother feel the baby will awaken, and so she attempts to silence the sounds. The text is repetitive, using
the same phrasing and text structure for each attempt by the mother to quiet the sounds around the child. For this reason, the number of thematic units for the story was few.

The story was divided into thematic units based on shifts in the themes of the text. As only one shift occurred in the story, no more than two thematic units were derived. In the first thematic unit, the mother moves from noise to noise, some caused by animals and some caused by nature, demanding silence for her child. In the second thematic unit, silence is achieved at last, but the baby is wide-awake while everyone and everything sleeps quietly. A single content and process theme were given to each thematic unit. The first unit's content theme for example was based on the action of the mother. The first unit's process theme was Culture as Background, as the illustrations primarily set this story apart as a story from Thailand. When the four themes were grouped, the main content theme was etic as the text was told from the universal perspective of a mother attempting to make a child go to sleep. The main process theme was Culture as Background as the illustrations set this story clearly in a more agrarian culture where the mother and child live in relative harmony with the animals and nature surrounding their simple home (See Appendix).

*John Henry* (1995) is an American folktale about a man born in the time of the log cabins and the railroad’s progression across the United States. John Henry is a mythic character, able to perform amazing deeds of strength, speed and agility. Mythic characters such as this are common to many cultures, but their stories are almost always embedded in the cultures they represent. Just as Ulysses is a sailor and a warrior, John Henry is a pioneer and a woodsman. Interestingly, John Henry is a mythic character in a
country in which his people were enslaved during the time he is alive. No mention of John Henry’s race or his ancestors is made in the story.

The thematic units assigned this story followed the narrative flow. As the books progresses, each page contains a brief story about the feat of strength or ability displayed by John Henry, and each of the thematic units reflects this pattern. The final thematic units cover John Henry’s greatest feat, memorialized now in song and story, and then describe his funeral and the place in which he is buried. Single content and process themes for each of the thematic units demonstrate John Henry’s multiple feats are set against a background of culture. While John Henry is most likely of African descent, nothing in the story beyond the illustrations places him in a cultural context besides the vernacular used by John Henry and other characters in the story. The main content theme of the story is from the perspective of the narrative, the etic perspective. The main process theme of the story is Culture as Background because the character is clearly imbedded in a culture supporting the story but does not influence the story (See Appendix).

*Lon Po Po: A Red Riding Hood Story from China* (1990) is a version of the popular European folktale of Red Riding Hood. The story, however, is told from the perspective of three Chinese children whose mother has left to see grandmother. While the mother goes over the hill and through the woods, the children must keep themselves safe from a wolf disguising himself as their grandmother in order to enter the house and eat them.

As the story linearly follows the pattern of Red Riding Hood stories, of which many versions exist, and the thematic units begin with the story’s exposition and proceed
to distinction based on thematic changes in the story (i.e. when the mother leaves, when
the wolf comes to the door for the first time, or when the children begin to discover the
wolf has claws and a tail). Each content and process theme for the thematic units reflects
the gentle interweaving of Chinese culture into the familiar story fabric. For example, in
Red Riding Hood, the little girl marvels at the wolf’s big teeth, while in Lon Po Po the
children marvel at the wolf’s claws as if a claw was an awl for making shoes and the
wolf’s tail is coarse like hemp strings for basket weaving. Thus, when the themes are
grouped, the main content theme was Culture as Discovery, because the story reinterprets
a classic folktale through a specific cultural experience. As the specific subjective
experience of the Chinese children is essential to the story, the main process theme was
Culture as Integral (See Appendix).

Martin’s Big Words: the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (2002) traces briefly
the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., religious leader, civil rights advocate, protester for
peace and Nobel Prize winner. The book begins when Martin is a child watching and
witnessing the oppression of the culture into which he was born. Later, Martin begins to
express socialist ideals of peace, love and freedom, before becoming the figurehead for
the Montgomery bus boycott, the nonviolent movement for civil rights, the winning of
the Nobel Prize for peace, till finally discussing how despite his assassination, his words
and his dream live on.

As may be seen from the above brief outline, the book progresses through distinct
phases of Martin’s life. As would be necessary for any children’s book, much of the
biographical substance of Martin’s life is jettisoned in favor of a description of his role as
a leader and inspirational figure. By separating Martin’s life from his role in society
however, the book makes of Martin Luther King, Jr. a symbol for counterculture and revolution, rather than a man. The author arbitrarily sets the delivering of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have A Dream” speech as the climax of the nonviolent movement for social justice, again symbolizing the movement as having a clear beginning, middle and end in relation to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s life.

Thematic units followed the phases of the book, as with the other representatives. Single content and process themes were assigned to each thematic unit. When the themes were grouped, the main content theme was Culture as Discovery, as the story of Martin’s life is neither subjective nor objective, but symbolic of the discovery by a specific culture of the unfulfilled promise of freedom and equality. The main process theme was Culture as Background for the same reason: Martin Luther King, Jr. could be any from any race, ethnicity or culture for the story to succeed, because there is no connection between the historical events chosen for the story and the method of telling the story in symbolic form. One might say the book chooses the popular image of Martin Luther King, Jr. to present to children, but no attempt to examine this popular image either in text or illustration appears in the book. Instead, a very stylized version of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s life is presented, until what Martin actually was or was not is less relevant than what he symbolizes in the story (See Appendix).

*More, More, More! Said the Baby* (1991) is the story of three infants and their interactions with their parents. Culture is apparent in the story as each of the children is illustrated with a different ethnicity. The first child is illustrated as would a European American child, the second is illustrated as a child with significantly darker skin than the first, and the third child is illustrated with similar skin color to the first child but with
distinctly different facial features. The first child is called “little guy” and is learning to walk, the second is called “Pumpkin” and is learning to crawl, and the third is called “Bird” and is rescued from falling (Williams, pp. 1, 11, and 21). At the end of each episode, the child is entertained by a parental figure and then put to bed.

