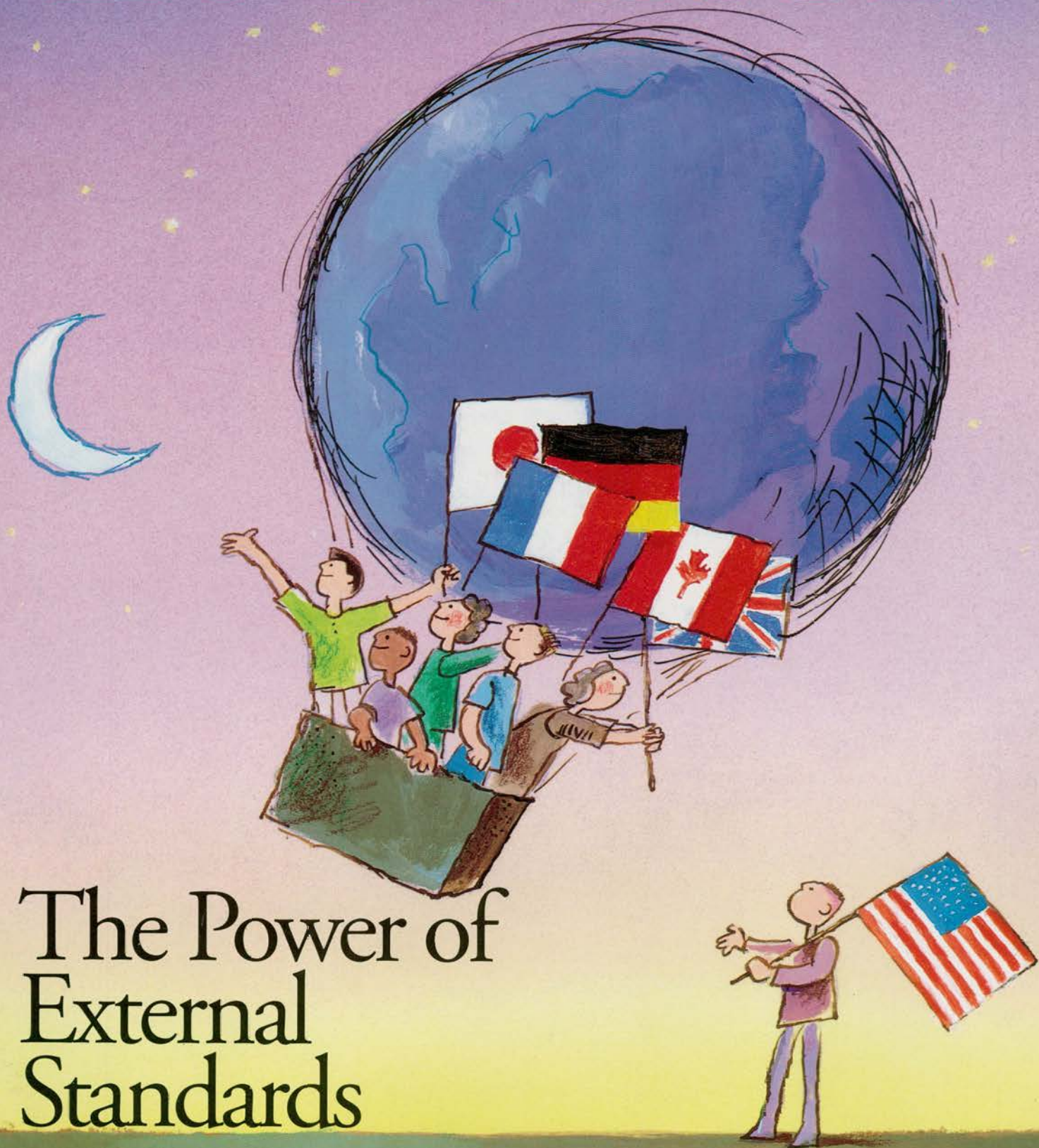


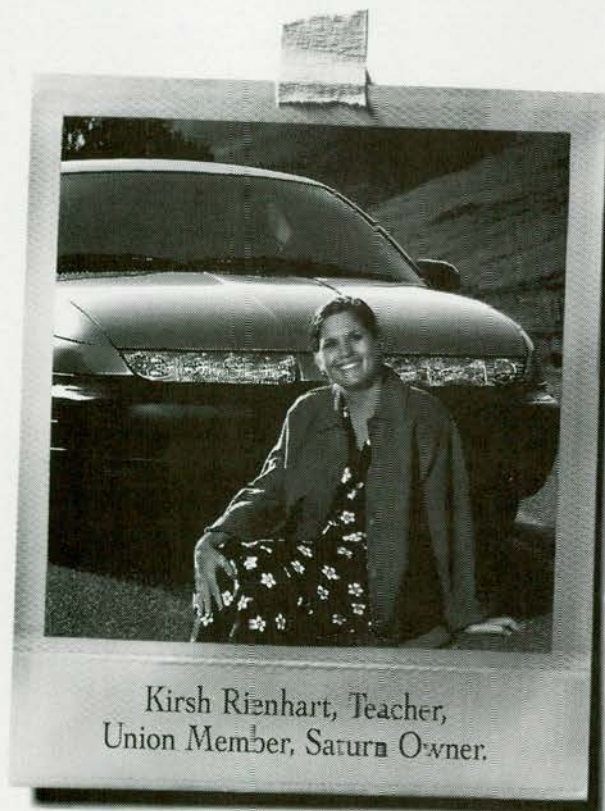
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
FALL 1995

AMERICAN Educator



The Power of
External
Standards

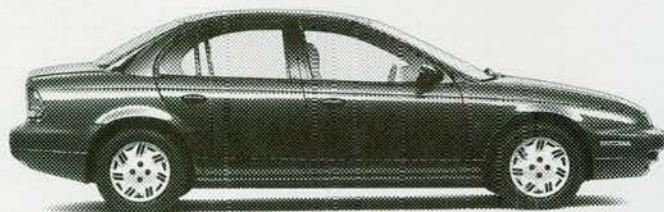
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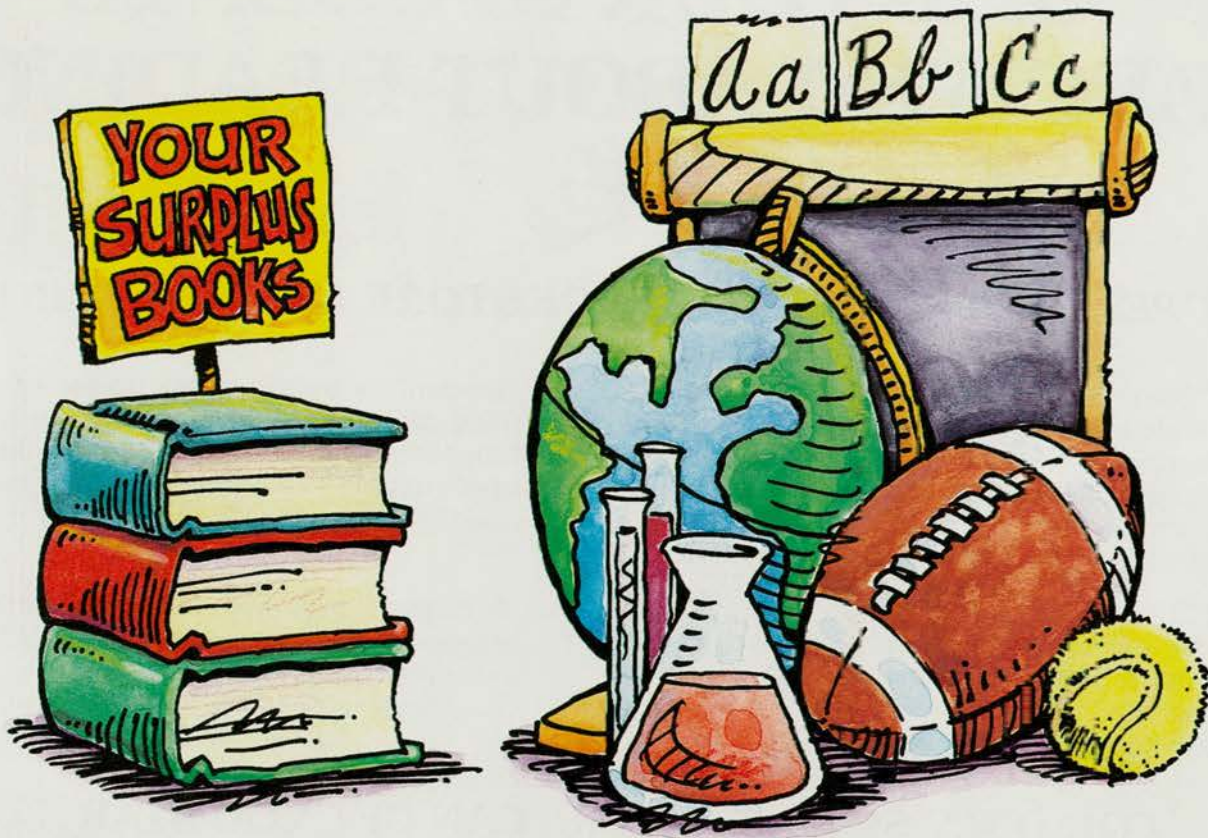


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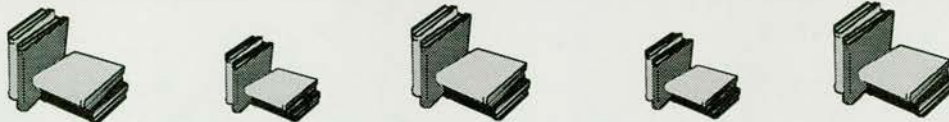
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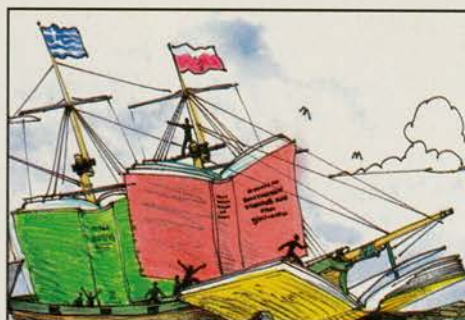
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By John Bishop

When the author took up his Peace Corps teaching assignment more than 30 years ago in Ganye, Nigeria, he encountered high school students much more motivated, hard-working, and "on task" than their American counterparts. Here's why.

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A PHOTOGRAPHIC REMEMBRANCE

For millions of young people, Anne Frank's diary has served as a vehicle for connecting their own lives to the innocent young people murdered by the Nazis. Now comes an extraordinary new book that will greatly enrich the reading of Anne's diary. You will look at these photos and weep.

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It's not an untried idea. Evidence from the countries that have implemented voucher plans indicates that such systems increase inequality without making schools better.

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BROADENING STUDENT UNDERSTANDING
OF THE AMERICAN ETHNIC EXPERIENCE

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One cannot help but be struck by the incomplete portrait of the American ethnic experience patterned in recent literature anthologies for middle and high school students. European ethnic groups have all but vanished from this literary landscape.

THE HORROR OF R. L. STINE

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By Diana West

Go to your local chain bookstore, and next to a few scattered copies of great children's books, like Kidnapped, To Kill a Mockingbird, and Charlotte's Web, you will find shelf upon shelf of the latest in the Fear Street and Goosebumps shock fiction series. Our children deserve better.

LETTERS

Editor's Note: By phone, FAX, regular mail, and e-mail, we have been inundated with requests for thousands and thousands of extra copies of our Summer 1995 issue on Learning to Read: "I have to have one to give to my principal"; "to send to the school board"; "for my neighbor, whose child is having a problem"; "for my niece, who is about to begin her first year of teaching and desperately needs this information"; and on and on. To the extent that our supply would allow, we have accommodated these requests. It is notable that, of the countless comments we have received, only four or five have disagreed with the point of view expressed in the articles or found fault with the research presented. We have included one of those critical letters among the ten that follow; however, this one-in-ten proportion in no way reflects the overwhelmingly positive response the articles evoked.

LEARNING TO READ

Thank you for so wonderfully presenting the issues currently surrounding beginning reading. As a first-grade teacher and former reading/language arts graduate student at Florida State University, I have experienced the "great debate" for 30 years. I have held on to my beliefs simply because "they work." Many of my colleagues are quick to latch

on to the newest idea or craze. Reading instruction issues change as dramatically as the fashion industry. Unfortunately, colleges of education are usually the first to get captured by the latest trends or fads. I would love to have about 10 copies of this issue as it illustrates so well what I believe, and I can share it with my teaching colleagues. I will happily pay for them. Perhaps you believe as I do that this information is a necessity for those who will be responsible for teaching kindergarten or first grade this next school year. If this little magazine you edit can impact 10 teachers then it will affect the education of 250 students at least. And don't discount the ripple effect of these teachers sharing what they know. The impact could be astounding!

—BRENDA SHIELDS
MAYPORT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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I am sorry that I did not learn the name of the young lady who so generously sent me copies of the Summer 1995 issue of your magazine, which contains the excellent series of articles on beginning reading. I am putting all those copies to good use. I wanted to thank her and to let her know that two copies went to members of the PTA curriculum committee in Maryland, one went to the Maryland superintendent of schools, one went to a curriculum superintendent in Baltimore County, one to the reading coordinator in Baltimore County, one to

the education editor of the *Baltimore Sun* papers, one went to a reading specialist who is also a college instructor, one went to a parent who is on the team for her school's curriculum committee, and one went to a member of the school board of Baltimore County. It was a lot of postage but worth every penny.

I highlighted parts of the article by Adams and Bruck because it is so hard to see the truth and just trust to luck that someone will notice that particular bit of truth, too. What has happened to reading instruction over the past five years or so is appalling and frightening. And while it was happening you couldn't find a college professor in Maryland or an administrator in Baltimore County who would buck the trend. I know because I tried. Principal after principal jumped on the whole language bandwagon. Teachers were left adrift in a sea of not knowing what they were supposed to do or why they were supposed to do it....

This was a great issue! Thank you so much. I have not quite finished sending them out, but all that highlighting takes time.

—SARA M. PORTER
READING SPECIALIST (RETIRED)
JARETTSVILLE, MD

The article in the summer issue of *American Educator*, "Resolving the 'Great Debate'" by M. J. Adams and M. Bruck was truly outstanding and should receive even wider dis-

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tribution. I applaud both the authors and the AFT for an important presentation. Please pass my thanks to the authors for a great contribution.

—GARRY MYERS
HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN, INC.

Your Summer 1995 issue, "Learning to Read, Schooling's First Mission," should be required reading in every school district in this country.

These are the most concise and best researched articles on beginning reading ever written. Perhaps, school board members with critical thinking skills will see the folly of their ways and immediately make the needed changes. Your magazine clearly explains how and why to teach reading using explicit phonics. Your articles' research is complete, clear, and well-reasoned. I plan to send a copy to everyone on my school board.

I am a parent in an M.E.A.-controlled school district that has been using whole language for over seven years. When I asked why so many affluent children don't read or spell very well, I was told: "Reading is developmental. We don't worry about late readers. They can catch up. Phonics isn't important. The spelling all comes together in fourth grade, or else they can always use a spell-check on their computer. We don't correct mistakes because it would hurt the children's self-esteem. If children don't know their math facts, they can use calculators. As long as they derive meaning from print, the exact words aren't important. By modeling good grammar, children will learn to talk good (sic). We don't spend a lot of time on handwriting, it isn't important. Rote memorization and practice are old-fashioned. We can't force children to do homework. Grades on report cards hurt self-esteem."

All of the longitudinal data support using explicit phonics for beginning reading. Even though I forwarded copies of the research to my school board/curriculum director, no changes have been made.