In the book, a portrait is presented of multicultural development, but uses the European-American illustrated child as a reference point for other races and ethnicities. No reference to different child rearing practices is implied in either text or illustrations, but universal aspects of human experience are emphasized, such as all children having ten toes. Furthermore, beyond the diminutive names for the multicultural children, the second child has a European American parental figure. All of the cultural aspects of the story are left to the illustrations.

Thematic units for the story followed the flow of the episodes, starting with the first. Single content and process themes were assigned to each of the thematic units, then grouped to determine main content and process themes. The main content theme for the story was given based on the perspective of the narrative, etic. The main process theme was Culture as Universal, as the children’s differences are strangely interfaced with universal human experiences and caretaking practices (See Appendix).

_The Paperboy_ (1997) is the story of a young boy who rises early in the morning to complete his paper route with the help of his dog. There are three phases to the story: morning preparation, the ride and returning home. During these three phases, the only character seen in the story is the young boy, who along with his dog, rides through a quiet, country neighborhood. The boy is shown as capable, though young, and gets himself and his dog prepared for the morning job. He needs no help to wake on time,
dress, or arrive as needed to begin his route. The child is responsible in his job, and loving to his companion.

The tone of the book is decidedly normal, save for the fact the main character is illustrated with dark skin. This illustration, however, adds a multicultural element to the story in a subtle way. In the same way Ezra Jack Keats' book Snowy Day (1962) introduced a young child with dark skin as the protagonist in a simple story about a child playing in the snow, The Paperboy (1997) subtly inserts the child's multicultural identity into the story through the illustrations (Keats, 2002).

Nevertheless, the author ignores important considerations of ethnicity because only the illustrations imply a multicultural aspect to the story. Yet no other element of the story, not plot, characterization or setting, addresses the child's ethnicity. In this way, the story overlooks an important aspect of multiculturalism. A person's ethnicity is not limited to appearance, but touches all aspects of their lives, from family dynamics to treatment by or perceptions of community members and socio-economic status. While not impossible, the child's ethnicity in combination with his life circumstances does not match the experiences of the majority of citizens of color in the United States. Most young boys of multiethnic descent are not given responsible jobs, and are not fortunate enough to live in a three-bedroom house and have their own pets. In this way, the story co-opts the child's ethnicity, without addressing the myriad aspects of a multicultural identity.

There were three thematic units for this story, in line with the three phases of the story. Single content and process themes were assigned to each unit, and the themes were grouped to determine main content and process themes. The main content theme for the
story matched the story’s perspective, etic, for though the child’s ethnicity is multicultural, individual aspects of experience are considered universally. The main process theme for the story was culture as universal, as the story emphasizes aspects common to mainstream America, rather than to a specific group of individual (See Appendix).

*Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Northwest* (1994) is the relating of a mythic tale explaining how the sun came to be in the sky for all to see. The Raven is a culturally influential character from Native American mythology in the northwestern region of the western hemisphere. As a “Trickster” the Raven performs supernatural deeds and shapes the destiny of the world. It begins when the world was dark and grey. The Raven goes looking for the light, and finds in the house of a god. In order to get into the house and near the sun, the Raven becomes a pine needle and is swallowed by the god’s daughter who drinks from a pool outside of the god’s house. After the god’s daughter swallows the Raven, she becomes pregnant and he is born as the god’s grandchild. When he is a child, he asks to play with the ball, and when the god gives it to him, he transforms back into a Raven and flies away with the sun, placing it in the sky. Thus, there are three phases of the story: the world in darkness, the raven finding the light, and the raven sharing the light.

Thematic units for the story coincided with the phases of the myth. Single content and process themes were assigned to each of the three units. When grouped, the themes yielded a main content theme of culture as discovery, as the story emphasizes universal aspects of human inquiry (i.e. from whence cometh the sun) interpreted through a specific cultural perspective. The main process theme was culture as integral as the
mythology is crucial to the story; without the mythology of the Native Americans, the story would not exist (See Appendix).

*Sector 7* (2000) is the story told in pictures. The main character is a boy illustrated as a European American who travels on a school fieldtrip. When separated from the school group, the child meets a child-like cloud transporting him to the cloud world where rules govern the shapes clouds are aloud to take. With the help of the young cloud, the young boy disrupts the bureaucracy and facilitates a revolution of clouds taking shapes recognizable earth shapes for example giant fish.

Though told through pictures, the story has clear shifts in plot. Thematic units followed the shifts in the narrative. Single content and process themes were assigned to each unit, and once the themes were grouped, the main content theme matched the perspective of the narrative, etic. The child is a representative of all children in the etic perspective, and consequently the main process theme was culture as universal since the story emphasizes common aspects of experience, rather than specific aspects of experience (See Appendix).

*Smoky Night* (1995) is the story of a family, a mother, her daughter and their cat, living in a neighborhood where the community members have begun to riot. The rioters are breaking into stores and pillaging businesses, taking away clothing, appliances and furniture. The story begins when the mother is putting her child to bed, attempting to explain the motivations of the rioters. When their building catches fire in the night, the neighbors in the building are forced to evacuate and walk to a nearby riot shelter. During the evacuation and the time at the shelter, the mother and daughter come to terms with a
neighbor in the building of a different ethnicity with whom they have always had a tense relationship.

The thematic units assigned to the text followed the narrative flow. Content and process themes assigned to each thematic unit reflected the dramatic tension between the family and their neighbors, as well as the rioters and their larger social issues. After the content and process themes were grouped, the main content theme chosen matched the perspective of the narrative, *emic*. As the narrative is told from an individual and specific cultural perspective, the main process theme was culture as integral (See Appendix).