When the district decided to use WLA, they had to have known there was no proof that it was better. I call that educational malpractice. Innovation and change only make sense when there is an improve-

ment in results. WLA and inventive spelling, as implemented here, are a waste of the students' time and taxpayers' money.

Now the district is saying that "direct instruction is only for disadvantaged kids." My children have been disadvantaged enough by inferior teaching methods and unproven philosophies. I hope you will expose other educational gimmicks that don't work for the majority of children.

I commend you for taking the lead and saying, "This works best." You should send a copy to Secretary of Education Richard Riley. He won't speak out on curriculum issues because he can't endorse any method. With your articles in hand, maybe he will find the moral courage to educate the parents as to what works in education. Then parents would at least be able to give informed consent to curricula used on their children.

Thank you for your common sense (sorely lacking in many areas of academia).

—PATRICIA A. ALSPACH
EARMINGTON HILLS, MI

Congratulations! You really hit the nail on the head in a timely way with this issue. This week, fresh back from QuEST, I had two phone calls from people in important positions in California's education community praising the *American Educator* and asking us for copies. The issue will go to all the members of the state Board of Education, key leaders in the Department of Education, and every commissioner on the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Apparently the report of the Reading Task Force convened by the Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin will say essentially the same thing, but in a less scholarly and thorough manner. This helps us enormously in reminding people that while the AFT in California may have fewer members, we still have the right positions on all the issues in education. Thank you! Let us know what we can do to help at any time.

—ELAINE JOHNSON
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Congratulations to the *American Educator* for presenting three important articles about beginning

reading. Your readers may be interested to know that they can purchase the 127-page summary of Marilyn Adams' book, *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print* from the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois. They should mail their orders to Dissemination Director, Center for the Study of Reading, Room 173 CRC, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, IL 61820. Single copies are \$7.50 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling. Boxes of 50 are available for \$300. Residents of the following states must pay sales tax: IL (7.25%), IN (5%), MN (6%), MI (4%), OH (5%), WI (5%). If readers want to use a purchase order, VISA or MasterCard, the phone number is 217-244-4083. If they are interested in ordering the complete book, it is available from the MIT Press. Currently it is available only in paperback, and sells for \$18.50. Readers can call 1-800-356-0343 to place an order.

—JEAN OSBORN,
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF READING

I have just finished reading the summer issue of *American Educator*, entitled "Learning to Read." As I am a teacher of young children, I found the topic compelling and eagerly began reading. When I finished, I was quite surprised and confused. Although whole language was spoken of often, I couldn't find any articles written by whole language advocates. Marilyn Adams and Maggie Bruck had difficulty defining whole language because they could not find consistent definitions in articles about whole language. Yet, whole language teachers do have a consistent definition of holistic teaching and learning. Where were the voices of these teachers who work with children in classrooms everyday who learn to read and write in holistic environments? The authors may have had difficulty finding a consistent definition because of the articles written by writers such as themselves who do not clearly understand the philosophy of holistic learning, although feel qualified to define it. Ms. Adams and Bruck quoted both Frank Smith and Ken Goodman, yet neither were allowed to speak for

(Continued on page 46)

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Gene Bottoms, Ed.D. of Atlanta, Georgia, Director of the Southern Regional Education Board's "High Schools That Work" program. Congratulations to three individuals whose dedication to scholarship

should be an inspiration to us all.

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THE POWER OF EXTERNAL STANDARDS

BY JOHN BISHOP

IN JANUARY 1962, I got on a train in Lagos, Nigeria, for a five-day trip to my Peace Corps assignment in Ganye, Nigeria. It took two days on the train and three days driving on dirt roads to get there. Sardauna province, where the school was located, had just become part of Nigeria. My school had started the year before, and it was the first in the province to offer a secondary school education. As a result of the arrival of the two Peace Corps volunteers, the school added another class so there were 60 students in all. This was for a province of a million people.

Many of my students' families lived far from roads of any kind. When we visited some of them, it was a five-day trek to get there and back again. And yet they were the hungriest learners I've ever encountered—much hungrier than my friends in the suburban secondary school I had attended and hungrier than the ninth graders I had student-taught in Tuckahoe, New York.

Mohammed Boboi was my best student, and I was surprised to find that he was respected not only by me but also by all his classmates. He was not despised because he was a "grind" or a "nerd," as would undoubtedly have been the case when I was in high school—and still is. One of the reasons for this very different attitude was that Boboi and his friends were not being ranked against one another; they were all striving to reach a standard that had been externally set. They were being prepared by me and by other teachers to sit for external exams at the end of secondary school.

The exams, which were similar to the British O-Levels, were set and graded by outside examiners—our closest analogy would be with the New York State Regents'. However, these exams were more difficult than

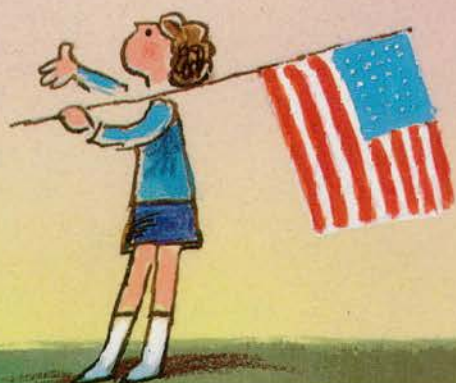
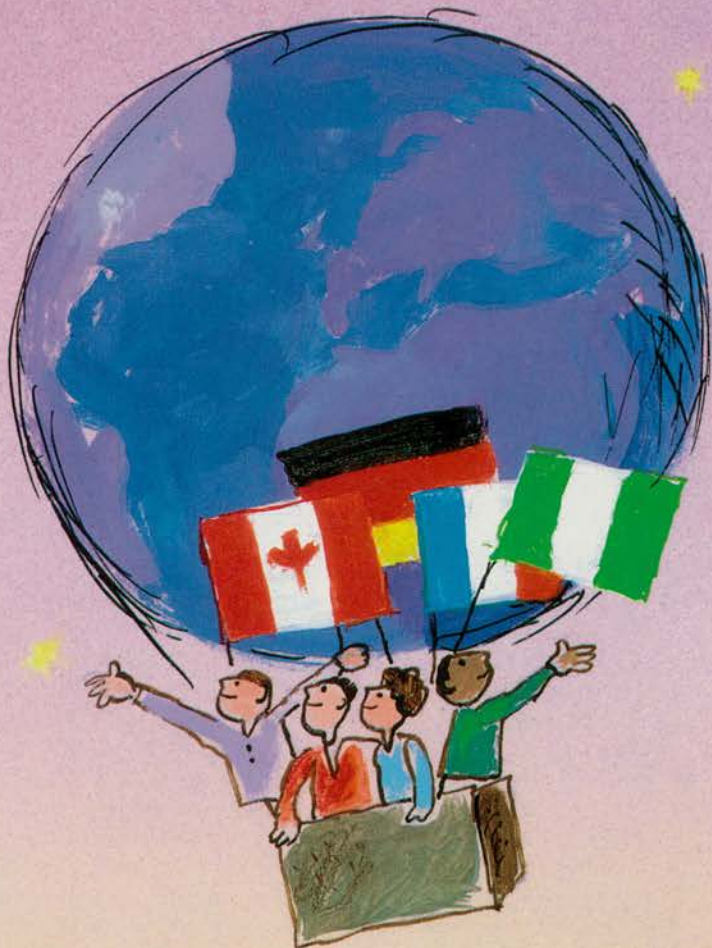
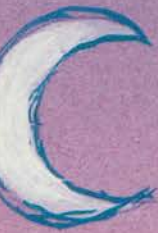
John Bishop is chair of the Department of Human Resource Studies at the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University. This article is based on his monograph "The Impact of Curriculum-Based External Examinations on School Priorities and Student Learning," published by the Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies.

our Regents' and more important to the future of the students who took them, because the exam results decided who would go on to university and who would not. The exams covered material students studied in a specified curriculum that included Commonwealth history, mathematics, English, and science; and students had five years to prepare for them.

When I arrived, this group was in its second year. The students knew what they had to master in order to do well on the exams, and they were very serious about learning the material. In fact, when I decided to stray from the curriculum as we approached geometry, a delegation of students came to me saying, "We're not studying proofs! What's wrong?" I had thought we needed to do some manipulatives and things like that, but they wanted to make sure they had a thorough grounding in the mathematics that would be on the examination.

One of the lessons I learned at Ganye Provincial Secondary School is that students will work very hard and achieve at high levels if you make clear what you want them to learn and if there are serious consequences attached to their achievement. A few years ago, many teachers in the U.S. might have considered the idea that external exams with serious consequences lead to high achievement to be new and untested, almost revolutionary. But it is nothing of the kind. It has been in operation in China for a thousand years. Indeed, the principle of having the larger community define what it wants young people to know—that is, setting an external standard—and then recognizing and rewarding mastery is found in the initiation rites of hunter-gatherer societies. It is hundreds of thousands of years old and is operating today in most countries in the world—in Asia, Africa, and Europe. It is also relevant to the problems facing American education.

STORIES ABOUT the poor achievement of American students come at us from many directions. For example, the 1989 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) told us that very few students at the end of high school were able to make intelligent use of



the facts and procedures they had learned. Only 7.5 percent of 17-year-old students could "integrate specialized scientific information"¹ and only 6.4 percent "demonstrated the capacity to apply mathematical operations in a variety of problem settings."² Some people slough off results like these saying they are too vague to be meaningful. It is harder to ignore the repeated and consistent reports of large gaps between the achievement of American secondary school students and their counterparts in other industrialized nations. The continuing prosperity and strength of our country depends on our students achieving at levels that are at least comparable to those of youngsters in our competitor nations. Why are U.S. students achieving at lower levels, and what can we do about the problem?

There is no shortage of explanations for this achievement gap. Among those proposed by educational researchers and policymakers are inadequate school funding, overly large classes, insufficient time for teachers to prepare their lessons, tracking, too little homework, too much TV, poor attendance, poor discipline, unsafe schools, school vacations that are too long, too little emphasis on core academic subjects and too much on nonacademic goals such as self-esteem and sports, inadequately trained teachers, peer pressure against studying, dumbed-down textbooks, and unsupportive parents.

These explanations have one thing in common. They suggest that the key actors in the learning enterprise—students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and school boards—are not paying enough attention to the goal of academic achievement. Some other goal, like avoiding work or controversy or tax increases, seems to be more important. But that leaves a basic question. Why do we apparently place a lower priority on academic achievement than do people in Europe and Asia? The answer, I believe, is that our system offers most students few incentives for academic achievement. We do not have good "signals" to indicate how hard students have worked and what they have learned; there are few rewards for effort and learning. Here is how the Competitiveness Policy Council described the situation in a report issued in 1993.

... high school students who plan to go on to college do not need to work hard and get good grades in order to achieve their goal. Except for the tiny percentage of kids who want to go to selective colleges, students know that, no matter how poor their grades, they will be able to find a college that will accept them. If most colleges continue to admit students who have done little work in high school, there is no reason to expect any change in student behavior.

The vast majority of employers give exactly the same message to students going directly from high school to work: What you did in high school does not count.... hard working kids do not ... have an edge since few employers ever inquire about what courses a young applicant took or ask to see a transcript.³

That was not the case in my Peace Corps school in Nigeria, and it is not the case in most advanced coun-

tries, where mastery of the common curriculum taught in high school is assessed by examinations that are set and graded at the national or regional level. The standards reflected in these exams are visible and public as well as demanding. In France and the Netherlands, for example, questions and answers are published in the newspapers and available on video text. And the grades a student gets are extremely important because they signal the student's achievement to colleges and employers. They influence the jobs that graduates get and the universities and programs to which they are admitted. How well graduating seniors do on these exams also affects the reputation of a school and, in some countries, the number of students applying for admission to the school.

In the United States, by contrast, there is no common curriculum, and the external tests that most students take—the SATs, for instance—are not intended to assess what they have learned in their high school courses. The exams merely compare their "aptitude" or general level of knowledge—or perhaps how successful their cram course has been. (The only exceptions are the Advanced Placement and New York State Regents' exams, but these exams are taken by a tiny fraction of American students.) The primary signals of academic achievement for most U.S. students are grades and rank in class. To a large extent, these signals show how well a student has done in comparison with other students in the school or class rather than in relation to an external standard. This way of signaling achievement affects everything about American education from the attitude of students toward schoolwork and the courses they take to the demands teachers can make and the resources that communities are willing to invest in schools.

The U.S. System

When a student's achievement is assessed relative to what classmates have achieved, young people are tempted to choose courses that are said to be fun or easy rather than ones that will call for hard work. It is not that American students are lazy; they are willing to work very hard at sports or music or their after-school jobs—places where their effort counts. Many simply don't see the point of putting themselves out to get a decent grade in a difficult course when they could take an easy one. Doing that won't help them get a better job or get into college, unless they are one of the few who wants to go to a highly selective school. In fact, considering the possible effect on their GPA and class rank, students who decide to stay away from tough courses wherever possible are acting rationally. And once in a class, students have a personal interest in encouraging other students to do as little as possible. One of the reasons students call those who work hard "nerds" or "grade grabbers" is because the hard workers are not acting in the best interests of their classmates. By studying hard, a kid like this shifts the curve up and makes it more difficult for other students to get good grades. So those who work in school do not admit it in the company of their friends. The prevailing norms of the friendship circles to which most American students belong are: *It is OK to be smart.*

Many American students simply don't see the point of putting themselves out to get a decent grade in a difficult course when they could take an easy one.

You cannot help that. But it is definitely not OK to spend a lot of time studying. Instead, use your free time to socialize, participate in athletics, or earn money. And if you do study hard, you'd better hide it.

Students pressure teachers as well as their peers. Teachers who demand high standards of achievement may be considered arbitrary and unfair, and students often dig in their heels if a teacher requires more than they consider reasonable. It's altogether different in a system where students will be assessed according to an external standard and it is important for them to be successful—the situation in my school in Ganye. There, the teacher will be in the role of a coach or mentor whose advice and expertise helps students achieve a goal they care about. American students, who expect to be graded on a curve, often wonder what difference it makes if they learn more or less. Theodore Sizer's description of Ms. Shiffe's biology class in *Horace's Compromise* illustrates the difficulties that teachers can get into when they are seen as taskmasters rather than coaches:

She wanted the students to know these names. They did not want to know them and were not going to learn them. Apparently no outside threat—flunking, for example—affected the students. Shiffe did her thing, the students chattered on, even in the presence of a visitor ... Their common front of uninterest probably made examinations moot. Shiffe could not flunk them all, and, if their performance was uniformly shoddy, she would have to pass them all.⁴

Generally, teachers cannot expect support from parents in efforts to raise or even maintain standards. Indeed, teachers will hear about it if parents think their children are being worked too hard or graded too stiffly. And no wonder. When the signal of achievement is a good GPA, parents are likely to see a teacher who tries to raise standards as an unpleasant aberration. After all, they have seen many young people from their community go on to college—and perhaps some of their own children—and most will not be sympathetic to demands for any effort that is out of the ordinary. This may be true even for parents who hope their children will get into top-ranked colleges. After all, the parents know that when admissions officers look at a transcript, all they will see is that a student took advanced biology and got an A—they probably will have no way of knowing whether the course demanded a lot of hard work or was a breeze.

In *The Shopping Mall High School*, we hear how teachers have to cope with the complaints from parents who consider even the reading of classic novels an unreasonable reading assignment:

Students were given class time to read *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *The Great Gatsby* because many would not read the books if they were assigned as homework. Parents had complained that such homework was excessive. Pressure from them might even bring the teaching of the books to a halt.... [As one teacher put it] "If you can't get them to read at home, you do the next best thing. It has to be done..."⁵



The behavior of school administrators and local school boards is also influenced by how student achievement is signaled to others. In the U.S., academic achievement must compete with the other school goals. American schools are also expected to foster self-esteem and provide counseling, supervise extracurricular activities, health services, community entertainment (e.g., interscholastic sports), community service, and driver education—all this in a racially integrated setting. If a school is to achieve these nonacademic goals, administrators must hire nonacademic staff. As a result, they will not have the money or the inclination to look for teachers with a strong background in calculus or chemistry—as they would need to do if making sure students did well on an external exam were first and foremost in their minds.

At best, then, academic achievement suffers because it is only one among many goals demanding the attention of school administrators. It can also be sabotaged when teachers are expected to pass students who have not earned a passing grade. In systems without external exams, the number of students who fail can be decreased by lowering the passing standard rather than by raising achievement. Without a common curriculum and external exams, who's to know? And that may be exactly what administrators often expect teachers to do. A Delaware principal who fired a math teacher for failing too many of her students typifies this approach to academic achievement:

I have made it very clear that one of my goals is to decrease the failure rate, to make sure the kids feel good about learning, stay in class, stay in school and do well.... Math is just a big body of knowledge; what is Algebra II across the nation anyway?⁶

This administrator had his eye on the existing signal—how many kids pass. (In some schools, it might be how many kids get an A, but the principle is the same.) A teacher who insisted on having her students *learn* and grading them in accordance with their *achievement* did not make any sense to him.

This kind of attitude is not uncommon. In a recent national poll, teachers said they felt various kinds of pressure to compromise academic standards:

One-third of all teachers (33 percent) report feeling pressured to lower academic standards in their classroom. Similar numbers indicate that they specifically feel pressured to give higher grades than students' work deserves (30 percent) or to reduce the amount and difficulty of work assigned (30 percent). And nearly half of all teachers (46 percent) say they experience pressure to pass students who really are not ready [for] the next grade.⁷

When there is no external assessment of academic achievement, there is no incentive for administrators to call for and enforce higher standards, seek more qualified teachers, or insist on a heavier student work load. Indeed, the immediate consequences of such decisions would be negative for all concerned: there would be more homework and lower GPAs for students, some of whom would be forced to repeat

courses or even face not graduating; there would be more pressure on schools from complaining parents; and a need for more money for teachers' salaries. Since college admission decisions are based on class rank, GPA, and aptitude tests, rather than externally assessed achievement in high school courses, tougher standards would be more likely to harm than help the college admission prospects of next year's graduates. Eventually, higher standards would result in more students doing well in college and graduating, but as everybody knows, even four years is a long time in the life of a school community—and it could be much longer before the improvement process started showing results. The incentives in favor of raising student achievement are very feeble in comparison with these negatives.

There is not much in it for school board members, either. If they set out to improve their school—the standards students must meet, the quality of the teaching and the achievement of the students—and they actually succeed, how will this be apparent to the “users”? There are no signals to let prospective employers or the colleges that recruit their graduates know. Looked at from the perspective of the school board and the parents, higher standards do not have a high payoff when there are no external examinations to signal success. Furthermore, upgrading the quality of education a school system provides is expensive, if only because the school board will have to raise its salary scale in order to attract more highly qualified teachers. And when the standards at the local schools go up, board members will have to cope with taxpayers whose children do not graduate or who are working hard but are no better off in terms of being admitted to college. It is small wonder that improving the performance of all the students in the school district does not have the high priority that it does in an environment like France or England, where external exams show whether or not a school district is providing students with the education they need.

The foregoing is perhaps a recognizable description of U.S. schools and a plausible explanation of the poor performance of American students. But is there any evidence to support my claim that curriculum-based, external examinations would alter the way a whole range of people—students, parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, employers, colleges—look at student achievement and, by providing a meaningful signal of good work, would lead to higher student achievement?

The Evidence from Sweden

International examinations designed to allow comparisons between student achievement in various countries provide some useful data. Of course, differences in achievement might be the result of a factor or combination of factors having nothing to do with whether a country has an external exam system. Another approach would be to see if changes in an external exam system were followed by changes in student achievement. This approach also has some obvious problems. Schools are conservative institutions and, because of this conservatism, changes made to exami-

WHAT STUDENTS CAN DO WHEN EXTERNAL STANDARDS SPUR THEM ON

A FEW YEARS ago, when there was much talk of the need for American students to reach "world class standards," the American Federation of Teachers—which agreed wholeheartedly with the goal—took the lead to explore exactly what world-class standards might mean. What are students in other countries expected to know and be able to do? Perhaps the most concrete way to get a handle on that question is to look at the exams students abroad are required to take, to compare the rigor of the material and the percentage of students who make the mark to the situation in the United States.

And so the AFT proceeded to gather and translate exam material from other industrialized countries around the world, and in the spring of 1994 published the inaugural volume of its *Defining World Class Standards* series. Beginning with the science subject that is most frequently taken in high school, the first volume was entitled *What College-Bound Students Abroad Are Expected To Know About Biology*. Drawing from the exams taken by college-bound students in England and Wales, France, Germany, and Japan, and comparing them to the U.S., the conclusions were clear and dramatic and fit like a glove with John Bishop's theories about the power of external exams that carry real-life consequences.

First, the study showed, much more is expected from students in other industrialized countries; from an American perspective, the rigor of the exams is nothing short of stunning. Second, these exams are external exams, set at either the regional or national level. Individual schools, teachers, or school districts do not determine their own standards; their job is to help students meet the standards established by the larger community. Third, there are high stakes attached to these exams. For the most part, if you don't do well on them, you don't go on to college. Fourth, unlike our SATs, you *can* study for these exams—but not through a two-week cram course. Since the exams are tied to the curriculum taught in school, the only way to prepare for them is to study hard in school, so that slowly, over many years of schooling, that curriculum is mastered.

Last—and one of the most striking findings of the report—was the high percentages of students in the other countries who are able to rise to the level de-

manded by the exams. Every country the report looked at, except the United States, manages to bring 25 percent to 36 percent of their students to the required level of performance. The closest comparison to these exams that we have in the U.S. are the Advanced Placement (AP) exams. Only 4 percent of U.S. 18-year-olds take and pass one or more A.P. exam.

SO, COLLEGE-BOUND students abroad, when faced with rigorous external standards that are tied to the curriculum and that have a strong determining influence on their future, perform very well indeed. But what about average-achieving students, many of whom will not be going on to college? Can an external exam system, with serious stakes attached, spur them on to do their best? A second study by the AFT, released this past summer, gives an unequivocal *Yes* to this question. The new study, entitled *What Secondary Students Abroad Are Expected To Know*, contains exams that students must take in order to earn certificates at the end of lower secondary school, that is, ninth or 10th grade. Exams from three countries—France, Germany, and Scotland—are provided. In each country, the exams represent a standard met or exceeded by about two-thirds of all students. Again, a lot rides on the outcome of these exams. A student's grade determines which academic or vocational opportunity he next qualifies for. By attaching clear rewards and consequences to performance on these exams, these countries have been able to create powerful incentives for students to work hard and excel in school—just as John Bishop predicted would happen. It is these incentives, combined with a common curriculum and assessments, that contribute greatly to the broad-based academic achievement present in the three European countries studied.

Below are examples taken from each of these two AFT reports. First is a sample question from a 1992 German *Abitur* Exam in biology. This exam is for college-bound students; about 35 percent of German students pass exams similar in difficulty to the one this example is taken from. Next we show three math questions from the Scottish Standard Grade Exam, which is taken at the end of 10th grade. These questions are from what is called the General Level of the exam, which is considered the intermediate level of difficulty. Thirty-seven percent of Scottish students

pass this level of exam in math; an additional 27 percent pass a more rigorous exam, which means that a total of 64 percent of Scottish students at the end of 10th grade perform at the level shown here, or significantly higher.

Exam Excerpt for College-Bound Students

(From a 1992 German Abitur exam in biology.)

Immunobiology

Lyme disease (*Borreliosis*) is caused by a bacterial infection. The pathogenic organism (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) is transmitted by blood-sucking ticks. The following illustration shows the antibody concentration in the blood of a person after a first infection by *Borrelia burgdorferi*.

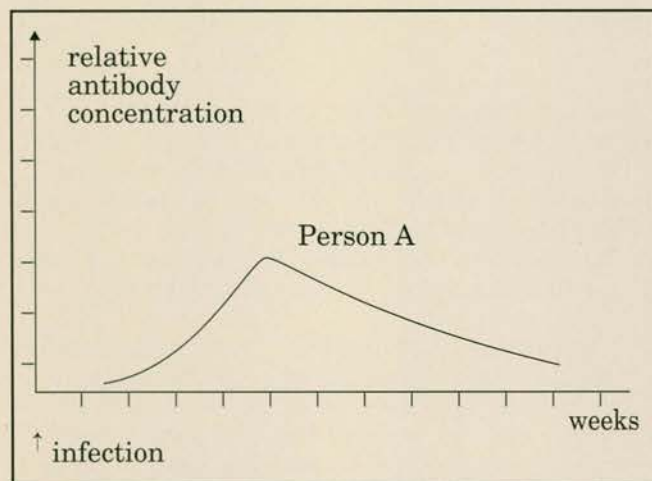


Illustration 1: Time progression of the antibody concentration after a first infection

- Describe, with respect to the curve in Illustration 1, the development of antibodies after an infection.
- Describe the course of an immune reaction of another person (Person B) after a second infection and compare to that of Person A.
 - Redraw Illustration 1 on your answer sheet, and draw the curve for the antibody concentration to be expected for Person B.
- How could the antibody concentration in a patient's blood be determined? Describe a possible method.
- Make a schematic drawing of the structure of an antibody. Label the various parts.
- Another disease transmitted by ticks is early-summer meningoencephalitis (ESME). The cause is a virus. Active and passive immunization is possible against this disease.

Explain the difference between active and passive immunization. In which case is the former used? In which case is the latter used?
- A severe case of *Borreliosis* can lead to nerve cell damage because of loss of myelin (demyelination).
 - Draw and label a motor nerve cell. (Size approximately one-half page)
 - Explain which possible neurophysiological consequences may result from the demyelination of a motor nerve cell. State your reasons.

Exam Excerpt for Average-Achieving Students

(From the 1993 Scottish Standard Grade Exam—General Level—taken at the end of the 10th grade.)



■ Chris needs to use a ladder to put up a television aerial on the wall of the house.

The ladder is 5 metres long and has to reach 4.8 metres up the wall. For safety, the angle between the ladder and the ground should be between 71° and 76° . The ground is horizontal.

Can Chris use this ladder safely? You must give a reason for your answer.

■ A satellite travels in a circular orbit round the earth once every $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The satellite is 2900 kilometres above the earth's surface. The earth has a radius of 6400 kilometres.

- What is the radius of the orbit of the satellite?
- Calculate the speed of the satellite.



■ After a test, a teacher worked out the average mark for her class of 10 pupils. It was 81%. One of the pupils scored only 27%, which was much less than any of the other marks. The teacher decided to work out a new average, leaving out the lowest mark.

What was the new average?

Ordering Information: *What College-Bound Students Abroad Are Expected To Know About Biology* costs \$10 per book; orders of five or more cost \$8 each. *What Secondary Students Abroad Are Expected To Know* costs \$15 each; orders of five or more cost \$12 each. Shipping and handling costs are included. Pre-paid orders only. Please make checks payable to AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS and send to Defining World Class Standards Books, AFT Order Dept., 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

—EDITOR

Probably the best way to ascertain the effect of a curriculum-based external examination system is to study a single country where some jurisdictions have such examinations and others do not.



nation systems are likely to be marginal. However, Sweden does offer an example of a radical change.

During the 1970s, Sweden eliminated its curriculum-based examination system and shifted to a system that based college admission on other criteria—a combination of teacher assessment and how well the student compared with other students in his track. Under the new system, there was no incentive for students to enroll in an academic track. In fact, students who did so were at a disadvantage. It was easier for students pursuing a vocational program to get into college because they were competing only against other students in vocational programs.⁸

What happened in Sweden when they dropped the external exams? We can get some idea by looking at the results of two international studies. Sweden participated in the first round of the International Mathematics Study in 1964, while it still had an external exam system, and in its replication in 1982, after the exams had been dropped. During the time between the two exams, the number of Swedish 18-year-olds taking college-preparatory mathematics fell from 16 percent to 12 percent. You would expect that the scores for this smaller and more select group of students would be

much better, but that did not happen. Scores were slightly higher in algebra and slightly lower in geometry on the items that appeared on both the 1964 and 1982 assessments. Finland, which also participated in the two international assessments, increased the proportion of 18-year-olds taking college-prep mathematics from 7 percent to 15 percent and significantly improved students' mean scores.⁹

According to data gathered in connection with the First and Second International Science Studies, the percentage of Swedish 18-year-olds taking academic science courses also dropped from 45 percent in 1970 to 28 percent in 1983. Though this smaller group was surely more able, there was no real improvement in Sweden's scores on the international science exam. Again, Finland increased the proportion of its 18-year-olds who were studying science from 21 percent to 41 percent while improving its relative scores. Australia and Italy had declines in relative test scores, but they also greatly increased the proportion of students taking academic science courses. Hungary was the only other participating country to reduce the proportion of 18-year-olds taking the science exam, but it achieved a substantial improvement in relative test scores.¹⁰

If you simply look at the decline in the number of Swedish students taking advanced math and science courses from the standpoint of scores on international exams, it may not seem very serious. But when fewer secondary school students take demanding courses, fewer 18-year-olds become competent in math and science. This is a net loss in itself. It also means that fewer students have an adequate foundation to study these subjects in university and may lead to young people with talent in science and math starting their studies late or not starting at all. In either case, the society suffers a net loss.

The Regents' and Canadian Provincial Exams

Probably the best way to ascertain the effect of a curriculum-based external examination system is to study a single country where some jurisdictions have such examinations and others do not. Questions about the possible influence of cultural differences don't come up or at least are not as troubling. The only such exam in the U.S. that covers a majority of high school students in a jurisdiction is the New York State Regents'. Regents' exams were introduced in 1865 as a high school entrance test, but they have developed over the years into a system of external, curriculum-based exams. A student taking a full schedule of college-preparatory Regents' courses would take Regents' exams in mathematics and earth science at the end of ninth grade; mathematics, biology, and global studies at the end of 10th grade; mathematics, chemistry, English, American history, and foreign language at the end of 11th grade; and mathematics and physics at the end of 12th grade.

Does the existence of the Regents' exams affect student achievement? That is the best explanation of a recent study of SAT scores in New York and 37 other

states. The study found that, after controlling for parental education and race, New York state has the highest mean SAT scores of the 38 states with adequate numbers to be included in the study. The difference amounts to 46 points on the combined math and verbal SATs. That is 23 percent of a standard deviation, or three-quarters of a grade-level equivalent.¹¹ This occurred despite the fact that Regents' exams are not high-stakes in the sense that the French *baccalauréat* or the German *Abitur* are. Regents' grades account for less than half of the course grade and influence only the type of diploma received. Students do not need a passing score on Regents' exams to be admitted to community college, and employers ignore exam results when they make hiring decisions. The so-called Regents' Scholarships awarded by the state government are based on aptitude test scores, not Regents' results.

But Canada offers the most conclusive evidence for the positive effect of curriculum-based, external examinations. At the time the data used in this study were collected, 1990-91, the majority of Canada's 10 provinces had curriculum-based, external examinations. Alberta, British Columbia, Newfoundland, and Quebec had them in English, French, mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, and a number of other subjects. These exams accounted for 50 percent of the final grade in Alberta, Newfoundland, and Quebec and 40 percent in British Columbia. New Brunswick had such exams in language arts and mathematics but not in other subjects. Local school districts in New Brunswick decided how much weight was to be given to the exams. The other provinces had no curriculum-based provincial examinations. Ontario eliminated them in 1967, Manitoba in 1970, and Nova Scotia in 1972. Nova Scotia substituted multiple-choice, norm-referenced achievement tests. Manitoba reintroduced curriculum-based provincial exams in 1991.