*So You Want To Be President?* (2001) is a brief historical look at the origins, similarities and differences of each president of the United States. Many of the presidents had similar first names, or came from similar backgrounds. Many of the presidents had similar abilities or interests, personality traits or physical characteristics. No mention is made of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s disability as a result of Polio, nor is any mention made of the impact of First Ladies. Toward the end, one of the pages mentions the impeachments of presidents Nixon and Clinton. Another of the final pages mentions neither citizens of color nor any women have been elected to the office of the president.

*So You Want To Be President?* (2001) was separated into more thematic units than any other representative in this study. It was not only a longer book, but also shifted in it’s description of different attributes of the presidents with each page, constituting a decisive shift in the narrative more frequently than was experienced in any continuous story. It was my decision as a researcher to honor each of these shifts, rather than grouping the work into a single thematic unit.
After each thematic unit received a single content and process theme, these themes were assembled and a main content them reflecting the narrative’s perspective, an etic perspective, concerning the universal human experiences of the presidents, from personal charisma to family connections. Throughout the book, no mention is made of the privilege accompanying a citizen who makes the decision to run for the president. No mention is made of the wealth necessary to achieve the highest office of the government of the United States. The main process theme was culture as universal.

*The Talking Eggs* (1990) is a folktale from the southeaster United States. The story centers on the youngest daughter in a family of three women. The main character’s mother and older sister routinely send her into the woods to collect wood for the fire or send her to the well to fetch fresh water. On one such trip to the well, the young girl meets an old woman who is thirsty. When she gives her water, the old woman promises to reward her. Later when the young girl is sent unfairly away from her home, the old woman takes her to her house in the woods after extracting a vow not to laugh or mock at what she sees. At the old woman’s house, she sees many strange things, such as multi-specie animals, wild creatures wearing clothes and dancing in organized parties and talking eggs. When the young girl returns home the next morning, her older sister attempts to visit the house as well, but none of the magic accompanies her visit. In the end, both the mother and older sister are dealt with, and the young girl leads a virtuous life at the edge of the forest.

The thematic units assigned to the story followed the narrative flow. The shortest thematic unit was in the beginning, when the first two pages provided the exposition of the plot. The longest thematic unit covers nine pages when the content of the story
focuses continuously on the old woman’s magic. Each of the thematic units received a process and a content theme, and those themes had main content and process themes. The main content theme of the story matched the perspective, emic. While the pattern of the story is reminiscent of other folktales (i.e. a young character plagued by unfair demands from her elders meets a magic visitor who redistributes the family dynamics based on the main character’s virtuous behavior), the story is told from a specific cultural perspective. The main process theme was culture as integral, as the specific cultural perspective dictates the plot of the story (See Appendix).

Perhaps the most unusual and multicultural of the representatives was Tar Beach (1992). Tar Beach is the story of a young girl who enjoys lying on the tar roof of her New York City apartment while her parents play cards with neighbors. In the city, the narrator explains, the temperature is very hot and the apartment residents go to the roof to cool off. While on the roof, the main character, a young girl, dreams she can fly over the city. In a style reminiscent of stream of consciousness, the young girl discusses her family’s history in the city, as well as her sense the city belongs to her and she is free to travel the skies above it.

The story is not told in a linear fashion, and has not structural continuity. As a part of the story, the final part of the book describes how the book was first written on a quilt made from the craftsmanship of multiple traditions. The author herself includes biographical information about how she considers herself a multiethnic artist whose initial project was to create a narrative tapestry.

Thematic units were based on distinct content foci. The first thematic unit included the narrator’s discussion of tar beach and her magical powers. The second
thematic unit was used to distinguish the author’s description of the narrator’s parents and grandparents. The third thematic unit included the author’s return to the theme of tar beach and the narrator’s magical powers from a new perspective, and the final theme, as discussed above, addressed the artist’s original tapestry. When the assigned content and process themes were grouped, the main content theme was based on the book’s perspective, which was emic as the story was told from an individual, subjective experience. The main process theme consequently was culture as integral (See Appendix).

_Tibet Through the Red Box_ (1999) is the story of a young man who inherits and reads his father’s journals about a trip taken through Tibet. The young man not only reads and imagines his father's trip to Tibet, but he begins to experience a cultural self-discovery in the way his father did during his trip. During the book, the narrator pauses in the story to describe the way he is experiencing a shift in the light of the room in which he sits, and how that shift reflects his growing self awareness in relation to the culture of Tibet as related by his father.

Thematic units were assigned based on the flow of the narrative, which moved in and out of the past and present, focusing on both the experience of the father and the son. The red box eventually becomes a symbol of the unknown, and the way the unknown can enlighten, broaden and deepen a personal perspective on the world. Grouping the content and process themes assigned to each unit yielded a main content theme of culture as discovery, since the thrust of the content is self awareness through the process of learning about another culture, whether through firsthand experience of vicarious narrative. The main process theme was culture as integral, since the specific culture of Tibet, and the
clash between the narrator’s father’s culture and the citizens of Tibet, specifically guides the plot and characterization in the story (See Appendix).

*Working Cotton* (1993) is the story of a family making its living by picking cotton. As the book begins, the morning is about to dawn, and the family takes a bus to the field before spending the day picking cotton, eating together in the fields, and finally leaving after sunset to return home. The entire family is expected to contribute, if only by being near the parents in order to be part of the family. The family is illustrated as African Americans, and the vernacular of the narrative mimics the patterns of speech mainstream culture attributes to southern African Americans.

Thematic units reflected the narrative shifts in the story, with assigned content and process themes following not only the subject of the story, but the way the family’s actions represent a specific familial experience among farm workers. The main content theme, taken from grouped content themes, represented the perspective of the narrative, an emic perspective. Similarly, the main process theme was culture as integral, indicating the narrative was necessarily based on a specific cultural perspective (See Appendix).

*Yo! Yes?* (1994) is the story of two boys from two different cultures who meet together over the commonality of friendship. The first child is illustrated and depicted through vernacular as an African American child. The second child is illustrated and depicted through vernacular as a European American child. Together, the two children approach the prospect of friendship from their own perspectives. When the first child says hello to the second, the second confides he is lonely because he has no friends. The first then offers the second friendship, and the second, overcoming his self-consciousness, accepts.
The narrative flow of the story is deceptively simple, as the illustrations. There is literally no background to the pictures, only characters against a white background. Furthermore, the text contains only brief dialogue, as the title indicates. Therefore, the narrative is subtle but has a distinct flow. Thematic units followed the narrative line, and single content and process themes showed the obvious and subtle aspects of the narrative. When grouped, the content and process themes yielded main themes. The main content theme of the emic perspective reflected how the characters are firmly embedded in the joining of two specific cultural perspectives. The main process theme was culture as integral, since the substance of the book is based on the interaction of two specific cultures (See Appendix).

The purpose of this section was to provide an in-depth description of the coding of each representative. By evaluating each narrative on its own terms, the process of coding emphasized the already established narrative flow of each story. The original texts, the development of thematic units, content and process themes for each unit, and main content and process themes for each narrative were all subject for scrutiny by the colleague who reviewed the initial results of the research. The emphasis throughout the coding was to have the research process match the dynamics of the story as closely as possible.

Main Content Themes

Each representative chosen included culture in the relating of a story. Main content themes were roughly distinguishable in one of three types of perspectives (See Appendix). Many of the stories approached culture from an etic perspective, or a cultural perspective emphasizing universal human experience. By contrast, many of the stories
included culture from an emic perspective, or a cultural perspective emphasizing internal
elements and functioning of a specific experience. Between these two poles was a third
perspective in the stories: culture as discovery.

The etic perspective is one in which universal elements of human experience are
emphasized, and group and individual aspects of human experience, such as race,
etnicity and culture, are de-emphasized or not included. Since representatives were
selected on the basis of the presence of culture either in content or process,
representatives from the etic perspective introduced culture and then ignored it as an
aspect of the story. Such stories left this reader in confusion, as they seemed to be aware
of cultural differences in a way many other story books not selected for the study did not.
However, like those other stories, representatives from the etic perspective seemed
unconcerned with the ramifications of cultural awareness on the narrative presented in the
content.

The emic perspective is one in which elements of human experience, such as race,
etnicity and culture, are contextualized within a specific culture. Universal aspects of
human experience are not ignored, but are examined through the subjectivity of differing
cultural perspectives. In this way, representatives from the emic perspective left this
reader more aware of the feelings, thoughts and experiences of characters from the story.

The perspective of culture as discovery is one in which universal aspects of
human experience are interpreted through aspects of group and individual experience,
such as race, ethnicity and culture, in a process of growing understanding and awareness
concerning cultural differences. While such universal themes as the origins of life, family
relationships and struggle for progress were essential to such stories, representatives from
this perspective used cultural awareness as a way to reveal the process of growth undergone by characters in the stories. Representatives from the culture as discovery perspective left this reader with a circumscribed awareness concerning the limited cultural influences shaping the story.

These three types of perspectives in main content themes are best represented by a continuum of cultural content in the representatives, hereafter noted as cultural continuum. On the one side were representatives whose content showed an integration of culture into the fabric of the story. Along the cultural continuum were stories including culture as a way of introducing discovery on the part of characters or systems. Alternatively to those representatives who told stories from a perspective heavily influenced by culture were those whose content did not address culture.

Main Process Themes

As the representatives were chosen for their inclusion of race, ethnicity or culture, each of the representatives introduced multicultural issues in some form or fashion. Main process themes fell along a cultural continuum (See Appendix). Many representatives’ authors integrated culture into the substance of the stories. Representatives’ authors alternatively included multicultural issues but de-emphasized differences in favor of similarities. Stories integrating culture into the substance of the story did so through the following elements: illustrations, characterization, plot, setting, narrative language, subject matter and historical references.

The representatives’ process themes were organized into one of three main process themes. In the first main process theme the stories included multicultural issues because they were integral. Illustrations, characterization, plot, setting, historical
references, subject matter and narrative language were actively used to discuss the intricacies of experience in relation to multiculturalism. Though many of the representatives in this main process theme did not have stories centering on race, ethnicity or culture, the structure of the stories still revolved around the use of culture because of the elements mentioned above. This main process theme was termed as follows: culture as integral.

In the second main process theme, the stories’ authors introduced multicultural issues, but they were not central. By including race, ethnicity or culture in no more than three of the aforementioned aspects of stories (e.g. illustrations, characterization, plot, setting, historical references, subject matter or narrative language), the stories’ authors included, but did not emphasize multiculturalism. In this main process theme, multicultural issues were in the background of the stories, rather than the foreground. This main process theme was termed as follows: culture as background.

Finally, in the third main process theme, the stories’ authors introduced multicultural issues in no more than two of the aforementioned aspects. In this main process theme, the presence of race, ethnicity or culture as a diverse experience was dismissed in favor of presenting the similarities between multiple experiences. Often the diversity was presented solely through illustrations, which literally put a multicultural face on representations of mainstream culture. This main process theme was termed as follows: culture as universal.