When the Educational Testing Service canvassed countries about participating in the 1991 International Assessment of Educational Progress, Canada decided to collect enough data to compare the education systems of its ten provinces and the French- and English-speaking systems of the five provinces with dual systems. Over 39,000 Canadian 13-year-olds participated. Stratified random samples of 105 to 128 secondary schools were selected from the French-speaking school systems of Ontario and Quebec and from the English-speaking systems of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland.¹²

Random samples of 30 to 40 13-year-olds were selected from each school. Half were assigned to the mathematics assessment and half to the science assessment. Students and principals in participating schools answered questionnaires designed to probe differences in resources and in the attitudes and practices of students, teachers, and administrators between provinces that had external exams and those that did not. For example, the student questionnaires asked about the number of siblings, the language usually spoken at home, the number of hours spent doing homework, reading for pleasure, and watching TV; the availability of books and science and mathematics re-

sources in the home; and attitude toward science and math. Students were also asked to describe how frequently they were given tests or quizzes, listened to the teacher give a lesson, solved mathematics problems in groups, worked alone on mathematics problems, did experiments, watched the teacher perform experiments, and watched science films. The questionnaires that principals filled out asked them to describe school policies and resources and the qualifications of eighth-grade mathematics and science teachers.

WHAT EFFECT did external exams have on student achievement? After controlling for social background (which in this case meant the number of books in the home, the number of siblings, and whether or not a foreign language was spoken at home), students in the provinces that had exams scored, on average, nearly a grade-level equivalent higher in mathematics and about two-thirds of a grade-level equivalent higher in science than students in non-exam provinces. This is an impressive difference, but the differences in student achievement are not the whole story. When provinces with external exams were compared with provinces that did not have these exams, there were striking differences in every part of the educational system.

Students in the provinces with external exams watched 40 minutes less television a week and were four to six percentage points more likely to report that their parents wanted them to do well in math and science. They were also more likely to say that their parents talked to them about what they were learning in school. Do external exams cut down on reading for fun and non-school-related science activities? That is what critics predicted. In fact, pleasure reading was higher in provinces with external exams, and, while the numbers were not statistically significant, watching nature programs like "Nova" was also higher.

How do teachers respond when they are freed from the pressure to lower standards and pass everyone—a pressure to which American teachers are often subjected? Exactly what you would think—they focus more closely on academic goals. Teachers in provinces with exams gave more homework: Provincial exams are associated with students doing 45 additional minutes of homework per week. And they covered more difficult material. Emphasis on computation using whole numbers—a skill that should be learned by the end of fourth grade—was significantly lower for 13- to 14-year-olds in exam provinces.

In terms of the way administrators use their resources, the most striking difference between Canadian exam provinces and non-exam provinces was the big increase in the use of specialist teachers and teachers who took more university courses in the subject they teach. Administrators in provinces with exams reported hiring approximately 80 percent more specialist teachers in mathematics and science. There was an approximately 30 percent increase in the hiring of teachers who had majored in math and science. There was an increase in tracking in provinces with exams, which was associated with a slight increase in science scores.

(Continued on page 42)

A PHOTOGRAPHIC REMEMBRANCE

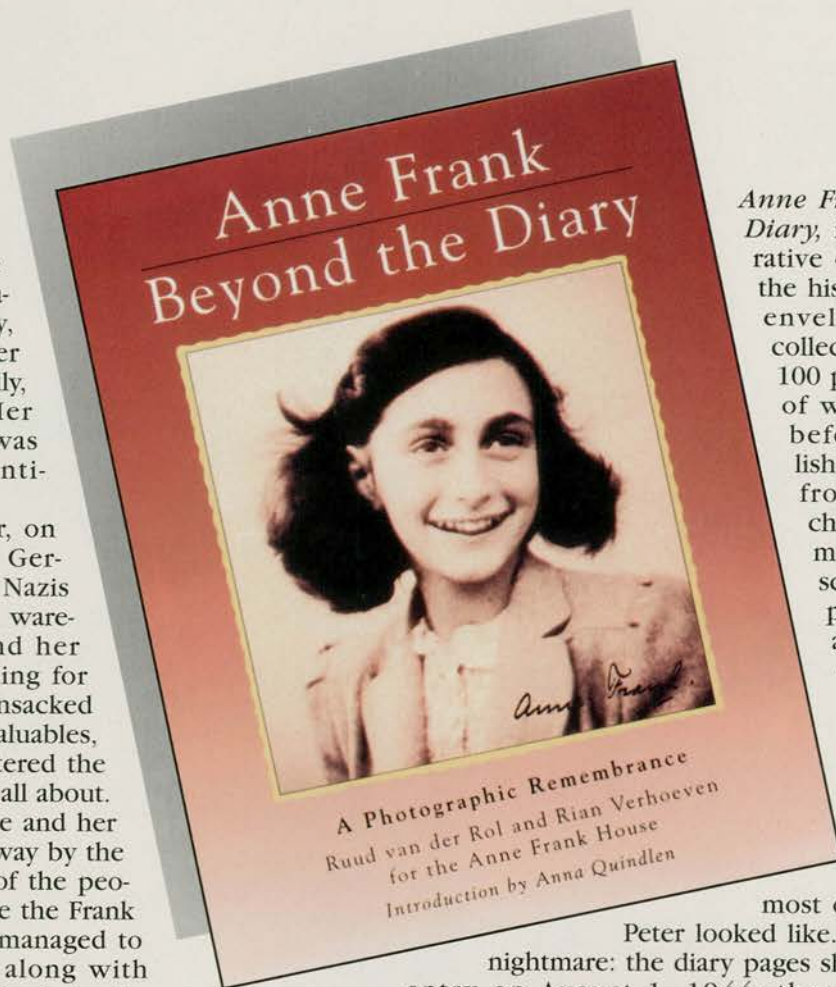
FIFTY YEARS ago, in March 1945, Anne Frank died at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany, three months shy of her 16th birthday. Technically, she died of typhus. Her real killer, of course, was the scourge of anti-Semitism.

Seven months earlier, on August 4, 1944, when German police and Dutch Nazis stormed the Amsterdam warehouse where Anne and her family had been in hiding for over two years, they ransacked the place, looking for valuables, and in the process scattered the pages from Anne's diary all about. Later that day, after Anne and her family had been taken away by the Nazis, Miep Gies—one of the people who had helped hide the Frank and Van Pels families—managed to retrieve Anne's diary, along with some of the Frank family's photo albums and a number of schoolbooks used by Anne, Margot, and Peter. After the war was over, Miep gave the diaries to Anne's father, Otto Frank, who was the only one of the group from the Secret Annex to survive the war. Fulfilling Anne's wish, Mr. Frank found a publisher, and an edited version of the diary was issued in an edition of 1,500 copies in the summer of 1947.

Eventually, the diary became world-famous. Now published in 55 languages, with more than 20 million copies sold, Anne's diary is destined to endure, testimony to the indestructibility of the human spirit.

For millions of young people, the diary has served as a vehicle for connecting their own lives to the innocent young people murdered by the Nazis. Adolescents recognize their own doubts and worries, hopes and enthusiasms in Anne's portrait of her adolescence. Seeing her on the threshold of life—as they are—yet knowing that her life soon will be crushed, they feel the horror of the Holocaust up close.

Now comes an extraordinary new book that will greatly enrich the reading of Anne's diary. Entitled



Anne Frank: Beyond the Diary, it combines a narrative of Anne's life and the historical events that enveloped her with a collection of more than 100 photographs, many of which have never before been published. We see scenes from Anne's idyllic childhood—her playmates, her first school, her devoted parents; the red-and-white plaid diary that she received for her 13th birthday; the hidden door to the Secret Annex; the table at which Anne wrote

most of the diary; what

Peter looked like. And then the full nightmare: the diary pages showing Anne's last entry on August 1, 1944; the transport list to Auschwitz, which includes the names of the Frank family; the unspeakable conditions of the concentration camps.

You will look at these photos and weep. And in so doing, Anne's voice will again triumph. As Ernst Schnabel wrote in 1958, "Her voice ... has outlasted the shouts of the murderers and has soared above the voices of time."

In the eight pages that follow, with the generous cooperation of the Anne Frank House, we reprint a selection of photos from *Anne Frank: Beyond the Diary*, along with text from the book. *Beyond the Diary* is co-authored by Ruud van der Rol, a sociologist, and Rian Verhoeven, a historian, both staff members of the Anne Frank House. The American publisher is Viking (the Penguin Group), and the book is available through any bookstore (\$17 in hardback). We encourage every school library and every classroom that takes up the story of Anne Frank to make this powerful, humanizing new book available to students.

—EDITOR

ANNE FRANK WAS BORN IN the German city of Frankfurt am Main on June 12, 1929. A keen photographer, Otto Frank took many photographs, especially of his children, and started a photo album for Anne.

"Papa with his kids" was the caption Anne later wrote in her photograph album for this picture (1930). Anne and Margot (who was three years older than Anne) were crazy about their father, and even had a pet name for him. Along with their mother Edith, they usually called him "Pim." Later Anne often used this name to refer to her father in her diary.

Before going to bed at night, Otto frequently invented stories for Anne and Margot, usually featuring two girls named Paula. One Paula was good and obeyed her parents, while the other Paula was disobedient and always got into mischief. ►

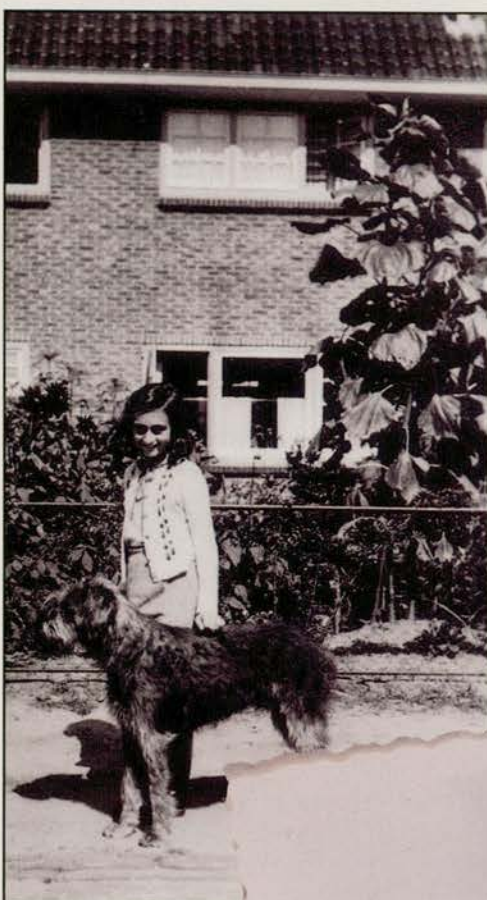
CREDITS AND PERMISSION: All photographs are from the collection of the Anne Frank House, © AFF/AFS, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and are used with permission, except as follows: Jewish children wearing Star of David; women at Auschwitz-Birkenau; and conditions at Bergen-Belsen, all courtesy of Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie. Anne and Margot's room, courtesy of Wubbo de Jong. The transport list to Auschwitz, courtesy of Rode Kruis, the Hague. Secret door to the Annex, courtesy of the Maria Austria Institute.

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IN 1933, ANNE, MARGOT, AND EDITH WENT TO live with Edith's mother in Aachen. With Hitler taking more and more measures against the Jews, the Frank family feared what the future might hold if they stayed in Germany. When Otto Frank received an offer to start a new company in Amsterdam, the family decided to move to the Netherlands. This photograph was taken by a photographer in Aachen, and was probably sent to Otto Frank. By this time, he had already been in Amsterdam for a few months, starting up the business and looking for a new house. ▼

ANNE IN 1939. ANNE'S INTERESTS NOW were laughing, history, movie stars, Greek mythology, writing, cats, dogs, and boys. She had a large circle of friends and enjoyed going to parties with them and to the ice-cream parlor called Oasis in her neighborhood. Anne rode her bike to school every day, where she often got into trouble for talking in class with her friends, a habit which earned her a lot of extra homework. ▼



WHEN ANNE PUT THIS PHOTOGRAPH in her diary, she wrote underneath: *This is June 1939 Margot and I had just got out of the water and I still remember how terribly cold I was, that's why I put on my bathrobe, Granny sitting there at the back so sweetly and peacefully. Just as she was wont to do.*

This was one of Margot and Anne's last trips to the beach. On May 10, 1940, Hitler invaded the Netherlands. The German Army had

caught up with the Frank family and there was no place left for them to flee. Newspapers became increasingly filled with articles ridiculing Jews, but Otto and Edith tried to keep this from their daughters as much as possible.

In reality, Anne and Margot's parents were extremely worried about what the future held for them and other Jews in the Netherlands. ►





AT THE END OF 1940, ▲ All Dutch people had to register with the authorities, so the Germans knew the names and addresses of all Dutch Jews. In November 1940, all Jewish civil servants were dismissed. The following year, all Dutch

citizens were given an identity card, a sort of internal passport. The cards of Jews were stamped with a "J." With every Jew now easily identifiable, the same laws which had been enacted against Jews in Germany were steadily

introduced in the Netherlands. From May 1942, all Jews aged six and above had to wear a yellow Star of David with the word "Jew" written in the middle, one of the measures designed to identify and isolate Jews.

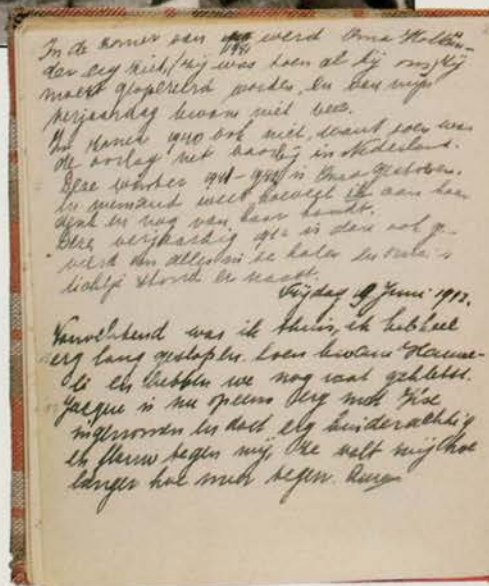
ANNE WAS GIVEN HER ▲ diary on her 13th birthday, June 12, 1942. She had never had a diary before and was delighted with the gift. Anne had many friends, both boys and girls, but with them she talked only about everyday things. But now Anne's diary would be her very best friend, a friend she could trust with everything. She called her new friend "Kitty."

On the first page of her diary Anne wrote: *I hope I shall be able to confide in you completely, as I have never been able to do in anyone before,*

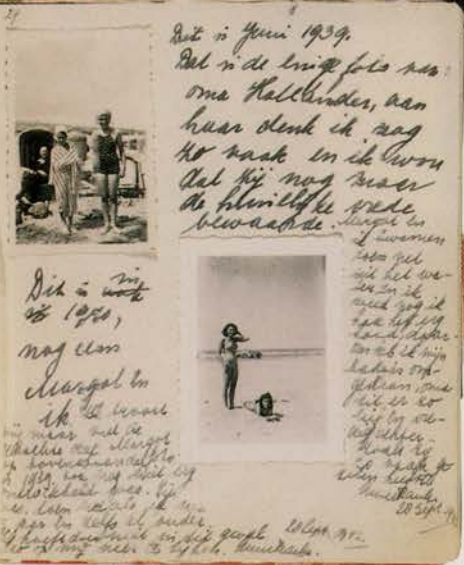
and I hope you will be a great support and comfort to me. Anne Frank (June 12, 1942)

Anne started writing to Kitty in her diary two days later, on Sunday, June 14. She would continue filling it for just over two years with her thoughts and feelings, and stories about all the things that happened to her. But on that first day, she could not suspect how her life was suddenly to change completely. Nor could she imagine that later millions of people

throughout the world would read her diary. ▼



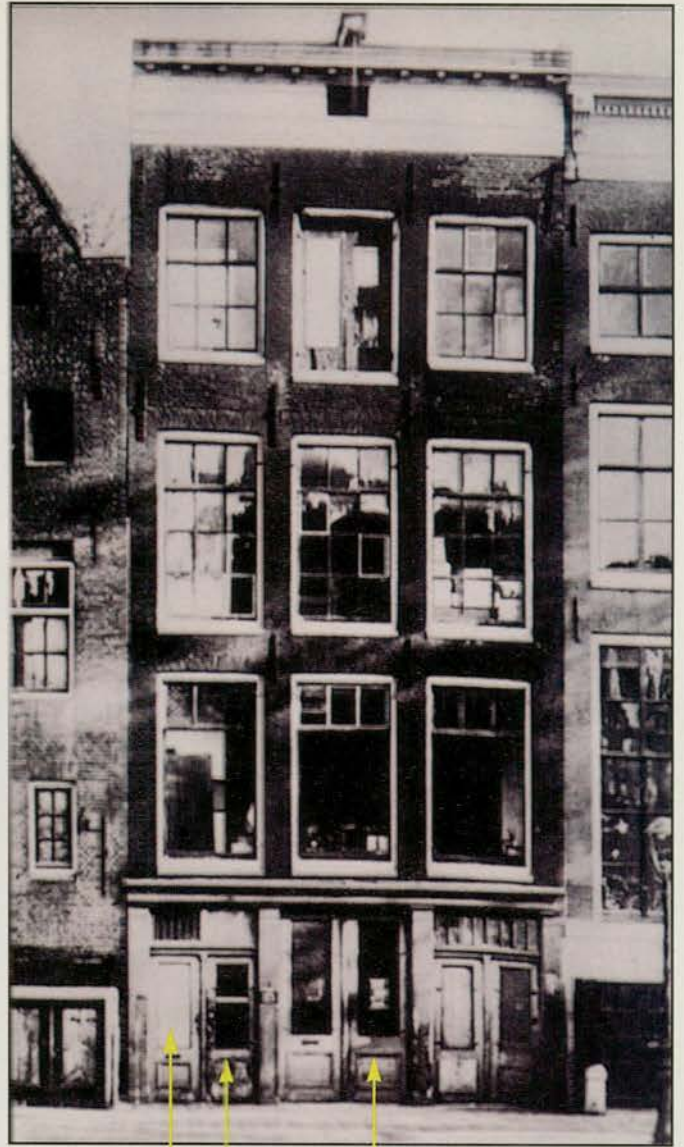
ANNE ALSO STUCK ▲ photographs in her diary and wrote comments next to them. She wrote this page on Friday, June 19, 1942. On September 28, 1942, she added a few words. Later she stuck some loose sheets in her diary whenever she wanted to add something.



ON MONDAY, JUNE ▲ 29, 1942, every Dutch newspaper ran an announcement that the German occupiers had decided to deport all Jews to labor camps in Germany. Anne's family had secretly been making plans to go into hiding, and very early on the morning of July 6, 1942, they left their house on Merwedeplein and moved into the "Secret Annex."

In departing their home of more than eight years, the family had left most of their possessions behind. Their cat, Moortje, also had to remain. Anne wrote: *No one knows how often I think of her; whenever I think of her I get tears in my eyes.* (July 12, 1942)

This is possibly the last photograph taken of Anne Frank. In 1942, Jews were forbidden to take pictures, though photographs could be taken of them. No photographs were taken in the years the Frank family spent in hiding—they all had other things on their minds.



THE FACADE OF OTTO ▲ Frank's offices, number 263 Prinsengracht. The warehouse (1) was on the ground floor. The door farthest to the left (2), led to the storage space on the third and fourth floors. The door next to it (3) led to the office on the second floor.

There is another door at the top of the stairs with a frosted glass window in it which has "Office" written in black letters across it. This is the large main office, very big, very light, and very full. Bep, Miep

and Mr. Kleiman work there in the daytime. (July 9, 1942)

Behind this office was a smaller office where Mr. Van Pels used to work with Victor Kugler. Now Victor Kugler worked there alone. The two top floors were used as storage space. Behind this house was another house, not visible from the road, which was connected to number 263 Prinsengracht by a small corridor. This was the Secret Annex.



ANNE AND MARGOT'S ▲ room. Our little room looked very bare at first with nothing on the walls; but thanks to Daddy who had brought my picture postcards and film-star collection on beforehand, and with the aid of paste pot and brush I have transformed the walls into one gigantic picture. This makes it look much more cheerful. (July 11, 1942)

Anne wrote most of her diary at the table in this room. This photograph was taken after the war, when the room was temporarily furnished according to the instructions of Otto Frank and Miep Gies. Now the room stands empty.



WHEN THE FRANK FAMILY moved into the Secret Annex on July 6, this bookcase had not yet been built, and a single door led to the Annex rooms. Anne wrote: *No one would ever guess that there would be so many rooms hidden behind that plain door painted gray. There's a little step in front of the door and then you are inside.* (July 9, 1942).

For safety's sake, it was necessary to hide this en-

trance. Over a month later Anne wrote in her diary:

*Dear Kitty,
The entrance to our hiding place has now been properly concealed. Mr. Kugler thought it would be better to put a cupboard in front of our door...but of course it had to be a movable cupboard that can open like a door. Mr. Voskuijl made the whole thing.... (We had already let Mr. Voskuijl into the secret*

and he can't do enough to help.) If we want to go downstairs we have to first bend down and then jump. The first 3 days we were all going about with masses of lumps on our foreheads because we all knocked ourselves against the low doorway. So Feter has made it as soft as possible by nailing a cloth filled with wool against the top of the door. Let's see if that helps! (August 21, 1942)



THE FAMILIES' SURVIVAL IN ▲ the Secret Annex completely depended upon their helpers, who were all close colleagues of Otto Frank and current office staff. From left to right: Miep Gies, Johannes Kleiman, Otto Frank, Victor Kugler, and Bep Voskuijl.



PPETER VAN PELS. ANNE described Peter's arrival in the Secret Annex as follows: *At nine-thirty in the morning (we were still having breakfast) Peter arrived, the v.Ps' son, not sixteen yet, rather soft, shy, gawky youth; can't expect much from his company.* (August 14, 1942) ▶



ON JULY 21, 1944, ANNE WAS HAPPY and optimistic. The news about the war seemed hopeful. Eleven days later, she made one last entry in her diary. On August 4 between ten o'clock and half past ten in the morning, the German police stormed the Secret Annex. They had been betrayed. Who betrayed the hiding place to the Germans remains a mystery to this day.



THE FAMILY SPENT FOUR days locked in a holding cell. Then on August 8 they were transferred to the Westerbork camp. They stayed there for the whole month of August in the so-called "punishment barracks." They were considered "punishable prisoners" since they had not given themselves up when the call-up notices were sent but had been captured in hiding.

On September 3, 1944, the eight prisoners joined a thousand others on the last train bound for the Auschwitz death camp in Poland. They were cooped up in a boxcar for days, crammed together with about seventy other people, and arrived in Auschwitz on the night of September 5. More than half of the people were killed in the gas chambers the very next day, including nearly all the children under 15. Since Anne had just had her 15th birthday, she was spared. The men and women were

separated, most never to see each other again. The women had to walk to the women's camp in Birkenau. Edith Frank and her two daughters stayed together. Mrs. Van Pels also went to the women's camp.

Otto Frank, Hermann and Peter Van Pels, and Fritz Pfeffer went to the men's camp.

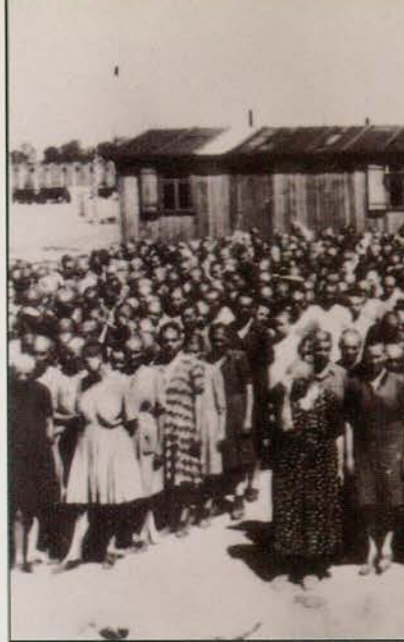
The list pictured here gives the names of people on the last transport from Westerbork to Auschwitz, including the names of the Frank family.

WHEN ANNE, MARGOT, and their mother arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau, their heads were shaved and numbers were tattooed on their arms. About 39,000 women were in this camp. ▶

ANNE AND MARGOT HAD TO leave their mother behind in Auschwitz at the end of October 1944. Like Mrs. Van Pels, the two girls were transferred to the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. There, too, the conditions were indescribable. It was icy cold, and there was hardly anything to eat. The camp was overcrowded, and contagious diseases spread unchecked.

Edith Frank survived in Auschwitz for another two months. She died on January 6, 1945.

Margot died in March 1945. A few days later, Anne died as well. The camp was liberated by British soldiers a few weeks later in April. ▶

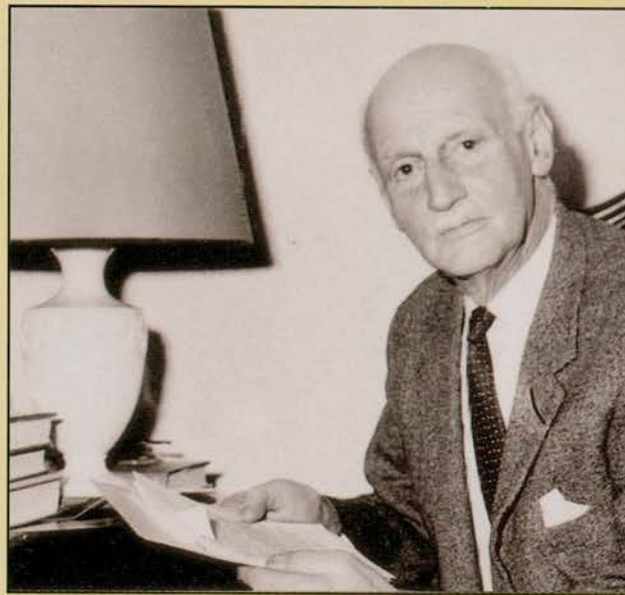


5 Judentransport aus den Niederlanden - Lager Westerbork
3. September 1944 Blatt 7

amHaeflinge			
301. Angers	Isidor	30.4. 93	Kaufmann
302. Angers	Leonard	13.6. 20	Landerbeiter
303. Franco	Manfred	1.5. 05	Verlager
304. Frank	Arthur	22.8. 81	Kaufmann
305. Frank	Issac	29.11.87	Installateur
306. Frank	Margot	16.2. 26	ohne
307. Frank	Otto	12.5. 89	Kaufmann
308. Frank-Hollaender	Edith	16.1. 00	ohne
309. Frank	Anneliese	12.6. 29	ohne
310. v. Frank	Sara	27.4. 02	Typistin
311. Franken	Abraham	16.5. 96	Landerbeiter
312. Franken-Weyand	Johanna	24.12.96	Landbauer
313. Franken	Hermann	12.5. 34	ohne
314. Franken	Louis	10.8. 17	Gaertner
315. Franken	Rosalina	29.3. 27	Landbau
316. Frankfort	Alex	14.11.19	Dr. i. d. Oekonomie
317. Frankfort-Elzas	Regina	11.12.19	Apoth. -ass.
318. Frankfort	Elias	22.10.98	Schneider
319. Frankfort	Max	20.8. 21	Schneider
320. Frankfort-Wehl	Betty	25.3. 24	Kuecherin
321. Frankfort-Werkendam	Rozette	24.6. 98	Schriftstellerin
322. Frjude	Herman	22.6. 87	Hochschullehrer
323. Frenk	Henriette	28.4. 21	Typistin
324. Frenk	Rosa	15.3. 24	Haushalthilfe
325. Friezer	Isaac	10.3. 20	Korrespondent
326. Fruitman-Vlessche- drager	Fenny	24.1. 03	ohne
	Elie	24.10.03	Betriebleiter
	Gesina	20.12.03	Maschinenstrickarin
327. Gans	Klaan	6.3. 79	Diamantbearb.
328. Gans-Koopman		12.5. 13	Kuecherin
			Landbauer



OTTO FRANK, ANNE'S father, was the only member of the group from the Secret Annex to survive the war. It was he who arranged for Anne's diary to be published, and he devoted the rest of his life to spreading Anne's ideas and ideals. He died in 1980, in Switzerland, at the age of 91. He donated the pages of Anne's diary to the State of the Netherlands.



AFTER THE WAR, THE house where the Frank family had gone into hiding, number 263 Prinsengracht in Amsterdam, continued to be used as a business office. By 1957, it had fallen into such disrepair that there were plans to demolish it. Many people opposed the demolition, some of whom joined Otto Frank in setting up the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam.

They succeeded in saving the building, which was opened to the public in 1960. Visitors to the premises of numbers 263 and 265 Prinsengracht can not only see the Secret Annex, but can also view exhibitions set up throughout the building on anti-Semitism, the history and ideology of the Nazis, and the Netherlands during the Second World War, as well as a display of the original diaries of Anne Frank. Attention is also given to contemporary examples of intolerance, racism, discrimination, and anti-Semitism.

Every year the Anne Frank House is visited by about 600,000 people from all over the world.



FACT SHEET ON VOUCHERS

Argument and Evidence

PROPONENTS OF a market system of education would like to give parents vouchers to use at elementary and secondary schools of their choice—public or private, religious or non-religious. They argue that vouchers will give low-income parents the same choices enjoyed by more advantaged parents, and that vouchers will improve public education by forcing schools to compete for students. Opponents dispute these claims. They say that vouchers are more likely to increase inequality than lessen it. They say that market forces cannot be depended upon to improve education. And they say that the “choice” offered parents and students would mostly be a hollow one, because private school choice really means that the private school does the choosing.

Advocates of vouchers also claim that private schools outperform public schools. Voucher opponents argue that they do not. Similarly, advocates say vouchers will save money, while opponents say they will increase costs.

What does the evidence tell us?

ADMISSION POLICIES

Voucher proponents claim that private school choice will open up an unlimited range of educational options for families, who would presumably pick from any number of high-quality schools. However, private school choice is not exactly a two-way street. Parents may want to choose a private school, but the school doesn't have to pick their child. As shown below, private schools

Fact Sheet on Vouchers *was compiled by the American Federation of Teachers (September 1995). Permission is granted to photocopy these pages. The document is also available as a bound booklet. A single copy may be obtained free of charge by writing the AFT Order Dept., 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. Ask for Item #111.*

screen students, most typically using more than one admission requirement. In contrast, public schools (with the limited exception of examination and some magnet schools) must accept all students.

The statistics about private school admission policies cited below are from the U.S. Department of Education, 1995.