When I presented the texts and coding to a colleague familiar with discourse analysis and qualitative research methods, the representatives were again read, the assignment of thematic themes verified as matching the narrative flow, and the content
and process themes considered a second time. In addition, my colleague noted the emphasis in this study on patterns. As the texts were examined for similarities in the multicultural content and process, differences within each of the categories described above were not explored. The colleague concurred with the assignment of thematic units, content and process themes and main process themes, but determined the study to be narrowly focused on exploring overall patterns, rather than individual differences.
DISCUSSION

In this final section, I first incorporate the impact and impressions I had as a reader into the research by discussing favorable and unfavorable aspects of my experience reading each of the representatives. Second, continuing from the Results section, I consider the managing of biases toward certain representatives, as well as how biases potentially influenced my research overall. Third, I present the limitations of the study while simultaneously discussing potential future directions. Finally, in conclusion, I present four hypotheses I formed on the basis of this study concerning the purpose of my research: to bridge the gap between social and clinical psychology by investigating the social discourse directed at children on multicultural issues in the United States.

Impressions

As a reader, my entries in the reaction journal indicate the representatives inspired both negative and positive comments for me. Only books with predominantly positive comments were considered as impacting this reader favorably; the same was true for those representatives considered to have impacted this reader negatively. As entries including both positive and negative comments were deemed to have affected this reader ambivalently, many of the representatives were considered to have an ambivalent impact on this reader.

I had favorable impressions toward representatives with stories ranging over a variety of topics, but were all written from an emic perspective and fully integrated culture into the narrative. These results indicate how as a reader I was biased from the beginning toward picture or story books seeking to include multicultural issues in stories. Since as a researcher I conceived of the form of the dissertation, this result is not entirely
surprising, since the decision to examine the way multicultural issues are presented,
discussed and resolved in children’s picture or story books necessarily depended on an
interest in children’s picture or story books integrating cultural issues into the narrative.

In addition, the reaction journal indicates when this reader responded favorably to
a representative, there was a desire to demonstrate the representative provided a model
for a narrative integrating multicultural issues. This desire was manifest in the close
observation of the elements of the narratives listed above as follows: illustrations,
characterization, plot, setting, narrative language, subject matter and historical references.
The effect of this desire came in closer analyses of the representatives as a whole, in an
effort to find a way to distinguish among representatives. However, special attention was
given to the number of themes presented in representatives regarded favorably. For each
of the favorably viewed representatives, the number of thematic units was no less than 4
and no more than 12.

Representatives impressing this reader negatively included stories with a variety
of topics, but included books written from the etic and culture as discovery perspectives
and treating culture as universal and culture as background. This result corresponds with
the bias toward integrating culture described above. However, it is important to note how
an equally strong desire to expose those representatives impressing this reader negatively
was clear in the reaction journal. The effect of this desire came in closer analyses of the
main content and process themes, in an effort to distinguish between categories of
representatives along the cultural continuum. Thus, whether the books impressed this
reader favorably or negatively, the result was an attempt to distinguish specifically
between the representatives in different phases of the analyses.
Nevertheless, representatives causing negative reactions were given special attention as to the number of themes presented for each. For three of the negatively viewed representatives, the number of thematic units was no less than six and no more than nine. However, a fourth representative viewed negatively had 21 thematic units, but this representative was also approximately 40 pages in length.

Limitations and Future Directions of the Study

As a researcher, I designed this study to be a platform from which to launch further investigations. The study should not be seen as a summative description of multiculturalism in children’s literature. The representatives chosen, and the results of the study, should not be used to generalize beyond the current sample until future research either supports or disconfirms the resultant hypotheses. To generalize would be to use research results from a small sample as a representative heuristic, and indulge in similarity judgments that cannot be considered valid as scientific inquiry.

The study was limited in nature, as well as in scope, generalizability and procedures. The very act of discourse analysis is an interchange between the text and the analyst, and as such, each discourse analysis differs depending on the researcher, the research question, the coding process, the analysis of the coded material, and finally the written account of the project. To attempt an unlimited analysis of the intended representatives would have been naïve at best.

In considering the study, certain limitations are relevant. The research, like all research, was vulnerable to confirmatory bias. The potential for the analysis to be swayed was considerable, as the primary researcher was responsible for the coding, analysis and written account of the project. However, this study had advantages over others whose
authors strive for objectivity. Firstly, no hypothesis concerning the nature of the representatives to be read, coded, and analyzed was asserted, because the purpose of the research project, as well as the theory and method supporting the research process, remained essentially observational and exploratory. Second, discourse analysis provided a unique theoretical and methodological frame as the researcher’s confirmatory bias was considered an aspect of the research project, rather than a source of error to be separated from the data.

Future investigators could examine the validity of the presented main content and process themes, and the cultural continuum of perspectives derived from observation of those themes. By so doing, the accuracy and usability of the results of this study could be tested and either given more weight or modified as necessary. Furthermore, other main content and process themes may emerge to provide a more complete understanding of the positions along the cultural continuum discussed previously. Multiple directions are possible both in substantiating the initial claims made or introducing contradictory evidence.

Further investigation of the study’s results could occur by an examination of representatives with similar main content or process themes. Such a study would allow for more in-depth exploration of the perspectives and processes used to present multicultural issues to children in popular media. With larger samples, and increased attention to in-group differences as well as between group differences, subsequent studies might present compelling findings related to the use of stories to inform children about the social universe in which they live.
In this regard, I recognize the range of published material from which the sample of representatives was taken was a limitation of the study. By focusing on recent literature, I limited the range of texts and thus the generalizability of the research results to literature published within a particular time, culture, and historical frame. Similarly, I had also limited the study to children’s picture or story books awarded Caldecott medals or honors, therefore the study was limited to literature seeking to appeal to a wide section of the population. This last consideration was both a strength and weakness of the study. While the selection of Caldecott medals and honors winners provided an insight into what the majority of children read, it had the potential to indicate a conventionality of perspective in the sample, which may have unfairly biased the project.