- Virtually all elementary and secondary private schools impose some requirement, or combination of requirements, for admission of students. In both elementary and secondary private schools, a personal interview is the most frequently used admission requirement.
- For private elementary schools, the most commonly used admission requirements, next to personal interview (45.5 percent), are students' academic record (36.2 percent); special admissions test (23.7 percent); religious affiliation (21 percent); recommendations (19.1 percent); and standardized achievement test (18.3 percent). (Other or additional admission requirements may be used, but they are less common.) As the totals indicate, private elementary schools typically use more than one admission requirement, with the combinations varying according to type of private school.
- For private secondary schools (which include secondary and combined K-12 schools), the most commonly used admission requirements, next to personal interview (64.4 percent), are academic record (52.9 percent); recommendations (39.3 percent); special admissions test (36.2 percent); and standardized achievement test (29.2 percent). Again, private secondary schools typically use more than one admission requirement, with the combinations varying according to type of private school. The admission requirements listed here are not an exhaustive list.

(Continued on page 31)

IS SCHOOL PRIVATIZATION THE ANSWER?

Data from Other Countries Help Burst the Voucher Bubble

BY MARTIN CARNOY

FOR CONSERVATIVES and even some liberals, privatizing public schools has become the solution to the nation's "education crisis." Given American values about competition and choice, this sounds like a great idea, especially since the discussion is unclouded by empirical data on educational systems where there is choice and privatization. Yet such systems do exist, and—contrary to present claims—their experience suggests that voucher plans promise a lot but may actually make most children in schools worse off.

According to conservatives, the main problem with public schools is that they are public—they are managed by government bureaucracies and staffed by unionized, tenured, and

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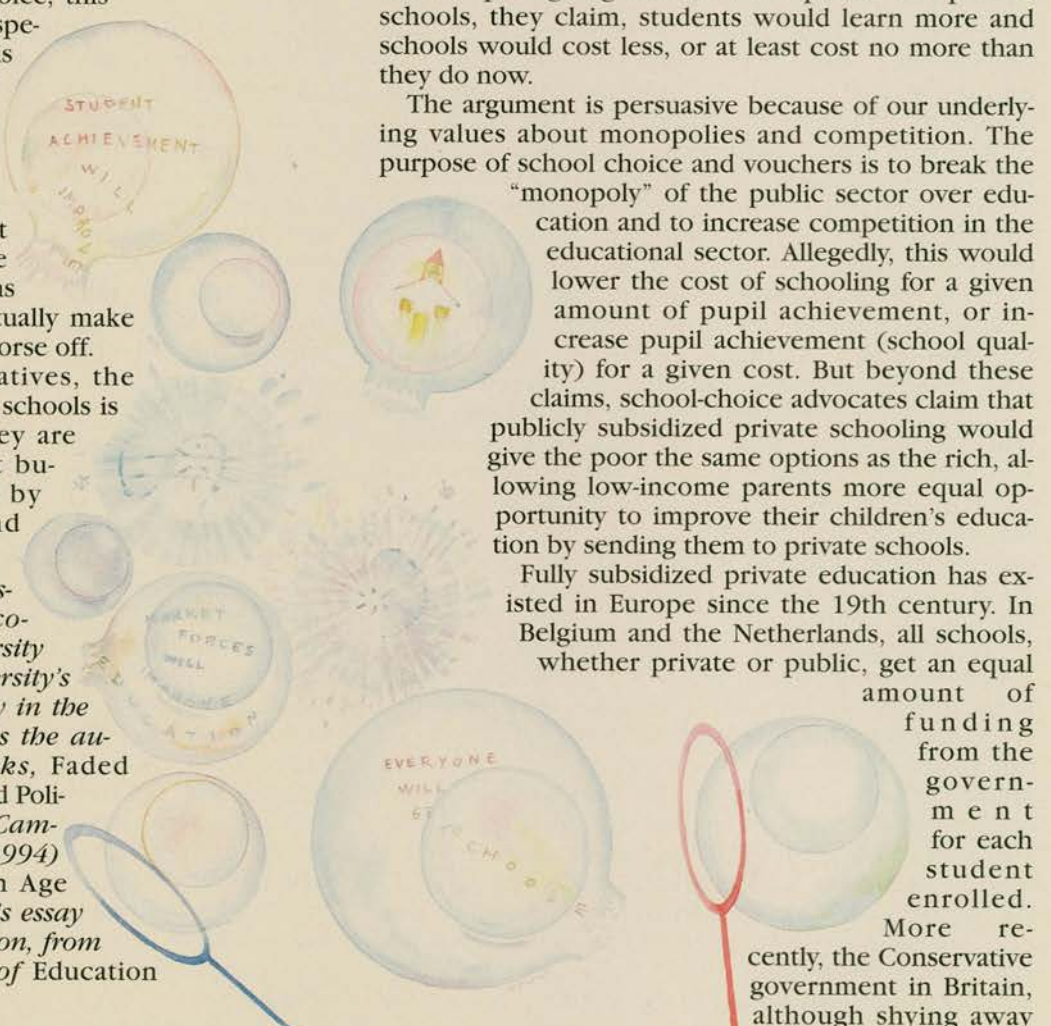
largely unaccountable teachers. If only we could hire private management companies to run public school districts or, even better, get a "voucher" or "school choice" plan going that included public and private schools, they claim, students would learn more and schools would cost less, or at least cost no more than they do now.

The argument is persuasive because of our underlying values about monopolies and competition. The purpose of school choice and vouchers is to break the "monopoly" of the public sector over education and to increase competition in the educational sector. Allegedly, this would lower the cost of schooling for a given amount of pupil achievement, or increase pupil achievement (school quality) for a given cost. But beyond these claims, school-choice advocates claim that publicly subsidized private schooling would give the poor the same options as the rich, allowing low-income parents more equal opportunity to improve their children's education by sending them to private schools.

Fully subsidized private education has existed in Europe since the 19th century. In Belgium and the Netherlands, all schools, whether private or public, get an equal

amount of funding from the government for each student enrolled.

More recently, the Conservative government in Britain, although shying away



from instituting a voucher plan, did develop an Assisted Places Scheme in the 1980s, designed to help youths from low-income families attend the high-cost independent private schools. And in 1991, the Conservative Party in Sweden implemented a nationwide voucher plan.

John Ambler's analysis of school-choice plans in Britain, France, and the Netherlands ("Who Benefits From Educational Choice? Some Evidence From Europe," *Journal of Policy and Management*, 1994) shows that "the primary negative effect of school choice is its natural tendency to increase the educational gap between the privileged and the underprivileged." Even though the gap already existed in public schooling, the European data suggest that providing subsidies for private education benefits higher-income families even more.

Mr. Ambler's conclusions about the equity effects of privatization in Europe are based primarily on the socioeconomic makeup of those pupils who take advantage of private education, not what happens to different young people from various social classes when they are in public and private schools. But there is a well-developed, long-operating voucher plan in Chile where pupils have been assessed regularly. The Chilean plan, begun in 1980 under the Pinochet government as part of an overall Chilean "de-governmentalization" free-market package, meets almost all the choice with equity advocates' conditions for educational reform, including mushrooming fully subsidized, privately run, completely unregulated voucher schools competing head-on for pupils with municipality-run public schools in all metropolitan neighborhoods, from middle-class suburbs to low-income barrios.

What were the results of this reform? The first was that even when parents' contributions are included, total spending on education fell quite sharply after increasing in the early 1980s. In 1985, the federal contribution was 80 percent of total educational spending, and total spending was 5.3 percent of the gross national product. Five years later, the federal portion was 68 percent of the total, and the total had fallen to 3.7 percent of the G.N.P. So private spending rose but not quickly enough to offset an 18 percent drop in real federal contributions.

The second result was that in Chile, as in Europe, those who took advantage of the subsidized private schools were predominantly middle- and higher-income families. Of families in the lower 40 percent of the income distribution in 1990, 72 percent attended municipal public schools. In the next-highest 40 percent, only 51 percent of families sent their children to public schools, with 43 percent in subsidized private school. And in the top 20 percent of income, only 25 percent had their children in public schools, 32 percent in subsidized private, and 43 percent in paid private schools. So with the 1980 reform, fewer public resources went to the poor and the middle class, but the

middle class and the rich were able to meet the decline with their own resources. The poor were not.

THE THIRD result was that the increases in pupil achievement predicted by voucher proponents appear to have never occurred. Scores in Spanish and mathematics from two nationally standardized cognitive-achievement tests implemented in 1982 and 1988 for fourth graders registered a national decline of 14 percent and 6 percent, respectively. According to the World Bank economist Juan Prawda, the test scores fell most for low-income students in public schools, but they also fell for low-income students in subsidized private schools. Middle-income students had small increases in test scores whether they were in public or subsidized private schools. Subsequent tests in 1990 showed increases over 1988 of 9 percent in Spanish and 11 percent in math, but this still left scores about the same as in 1982. Middle-income students averaged higher scores on these tests in private schools than in public, but lowest-income students tended to do better in public schools. Taryn Rounds's estimates of pupil achievement as a function of type of school, location, parents' education, and students' socioeconomic class using the 1990 test results confirm that lower-social-class students did better in public schools on both the Spanish and math tests, and middle-class students did better in subsidized private schools.

Because low-income parents were less able to add private contributions to the voucher amounts, private schools in Chile were apparently not that interested in doing any better than public schools with lower-income pupils. And if the declining scores in Chile's municipal public schools mean anything, it is that increased competition had a negative effect on teachers and children, and that the Chilean voucher plan contributed to greater inequality in pupil achievement without improving the overall quality of education.

Neither had the private schools cost any less, even though they paid their teachers lower salaries. Indeed, many teachers taught both in private and public schools, double shifting. Government made no effort to improve the curriculum, the quality of teaching, or the management of education, since this was supposed to happen spontaneously through increased competition among schools vying for students. It did not. Yet, the test-score results suggest that the poor still made the right choice in sending their children to municipal schools, since they do better there.

THE LESSONS for us here in the United States are obvious, but not ones that privatization advocates want known. Voucher plans increase inequality without making schools better. Even more significantly, privatization reduces the public effort to improve schooling since it relies on the free market to increase achievement, but the increase never occurs.

What is most disturbing about this reality is that the privatization movement in this country is gaining just when pupils from all groups, especially those who have traditionally not done as well in school, are making significant achievement gains, and they are doing it because public education is getting better—without vouchers. □

FACT SHEET ON VOUCHERS

(Continued from page 28)

- At the secondary level, Catholic schools, especially Catholic Private-Order schools, tend to use personal interview, special admissions tests, standardized achievement tests, academic record, and recommendations more often than do other categories of private schools. At both the elementary and secondary levels, private schools affiliated with the National Association of Independent Schools have the highest use of every one of these five most common admissions requirements.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Voucher advocates often claim that private schools do a better job with the same kinds of students, particularly with disadvantaged children from inner cities. However, the evidence shows otherwise. Because private schools handpick their students and charge tuition, their students come from more advantaged backgrounds than public school students. Even when private schools serve disadvantaged children from inner cities, they are usually selecting those with the most family support and motivation to succeed.

- In a study of eighth-graders, the U.S. Department of Education found that 12 percent attend private schools. But only 2 percent of the eighth-graders whose parents had not finished high school were enrolled in a private school. By contrast, more than 20 percent of eighth-graders whose parents were college graduates were enrolled in private school. (U.S. Department of Education, 1990)
- Similarly, when the U.S. Department of Education compared the socioeconomic status (SES)—which reflects family income, parent education, and parental occupation—of American eighth-graders, private schools came out far ahead. Overall, 46 percent of private school students fell into the top SES quartile, and only 8 percent fell into the bottom quartile. By contrast, only 22 percent of public school students fell into the top SES quartile, and 27 percent fell into the bottom quartile. (U.S. Department of Education, 1990)
- Even in urban areas, private school students are more advantaged than their public school counterparts. Among Catholic school eighth-graders in urban areas, only 12 percent fall into the lowest SES quartile, compared with 34 percent of eighth-graders in urban public schools. (Sebring and Camburn, 1992)
- 86 percent of public schools provide special education, compared with only 17 percent of private schools. (U.S. Department of Education, 1995)

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Many argue that private schools do better than public schools on most measures of student achievement. However, the private school edge is usually small and disappears when one compares students of similar background in each type of school. Thus, what

What voucher advocates claim is the superiority of private school education is instead explained by student background characteristics.

voucher advocates claim is the superiority of private school education is instead explained by student background characteristics. In fact, private school achievement should be much better than it is because private school students come from much more advantaged backgrounds than public school students do.

- After four years of Milwaukee's pilot voucher program for low-income students, researchers found that voucher students in the private schools are not achieving better in math or reading than low-income students who remained in Milwaukee public schools. (Witte, Thorn, Pritchard, and Claibourn, 1994)
- Catholic high school students slightly outperformed public high school students on achievement tests taken during the federal High School and Beyond study, but student and family characteristics accounted for most of the gap. Moreover, Catholic and public school students who had taken the same courses scored the same on the achievement tests. (Witte, 1992)
- Private school eighth- and 12th-graders have slightly higher average scores on math and science tests from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. However, the private school students had no advantage over public school students who had taken similar courses in math and science. Similarly, private and public school scores were about the same for students with the same level of parental education. (Data from the 1990 National Assessment of Educational Progress, presented in Shanker, 1991)
- Private school 10th-graders also did better in math than their public school counterparts in another federal study, the National Education Longitudinal Study, that began following eighth-graders in 1988. However, the public school students often outperformed private school peers with similar backgrounds. For example, of middle-class 10th-grade students who had taken algebra, 25 percent of public school students reached the two top performance levels in math, compared with only 8 percent of private school students. (U.S. Department of Education, 1993a)
- After studying 70 public and private schools, *Money* magazine concluded that students who attend the best public schools outperform most private school students, that the best public schools offer a more challenging curriculum than most private schools, and that the private school advantage in test scores is due to their selective admission policies. (Topolnicki, 1994)

MARKETS AND THEIR EFFECT ON EDUCATION

The academic theories about market competition in education are largely untested. However, evidence about the public and private sectors in elementary and secondary education, from the higher education sector, and from choice programs in the United States and abroad suggest how "free" education markets may work.

- Free and fair competition in any sector requires that all participants play by the same rules. However, private schools are mostly exempt from public rules concerning admission, due process, curriculum, teacher qualifications, oversight, special education, student testing, and financial accountability. Most voucher plans would continue to exempt private schools from most forms of public oversight. For example, an initiative rejected by California voters in 1993 would have given parents \$2,600 vouchers to use at almost any school that could enroll 25 students. Private schools would have been allowed to discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, disability, and prior academic or behavioral record, and still receive taxpayer funds.
- Public school choice programs suggest that choice by itself does little to improve education. For example, a study prepared for the U.S. Department of Education found that only 4 percent of students chose a school in Minnesota's open enrollment program and concluded that it had little impact on school district finances, educational programs, or outcomes. (U.S. Department of Education, 1994a and 1994b)
- A study of choice in Britain, France, and the Netherlands found that private school choice increased social and economic segregation of students because higher-income and better-educated parents had more knowledge, resources, and motivation to pick a school for their children than did lower-income and less-educated parents (Ambler, 1994). And after a voucher plan was implemented in Chile in 1980, overall student achievement did not increase, and performance declined for low-income students in public and private schools (Carnoy, 1995).
- Because most voucher proposals offer between \$1,000 and \$3,500 per student, they may not give parents much choice of private schools. Although tuition in private elementary schools averaged only \$1,780 nationwide in 1990-91 (the most recent year for which figures are available), tuition at private secondary schools averaged \$4,395 that same year. Tuition at non-religious schools in 1990-91 averaged \$3,748 for elementary schools and \$9,625 for secondary schools. (U.S. Department of Education, 1995)
- The nation's private schools, which are almost entirely non-profit, have little room to expand. Nationwide, private schools have been shrinking: enrollment dropped from 5.22 million students in 1987-88 to 4.67 million in 1990-91 (U.S. Department of Education, 1995). After surveying private schools in Texas, researchers from the University of Texas at

Austin concluded that only 2 percent of students eligible for a proposed voucher plan would find spaces in those schools (Dougherty and Becker, 1995). Therefore, the most likely source of expansion in private schools due to a voucher program would be entrepreneurs who enter education to make a profit. With little oversight by the public, there would be no way of judging entrepreneurs' qualifications to educate children. And if the experience of small business is a guide, the failure rate of these new private schools would be high, destabilizing children's education.

- A publicly funded, unregulated "market" system in postsecondary education has been accompanied by widespread fraud. For example, proprietary-school entrepreneurs padded enrollment figures, inflated job placement data, and trained people for jobs that did not exist so they could make a profit at the public's expense. One trade school in New York City that offered an independent study course without classrooms, teachers, books, or supplies received \$22 million in federal Pell Grants over a decade by listing entire families and neighborhoods as its students, 97 percent of whom received the federal grants. (U.S. Senate, Subcommittee on Investigations, 1991, and Winerip, 1994)
- Although American higher education is often hailed for the quality of its elite institutions, most of our colleges and universities have lowered standards in the competition for tuition and federal student aid dollars. In our market system of higher education:
 - Many colleges accept students without regard to grades or SAT scores, and 89 percent of four-year colleges offer some form of remedial instruction or tutoring. (U.S. Department of Education, 1994c)
 - Only half of full-time entrants to four-year colleges have earned a college degree six years later. (U.S. Department of Education, 1994c)
 - In a recent literacy study of American adults, 15 percent to 20 percent of college graduates lacked the skills that would enable them to understand an appliance warranty, apply for a Social Security card, or compute the costs of purchasing different items on an order form. (U.S. Department of Education, 1993b)

COST

Voucher proponents argue that private schools are more efficient than public schools and cost less per pupil. But vouchers may end up costing taxpayers more than they spend now for education.

- If families get a voucher for each child, parents with children already in private school would get vouchers, too. If all of the 4.67 million children now in private school got a voucher, the cost to taxpayers would be almost \$5 billion a year if the voucher were \$1,000 and \$14 billion annually if the voucher were \$3,000—a huge expense before a single child switches schools.

If the experience of small business is a guide, the failure rate of new private schools would be high, destabilizing children's education.

- Although the average private school tuition is lower (\$3,625 in 1990-91) than costs per pupil in public schools (\$5,410 in 1990-91), these comparisons are misleading because private schools are heavily subsidized by churches, alumni, boards of trustees, and the public (through aid for transportation and textbook costs, or the federal school lunch and Title I programs, to cite a few examples). Private school costs would also rise if private schools served as many disabled, limited-English proficient, and otherwise disadvantaged students as public schools do. (The private school tuition statistic is from U.S. Department of Education, 1995, and the figure for public school spending is from U.S. Department of Education, 1994c.)
- Another reason why private schools cost less than public schools is that private school teachers are poorly paid. In 1990-91, private school teachers were paid only \$18,713 on average, while public school teachers were paid an average of \$30,751. Low teacher pay in private schools contributes to higher teacher turnover: one of every eight private school teachers leaves his or her school each year, compared with one of every 12 public school teachers. (U.S. Department of Education, 1995)
- Vouchers will increase costs for public information and transportation if families are to have real choices in education. In Montclair, New Jersey, transportation costs grew by \$1.5 million annually after public school choice was implemented throughout the district. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, transportation costs more than doubled from \$173,000 in 1981-82, before public school choice was introduced, to \$407,000 in 1991-92. (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1992)
- Bureaucracy would grow considerably under a voucher program because there would have to be some way to enforce at least minimal standards for health, safety, civil rights, and educational quality at private institutions receiving public funds. If private enterprises open and close in an education market as frequently as they do in the rest of the economy, regulation will probably be more cumbersome and expensive than it is for schools that are owned and operated directly by the public.
- Private schools are no more efficient than public schools in containing costs, despite public perceptions to the contrary. Between 1987-88 and 1990-91,

average tuition at private schools grew 34 percent, from \$2,622 to \$3,524 (U.S. Department of Education, 1995). During the same period, public school expenses per child rose 27 percent, from \$4,310 to \$5,486. (U.S. Department of Education, 1994c) □

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ALL OF US HAVE COME TO AMERICA

Broadening Student Understanding of the American Ethnic Experience

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING EUROPEAN ETHNIC LITERATURE

BY SANDRA STOTSKY

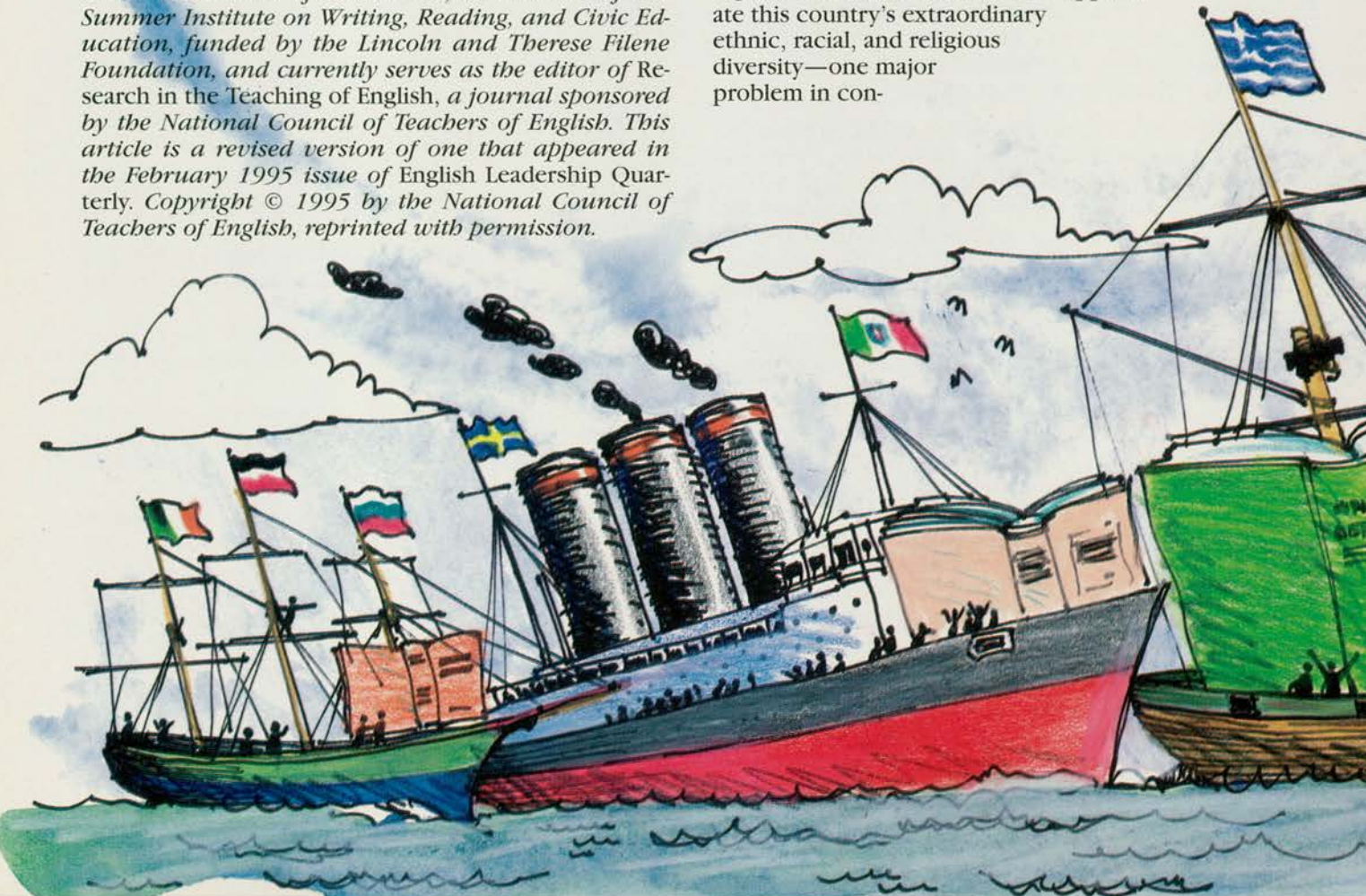
IN RECENT years, there has been a tendency, at least in high school literature anthologies, to focus chiefly on works by or about the experiences of African Americans, native American Indian groups, Spanish-speaking immigrants, and immigrants from certain Asian countries, such as Japan, China, and those in Southeast Asia, in addition to works about a seemingly monolithic "white" America.

It is commendable that publishers are now includ-

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ing in their anthologies larger numbers of works about social groups in this country and elsewhere that were previously slighted in literature programs. All students should be able to see the multiethnic and multiracial nature of this country (and of the world) in the literature they are asked to read. They should also be able to see members of different ethnic and racial groups as leading characters in what they read, so that as readers they have opportunities to identify with all types of human beings.

However—although this literature should be helping our students understand and appreciate this country's extraordinary ethnic, racial, and religious diversity—one major problem in con-



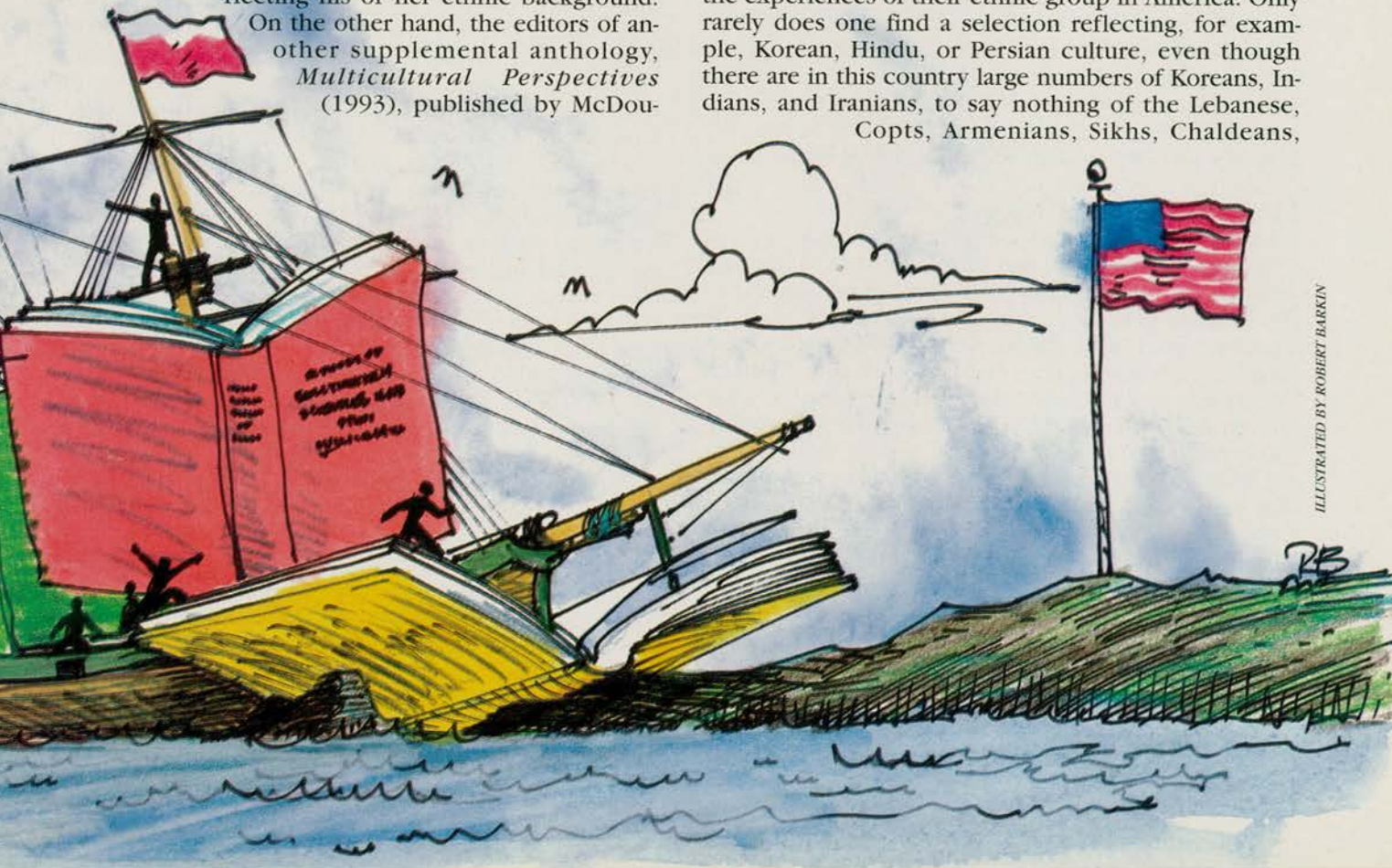
temporary secondary school anthologies is the paucity of works about the acculturating experiences of the dozens of European ethnic groups that have been migrating to this country since the 1600s and the misleading implications that result from their absence. One cannot help but be struck by the narrow range of American ethnic groups patterned in these anthologies.

The limited range can be seen very clearly in a new Scott, Foresman anthology called *Multicultural Voices* (1995) that it recommends as an elective supplement to its literature anthology series for grades 7-12. Although the four-page yellow brochure describing it states that the anthology "celebrates the immense diversity of American culture" and includes recent works by "Americans of varied cultural backgrounds—African, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, European, and Middle Eastern," this description is highly misleading. Almost all the works are by African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and the native American Indian groups—what are now generally regarded as the four affirmative action categories, and there is exactly one work about a European ethnic group: "The Wooing of Ariadne" by Harry Mark Petrakis. It is so remarkably unique that it stands out like a sore thumb in this collection. One wonders if one of the editors was a Greek American and on principle insisted that "the immense diversity of American culture" should include at least one work reflecting his or her ethnic background.

On the other hand, the editors of another supplemental anthology, *Multicultural Perspectives* (1993), published by McDou-

gal, Littell as part of its *Responding to Literature* series, have made a clean sweep of European ethnic groups—a sort of literary ethnic cleansing—apparently deciding that only members of the four affirmative action categories have retained their "cultural identities" and have "unique heritages" that can strengthen and enrich America (Introduction, p. 4).

(Interestingly, the category of Asian or Asian American is also a limited one in most anthologies for grades 7 through 10. For the most part, it seems to refer to works about Japan, China, or countries in Southeast Asia or to works by authors in the U.S. whose origins may be traced to those countries and who write about the experiences of their ethnic group in America. Only rarely does one find a selection reflecting, for example, Korean, Hindu, or Persian culture, even though there are in this country large numbers of Koreans, Indians, and Iranians, to say nothing of the Lebanese, Copts, Armenians, Sikhs, Chaldeans,



ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT BARKIN

Palestinians, Israelis, and other groups that hail from various parts of the vast continent of Asia.)

It is not clear why the editors of these anthologies believe that literary works about the experiences of members of the four affirmative action groups provide a comprehensive portrait of this country's ethnic diversity. They clearly do not, but in light of this tendency it would not be at all surprising if many students come to believe that Spanish-speaking immigrants and immigrants from Asian countries (who constitute about 9 percent and 3 percent respectively of our population) have been the primary immigrant groups to this country, and that almost all of the inhabitants of this country encountered by these groups when arriving here were Protestants of English descent. Nevertheless, according to the 1990 consensus, about 75 percent of Americans trace their ancestry to Europe, and the majority of them are of non-English descent. Thus, works about the experiences of members of the many European ethnic groups who came, and are still coming, to this country deserve much greater attention in our literature courses than they seem to receive now, to judge by the cultural content of the leading literature anthologies for grades 7-11, a variety of recommended multicultural reading lists, articles in professional journals, and presentations at professional conferences, a situation I have discussed in several articles (Stotsky, 1993-94; 1994; 1995; and in press).