Nevertheless, the decision to use Caldecott medals and honors winners was an important aspect of the research project. At the present time, Caucasian, heterosexual, European-American, male values dominate the culture of the United States. How this is reflected, or not reflected, in children’s picture and story books written on multicultural issues or subjects, was precisely the issue in question. Through discourse analysis, the ideology on multicultural issues constructed in children’s literature was examined.

A future study examining the introduction of multicultural issues in other media (e.g. periodicals, radio and television broadcasts, young adult and adult literature and cinematic entertainment) would also be helpful to expand the study’s purview. Children are exposed to multiple forms of media; books are only one source of social information for children. If further investigation into different media were instigated, patterns between representatives from different works of art or entertainment could be compared to researched patterns in children’s picture or story books. Such investigations would
broaden the scope of the study, while also allowing for a greater scrutiny of the hypotheses presented.

Finally, the study was hampered by the exploratory nature of the analysis. After the representatives were read, coded and reviewed, the data was presented to a colleague familiar with discourse analysis and qualitative research methods for comparative analysis, as mentioned above. The colleague reviewed the original material and the coding, but was correct in noting the analysis sought to detect similarities between the representatives, not differences. In searching for patterns, the analysis had purposefully remained general in nature. While specific themes were noted, the divergent ways in which those themes were manipulated was not examined in the stories analyzed. For this reason, a limitation of the study was the emphasis on similarities rather than differences; prevalence had greater emphasis than sensitivity or specificity.

Future investigations designed to uncover the emphases being given by other media forms could lead to different results. The use of a different methods would further our understanding of the topic of this dissertation. Regardless of what direction future researchers choose to take, the examination of media messages on multicultural issues presented to children is an important aspect of clinical and social psychological research. Children’s perceptions of the world directly influence their behavior, and as children become adults, their behavior influences their peer groups, their communities and their governments. In the current information age children are influenced by a world community, and as such are subject to increased exposure to ideas, concepts and ways of life. While cognitive development in children may remain consistent over time, the information to which children have access is ever more encompassing. For example,
though children may continue to develop a consciousness of unchanging racial identity between the ages of six and seven (Tatum, 1997), children are likely to be aware they can choose from multiple models of racial identity. Whether this eventually results more in confusion and doubt than excitement and potential is still to be determined.

Hypotheses

Several points regarding the introduction of multicultural issues in children's picture or story books were apparent to me at the conclusion of the study. Since the current sample represents only a fraction of the children's books available to parents and young readers, the conclusions to be presented must be seen as tentative. That said, four foundational hypotheses for further investigation will be discussed.

First, based on the results of the study, I would tentatively assert multiculturalism is not an issue of necessity to authors of children's picture or story books. The representatives for the study were chosen from the past 15 years of Caldecott medal and honors recipients. As the Caldecott medal and honors are the most venerated awards available for children's picture or story books, the presence of only 21 representatives out of 68 medal or honors recipients indicates there are few books addressing multicultural literature considered to be of high quality. The limited number of picture or story books addressing multicultural issues such as race, ethnicity or culture indicates mainstream authors do not emphasize such issues in their books. While it cannot be denied race, ethnicity and culture are vital to the social fabric of the United States, it appears writers and publishers of children's picture or story books choose to look elsewhere for narrative inspiration. Furthermore, this hypothesis validates the need for awards given only to
books addressing multicultural issues, such as the Coretta Scott King Award, as a way to spur the writing and publication of books addressing multicultural issues.

The second hypothesis is an etic cultural perspective toward race, ethnicity and culture is a prominent aspect of the national conversation on multiculturalism, as the main content themes indicated. This hypothesis stems from the fact fully one third of the representatives' authors presented multicultural issues from this perspective. While this perspective helps to emphasize the essential human experience, it encourages the notion differences of group identity are less important than issues of either individual identity or universal identity (Sue & Sue, 2003). Further, the task of discussing multicultural issues from the other perspectives, either emic or culture as discovery, is complicated by the presence of the etic perspective. Writing from an emic perspective on multicultural issues does not prevent an author from mentioning the mention of universal aspects of human experience. Neither does writing from the emic perspective interfere with a discussion of multiculturalism through the lens of culture as discovery. Rather, an author choosing to write from the emic perspective encourages readers to see into the secret world of characters influenced by individual and group differences. Any discussion of multiculturalism in this way naturally promotes alternative perspectives. Similarly, authors use the perspective of culture as discovery to open the discussions of multicultural issues necessarily bringing a new understanding of individual and group differences to awareness. Authors use the perspective of culture as discovery to initiate the discussion from a standpoint of humility and openness, and sponsor an embrace of divergent experiences. By contrast, authors writing from the etic perspective run the risk of dismissing individual or group differences in favor of universal aspects of human
experience. When authors introduce the etic perspective, they assert universal aspects of human experience are important, and argue that they outweigh other aspects of difference. By consequence, the other aspects of difference can be ignored or dismissed. While using emic and culture as discovery perspectives offers assertions with openness, authors’ writing from the etic perspective can only begin a discussion of which perspectives are important, thereby bringing the discussion of multicultural issues to a proverbial halt. While such differences can potentially be sorted by discussion and exchange, children learning about race, ethnicity and culture are in a precarious position, being told individual and group differences are significant, but can be dismissed openly in favor of universal human qualities.

Third, based on the main process themes presented, as a researcher I suggest the introduction of multicultural issues in children’s story and picture books happens along a cultural continuum of inclusion. On the one side are authors who only tacitly refer to multicultural issues, while on the other are authors weaving multicultural issues into the fabric of the narrative. The majority of representatives introducing multicultural themes integrate multicultural issues fully into the children’s picture or story books. This finding is significant because there are layers to the perspectives of the content of children’s picture or story books, there are also layers to the ways the content is introduced, discussed and resolved in children’s picture or story books. Authors not only introduce multicultural content from a particular perspective, but they employ narrative devises in the telling of the story, influencing the discussion of multicultural issues. Of the three main process themes, the largest variance occurred for the category of culture as integral, as there were numerous ways the multicultural issues presented could be made a
centerpiece of the story. For example, a book like *Harlem* (1998) used the name of this section of New York City as a historical metaphor, in which the community experienced a collective identity based on location. By contrast, the authors and illustrators of a book like *Yo! Yes?* (1994) use illustrations and language as metaphors for divergent group identities in order to show the openness of the characters could lead to social integration. While authors chose very different methods for employing the multicultural content, the process was the same because multicultural issues were essential aspects of the narratives. Consequently, the variance within this particular process theme was large.

By contrast, the variance on the other categories of process themes was relatively small. The main process theme of Culture as Background encompassed only 3 of the 21 representatives. These three representatives all included culture, but the inclusion merely allowed the story to take place, rather than directing the substance of the story. For a book like *Martin's Big Words* (2002), the authors chose Martin Luther King, Jr.'s contributions to civil rights as a starting place for the book. However, with the exception of the illustrations and historical references in the book, little discussion took place of race, ethnicity and culture. Readers of the book learn Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke for peace, freedom and equality, but from a vantage point emphasizing how long ago he did so. In this way, the book used Martin Luther King, Jr. as a symbol for the struggle for civil rights, but made no reference to his experience as with race, ethnicity or culture despite the fact he was an African-American man who grew up in a society troubled by racial prejudices and bigotries still present to this day. The emphasis of the book was on his message, not on his race, ethnicity or culture. Books in this category used
multicultural issues as a starting point for the narrative, without integrating those issues into the substance of the narrative.

Similarly, the main process theme of Culture as Integral had little variability, although more books were in this category than in any other. However, each of these books began, progressed and ended within a cultural perspective, integrating the culture into the plots, character descriptions and narrative language of the stories. Little variability existed most likely because the study sought only to identify patterns in a group of varied representatives, rather than differences in a group of similar representatives. However, certain observations were possible. Many authors integrated multicultural issues through the telling of stories from specific cultures, such as The Faithful Friend (1996), which was based in Haiti and made frequent reference to Haitian culture. Other books integrating culture did so not from folk tales but through the relating of particular experiences in a cultural setting never only implicitly presented. Despite these two divergent methods of introducing multiculturalism, books with the main process theme of Culture as Integral indelibly relied on race, ethnicity and culture to support the story.

Fourth, I would hypothesize a link, between main content and main process themes, appears to be prominent based on the results of this study. When a picture or story book’s author wrote from the etic, or universal perspective, multicultural issues were either treated as background or universal in the process. In other words, books with the main content theme of Etic perspective had a main process theme of Culture as Background or Culture as Universal. Books with the main content theme of Emic perspective always had a main process theme of Culture as Integral. Books with the main
content theme of Culture as Discovery almost always had a main process theme of Culture as Integral, with the exception of *Martin's Big Words* (2002), which had a main process theme of Culture as Background. This initial finding further illustrates the point made above concerning the etic perspective: the etic perspective gives special consideration to universal aspects of experience, as consequently allows group or individual differences to be ignored or dismissed. The nature of the perspective is dichotomous, insisting on either one or the other, and as a result the other is lost. Nevertheless, authors of books separated into the other main process themes were able to be more flexible with multicultural issues, both by integrating them and using them as a background for the stories told. The error of the etic perspective could be summed up simply as the following: by emphasizing the universal, you exclude all the aspects of experience making up the universal. Multicultural issues are as prevalent an aspect of human experience as any other, yet the etic perspective ignores them in favor of personality traits or personal values, as if these were separable. The result is a false universalism, which will never appeal to a universe of human experiences.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Main Content and Main Process Themes for Participants

   Main Content Theme: Etic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Universal

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

5. Grandfather’s Journey (1994)
   Main Content Theme: Culture as Discovery
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

   Main Content Theme: Etic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Background

   Main Content Theme: Etic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Background

9. Lon Po Po: A Red Riding Hood Story from China (1990)
   Main Content Theme: Culture as Discovery
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

10. Martin’s Big Words: the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (2002)
    Main Content Theme: Culture as Discovery
    Main Process Theme: Culture as Background

    Main Content Theme: Etic perspective
Main Process Theme: Culture as Universal

   Main Content Theme: Etic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Universal

   Main Content Theme: Culture as Discovery
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

   Main Content Theme: Etic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Universal

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

16. So You Want To Be President? (2001)
   Main Content Theme: Etic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Universal

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

18. Tar Beach (1992)
   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

19. Tibet Through the Red Box (1999)
   Main Content Theme: Culture as Discovery
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral

   Main Content Theme: Emic perspective
   Main Process Theme: Culture as Integral
From Twenty-One Wooden Stairs

by

Tobias Ryan

2004 - 2006
You waited, your hands around the white cup; your pale face in the window a soft torch; I climbed the twenty-one wooden stairs up to the doorway of your second story porch. While you sat within, your eyes looking out, I stood outside and watched for you to move; looking inside, you wore the face of doubt where I was hoping for the face of love. The quiet stillness in your expression—your heart’s distraction while the spell was cast—when seeing me, you blushed with affection though I felt our sweet carelessness had passed. As you stood up to hold the door for me, I smiled at dreams you have in store for me.

July 14, 2005

Trapped beneath the waves of history are muted voices that we live without—Each day I hear the dumb past implore me to overcome my loneliness and doubt. With silent tentacles that reach for me, from phantom depths I have not ventured through, ghosts long dead awaken and explore me: a living vessel for a lifeless crew. I do believe that spirits walk abroad—I see and hear them, and some know my name; unreckoned souls who never speak of God, move like the sea around me and exclaim: “We loved and hated long before your birth—Remember us in every hour of mirth!”

January 20, 2005

Though parents raised me to revere the soul, Though teachers lectured on the color line, I met a man with skin as dark as coal and felt afraid to take his hand in mine. The haughty pride of my seventeen years swayed like tower built on shifting sand: how could be fail to see my sudden fair of his politely offered, outstretched hand? True it is, one experience is worth ten lessons learned by heart from dusty books of ten commandments sermoned from above. But parents and teachers showed me from birth: fears live within, not in another’s looks, and all fears can be comforted with love.

January 9, 2005
A wife declares, one gloved hand on the door: 
"If you leave me, leave me as you are 
and not because you long for something more. 
To lose you to another would by far 
hurt worse than any other kind of loss; 
when you go, if I hear wedding bells, 
you may as well have hung me on a cross 
where I could watch you sleep with someone else."

A husband shudders to himself at night: 
"The greatest wound, the greatest pain of all, 
is when the one who loved and wanted me 
now acts as though I can do nothing right; 
laughs at me, to show me just how small 
I am to her, after she has had me."

April 15, 2005

Between the turn signals and overdrives, 
my rearview mirror showed me a gray hair; 
a vein of silver dying as it lives, 
a spring of wealth already spent elsewhere. 
My age reminds me how my age will end 
without what happens next or come what may, 
without more what to do or what to say, 
slowly, over time, as backs will bend. 
I checked the mirror and turned the wheel right, 
and pulled the strand as I went rushing past, 
the shock of old age giving me dismay; 
I wondered just how long my chance will last, 
as I changed lanes between the traffic lights, 
and just how fast my body will decay. 

May 5, 2005

Each heart has a church: mine has the forest; 
my choir and congregation are the trees; 
the rushing river, my choir's chorus; 
each breath is sacrament; I am my priest. 
Beneath the great green of the canopy, 
we offer up our prayers to the sun; 
the oldest souls are in my ministry 
but we blessed share blessings in common. 
Our creed is simple: we live by the wind; 
we stand head high while rooted in the earth; 
we strive to sway and bend before we break. 
How will I hold these beauties in my mind, 
when other hearts question the very worth 
of what they can destroy but not remake? 

June 10, 2005
Alone and yet surrounded by a crowd
I felt the isolation with remorse
as those around me voiced their thoughts aloud
I saw the shadow of a running horse
thrown fierce and broad and gross across the floor
by a force impersonal as a plague,
a vision, three dimensional and vague
spreading, though the rude crowd seemed to ignore
the frightening beauty of the soulless shade
so breathlessly immense; I looked away
without forgetting how the darkness reared
at meaningless remarks those speakers made
unknowingly, as this vision gave way
to emptiness, and all hope disappeared.

July 20, 2005

New Jersey, 1940, two black men
left a bar as a white woman came by;
unsteadily, one weaved toward her, then
touched her arm, but the harsh look in her eye
reminded him of cities he had sworn
never to return to, never to see;
recalled for him the moment he was born
not as he was, as he appeared to be;
and she, guilty, determined not to tempt
further the thought of original sin
fled carefully away along the street
as these three victims sensed the raw contempt
and threat of death lurking beneath the skin
white men hide in as if it were a sheet.

August 19, 2005

We give each other what we want ourselves
thinking somehow we give the best of love
when we look within but then give without
thought of ourselves, and so we live without
real peace, and find we're always on the move;
no wayward heart knows into what it delves
when two people talk of love as you and I
how talk of past and future but pretend
a better time is set aside to say
what between us happened here today;
we know too well how to be a dear friend
but stumble like a lover when we lie;
for now we stand too close for pleasantries,
too far away for true sincerities.

January 23, 2006
It is achievement that entices me
from virtue, balance and compassion,
with honeyed words and honors meant to catch
my roving eye taught faithfully to watch,
achieve and maintain through competition
the influence my pride promises me.
When I forget the simple truth I feel,
look lost in rank, obsessed with raw prestige,
dissatisfied with everything I see,
expect to find me hanging my degrees,
fighting within the old symbolic siege;
the only struggle that I know is real:
between my blind and selfish ambition,
and the selflessness of my intuition.

February 2, 2006

Between the secret noises of the night,
I harbor secret thoughts of loneliness:
what will I feel when all my friends are gone?
how will I bear out being all alone,
when my loves pass away and emptiness
is everywhere around without respite?
Some faces I will never see again,
though I knew them well before I knew my own,
and others will be lost to me as well,
that only recently I learned to tell
apart from all the crowds I have been shown
of strangers, neither enemies nor friends.
Before I thought of life alone for years,
my own death seemed the chillest of my fears.

February 20, 2006

Where I have fallen short is in the thought
handed down to me through ages of mankind
declaring how the strong should rule the weak,
how all should strive for strength; first in physique,
as only fighters can defend; in mind
next for knowledge is power; last but not
least in wealth, for only rich men grow old
and do not lose their sway over the earth,
for though feable in spirit and in limb,
ownership will transform every whim
into reality; when birth means worth,
innate entitlement never grows cold.
For twenty years, I lived under this rule,
this law, which begs for mercies from the cruel.

April 27, 2006