The purpose of this article is to spell out several criteria for teachers and curriculum developers to use in selecting European ethnic literature for classroom study. Such literature is particularly appropriate for interdisciplinary courses that combine American literature and American history. These criteria address the groups to highlight, the range of themes that can be found in this literature, and how these works might be integrated with the works by and about African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and the native American Indian groups. I also provide titles and brief annotations for an illustrative number of books or collections of short stories to which students could be directed in their school or public libraries.

Matters of Definition

I consistently refer to the various social groups in this country as *ethnic*, not *cultural*. That is because *ethnic* is probably the most accurate term to use for all the non-indigenous groups in this country, such as Japanese Americans, Italian Americans, Greek Americans, African Americans, Cuban Americans, German Americans, and Mexican Americans. In a major work on ethnicity, Werner Sollors (1986) refers to the "polyethnic character of America" and includes as ethnic both those groups whose members migrated or fled to this country and those groups whose members were brought here as slaves or servants. Unlike their ethnic relatives in their countries of origin, members of these groups are not part of organically distinct cultures in this country because most of their members speak and write English after the second generation (even though some remain bilingual) and participate in our political and popular culture in varying ways. Indeed, members of all groups are increasingly intermarrying with members of other groups in this country,

crossing ethnic, religious, and racial lines, although at varying rates. Members of America's ethnic groups differ in most critical respects from people in their countries of origin because they are no longer situated within the geographical and social context that first shaped their or their ancestors' political values and social customs, a context that continues to shape their ethnic kin. Thus, the literature in English about members of these groups qua members of these groups should, for the sake of accuracy, be referred to as American ethnic literature rather than multicultural literature, as it is usually called. This literature should be seen as a prominent part of our national literature.

All Students Need To Read about the European Ethnic Experience

Why is it important for American students to read works about the varied experiences of European ethnic groups in this country, in addition to works by and about members of the four affirmative action categories? There are three sets of reasons. Given the near total absence in secondary school literature anthologies of identifiable members of the vast number of European ethnic groups in this country, as well as the almost total absence of selections about the early experiences of these groups here, it would not be at all surprising if students classified in the four affirmative action categories end up with a completely erroneous understanding of American history and who Americans are. These students may end up believing that students who are not members of these four categories—those who supposedly belong to the "mainstream"—are all of Anglo-Saxon stock and are all alike with respect to values, beliefs, and customs. So far as I can tell, only works by or about white Southerners seem to portray distinctive cultural/regional characteristics.

Further, both the students classified in the four affirmative action categories and those considered "mainstream" may easily come to believe that members of groups in the four categories are basically different from other Americans and are quite similar to their ethnic kin in their countries of origin (neither of which is the case after the first generation in this country). Indeed, students may believe that members of groups in the four categories constitute "cultures" that are parallel to a so-called "mainstream" culture rather than constituting ethnic groups that are not distinct cultures at all (with the possible exception of small groups in remote parts of Alaska). Students may also fail to see that the experiences of immigrants from Spanish-speaking and Asian countries over several generations parallel those of most European ethnic groups in this country.

Finally, if the experiences of the different European ethnic groups in this country are ignored, and students see the story of prejudice and exploitation in this country's history in racial terms only, they may come to see as reasonable a race-based multicultural curriculum such as the one proposed by James Banks (1992) and adopted by the Board of Directors of the National Council for the Social Studies, in which students are taught according to someone's notion of their race's "learning style" (a concept that seems to echo some utterly discredited 19th-century views of race). Yet

race is not coterminous with continent or culture; all Asians do not look like the Chinese, Japanese, or Koreans; "white" peoples come from Asia Minor as well as South America; and each continent contains multiple cultures. A race-based curriculum would only damage all students in so far as it denies the enormous differences within and across individual ethnic groups as well as the far more important influence of socioeconomic class on literacy learning among members of any ethnic group.

The Three Waves of Immigration

Before I suggest possible guidelines for selecting European ethnic literature, let me offer this broad overview of immigration—not because English teachers are unaware of these waves, but because I do not think that they have, in general, consciously thought about the usefulness of selecting literary works to accompany the study of American history that illuminate these waves of immigration, the culturally significant groups in each wave, and the different areas of the country they helped to settle or develop. Until the American Revolution and the founding of the American Republic, the Dutch, French Huguenots, Germans, Scots, Welsh, and Scotch-Irish were the major groups who migrated to the British colonies, or became integrated with descendants of the English settlers as a result of territorial changes.

During the first great wave of immigration in the 19th century (from 1815 to about 1880), the Irish, Germans, and Scandinavians were the major groups to migrate here in large numbers, with much smaller numbers of immigrants coming from China and from Canada (the French Canadians). As is still apparent today, the Germans and Scandinavians tended to settle in both the cities and the farming areas in the Middle West and Northwest, while the Irish, whose labor built the Illinois Central Railroad connecting Chicago and New Orleans and who, along with the Chinese, laid tracks for the Union Pacific Railroad, formed communities all across the country but especially in its biggest cities.

The next great wave of immigration took place from about 1880 to about 1920, with most immigrants coming from eastern and southern Europe, and a much smaller number from Japan and the Hawaiian Islands. The Italians, Jews, and Poles were the largest of the groups in this second wave, and tended to settle in our largest cities in the Northeast and Middle West, thus serving as the labor force for the industrial development of the country (for example, Italian immigrants built the New York City subway system).

The third great wave of immigration has taken place since World War II, and has included large numbers of Spanish-speaking people, from Mexico and Puerto Rico especially, in addition to immigrants from every other part of the world, Asia in particular. These immigrants have settled chiefly in the Southeast and Southwest, although many have migrated to Northern cities as well. Among the European ethnic groups, a large number of Poles, Irish, and Russian Jews have been part of this recent wave of immigration.

Many good pieces of literature exist for every one of the culturally significant European immigrant groups.

Thus, English teachers can give their students choices and a good grasp of the development of every section of this country as these groups joined with the descendants of the original English settlers, African Americans, and American Indians who lived off of reservations, in communities all across this country.

Suggested Guidelines

Three broad criteria might be usefully employed by English and history teachers in suggesting specific titles in European ethnic literature to their students. They focus on the groups to be considered, the range of themes reflected in this literature, and how these themes might be related to works by members of the four affirmative action groups to illuminate similarities and differences. I discuss each of these criteria in turn.

First, teachers should choose works of merit about groups with a visible and significant impact on this country's political, economic, or cultural development. Although America has been the destination of people from almost every country or region on earth, unfortunately there is not enough time in a normal curriculum for students to read about every single one. Thus, those groups that have played a role in this country's development during those historical periods usually conceptualized in American history textbooks should be reflected in their choice. For example, many works deal with the experiences of European ethnic groups around the turn of the 20th century as America became an urban and industrial society. I indicate here the title, author, and original date of publication of some illustrative works, along with a brief description of the work:

Hogan's Goat by William Alfred (1966), a play set in Brooklyn in 1890 about a ward leader caught up in a web of duplicity, adultery, and conspiracy that eventually undermines his marriage and his bid for the mayoralty of Brooklyn.

A Chance to Live by Zoe Beckley (1918), a story of an Irish American girl living on the Lower East Side in New York and her growing awareness of the social issues of her day.

Christ in Concrete by Pietro DiDonato (1939), an autobiographical novel about an Italian construction worker who is fatally injured by a collapsing building one Good Friday.

Rosa, The Life of an Italian Immigrant by Marie Hall Ets (1970), the story of a young wife and mother from Lombardy who emigrated in 1884 to Missouri, where her husband found work in the mines, as written up by a Chicago settlement house worker.

Gold in the Street by Mary Vardoulakis (1945), the story of the migration of Greek peasants from the island of Crete to a Massachusetts mill town.

Second, teachers should expose students to the range of themes that can be found in this ethnic literature. This becomes an increasingly important criterion. There has been a tendency in recent decades to look at the experiences of all immigrant groups as well as of African Americans and the indigenous Indian tribes through the lens of exploitation, discrimination, and prejudice only. In many curricular texts and refer-

ence books, racism has been made the central experience for immigrants to this country, beginning with their voyage to this country, continuing with their arrival on our shores, and progressing through several generations of adjustment and assimilation to life here. Immigrants are portrayed as little more than victims of bigoted Protestants or white Americans. This narrow, one-sided portrait of the immigration experience is as distorted as one portraying immigrants uniformly going from rags to riches and attaining the American Dream within one generation in this country.

Clearly, the themes of exploitation, prejudice, and discrimination can be found in the literature about the immigrant experience. But there are many others that deserve to be highlighted. Let me indicate some of the other themes in this vast literature and suggest some illustrative works for each. For most titles, I have drawn heavily on their annotations in *The Image of Pluralism in American Literature: An Annotated Bibliography on the American Experience of European Ethnic Groups* (Inglehart & Mangione, 1974).

Intergenerational Conflicts and Changes

Asch, Sholem. *East River* (1946): Three generations of Jews are described and their relationships contrasted.

Costakis, Roxane. *Wing and the Thorn* (1952): An immigrant from Greece makes a Greek world for himself in America, but over the years his children rebel against him.

Forgione, Louis. *The River Between* (1928): An account of a prosperous Italian immigrant family, living in an Italian community on the edge of the Hudson Palisades, experiencing conflicts in values and beliefs.

Hagopian, Richard. *The Dove Brings Peace* (1944): Portrays attitudes of the first generation of an Armenian family living in Massachusetts and the bewilderment of the offspring as the two groups come into conflict.

Mangione, Jerre. *Mount Allegro* (1942): A series of recollections of the author's Sicilian childhood in Rochester as his family adjusts to a new land.

O'Connor, Edwin. *The Edge of Sadness* (1961): Depicts a world of tight, family-centered second- and third-generation Irish in a decaying parish.

Ostenson, Martha. *O River, Remember* (1943): A story, spanning 1870 to 1941, of two pioneer families, one Irish and one Norwegian, who settle in the Red River Valley of Minnesota.

Petrakis, Harry Mark. *Waves of Night and Other Stories* (1969): Among the subjects dealt with in this collection of short stories on the Greek American experience are father-son conflicts.

Sourian, Peter. *The Gate* (1965): Depicts three generations of an Armenian American family.

Spitzer, Antoinette. *These Are My Children* (1935): A three-generation study contrasting the ideals of a Viennese woman with those of her daughter and her grandchildren.

Watson, Virginia. *Manhattan Acres* (1935): A family chronicle about Dutch Americans covering 300 years in the lives of 10 generations of the Van Kampe family, with the growth of Manhattan as significant historic background.

White, Georgia. *Free as the Wind* (1942): A chronicle novel of a family of Hollanders who settle in Michigan during the middle of the 19th century and who are followed through the first year of World War II.

Winther, Sophus. *Take All to Nebraska* (1936): Set in 1898 and the following decade, this is the first novel in a trilogy depicting a Danish family's experiences on a Nebraska farm as rent farmers and the conflicts between father and sons.

Yeziarska, Anzia. *Children of Loneliness: Stories of Immigrant Life in America* (1923): Depicts problems that arise with immigrant parents clinging to the old ways and their children adopting Americanized customs.

Interethnic or Interreligious Contacts or Tensions

Adelson, Ann. *The Little Conquerors* (1960): Story of an Italian American family in a New England town dominated by Irish politicians.

Barrett, William. *Lilies of the Field* (1962): Story of a black ex-GI who builds a chapel for a group of refugee nuns.

Dreiser, Theodore. *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911): The child of religious German immigrants, Jennie is nevertheless attracted to the pleasure-loving son of an enterprising Irishman.

Hagopian, Richard. *Faraway the Spring* (1952): Children of an Armenian immigrant family cross national boundaries in their friendship with children of Italian neighbors.

Malamud, Bernard. *The Tenants* (1972): Novel depicts the confrontation between a Jewish writer living in an abandoned tenement on the East Side of Manhattan and a black writer who also moves into the decaying house.

McHale, Tom. *Principato* (1970): Divergent views about life, death, and the Catholic church are expressed by two immigrant Catholic groups.

McSorley, Edward. *Our Own Kind* (1946): Life in the Irish section of Providence, Rhode Island, in the early 1900s, showing a boy's maturation as he learns about anti-Jewish and anti-Italian sentiments.

Panetta, George. *Kiss Mama* (1965): A two-act comedy in which an Italian mother compromises to make peace with her Jewish daughter-in-law.

Tomasi, Mari. *Like Lesser Gods* (1949): An account of Graniteton, Vermont, its Italian marble cutters, their Scottish wives, and the merging of two cultures and religions.

Intraethnic Class Differences

Curran, Mary Doyle. *Parish and the Hill* (1948): A story of the conflicts arising from the differences between lower-class and middle-class Irish families in a New England mill town.

Oppenheim, James. *Dr. Rast* (1909): A German Jewish physician works among the newly arrived Eastern European Jews on the Lower East Side of New York.

Humor

Auslander, Joseph. *My Uncle Jan* (1948): Set in Wisconsin in the 1890s, a nephew tells the story of Uncle Jan, who made so much money that he sent for all his

(Continued on page 44)

THE HORROR OF R. L. STINE

BY DIANA WEST

HERE'S AN unlikely front in the culture war: a land where divorce is unusual, lawns are meticulously tended, and children go to schools that are impervious to drugs, condoms, and multiculturalism. In this homogeneous suburbia, nobody cusses and rec rooms abound. Homosexuality is non-existent, incest unthinkable. This is the literary universe of juvenile horror writer R.L. Stine, the best-selling writer in America—and it may be the most dangerous place in America.

Every month, 1.25 million children buy into Stine's world, the peaceful neighborhoods where youngsters live in jeopardy, helpless against an assortment of evils. Stine's older readers (9-14) thrill to the homicidal houses and jealous teenagers of the Fear Street collections. For the very young (ages 8-12), there are the malicious puppets and robotic camp counselors of the Goosebumps series. Each slim, large-print Goosebumps release predictably surges to the top of the bestseller lists, outselling the John Grishams and Anne Rices of the moment. On a given week this summer, Stine had as many as seven of the nation's 50 top-selling books, and as many as 15 of the top 150. At this rate, it's no wonder he has 90 million books in print.

And no wonder the 52-year-old author has transformed the world of publishing. The children's department in any bookstore tells the story. Under the broad "young adult" banner, scattered copies of *Kidnapped*, *The Yearling*, or *White Fang* may suggest familiar territory, but the section is otherwise unrecognizable, dominated by shelf upon tightly packed shelf of horror books, their covers reminiscent of the lurid slasher-movie posters of the late 1970s to mid 1980s—novels, trilogies, and series without end. The popularity of Stine has inspired a host of competitors and imita-

Diana West's fiction has appeared in the Atlantic Monthly. This essay is reprinted with permission from The Weekly Standard (September 25, 1995).



tors—Diane Hoh (of the Nightmare Hall series), Richie Tankersley Cusick, and Nicholas Pine (Terror Academy) among them. It has also propelled a once-seedy sideline of children's publishing into the market's mainstream.

This phenomenon is more than a matter of bringing new tricks to old pulp. From the boundless word-processing capacities of Stine and Co. comes a new genre: shock fiction for the young. In this literary landscape, narrative exists solely to support a series of shocks occurring at absurdly frequent intervals. Push-button characters serve as disposable inserts to advance the narrative, shock to shock.

For example, three pages after "Corky let out a horrified wail when she saw the bright red gush of blood spurting up from Rochelle's neck," we find that "Bobbi had been trapped in the shower room. Somehow, the doors had shut and she'd been locked inside. Then scalding hot water shot out of the showers. Unable to escape, Bobbi had suffocated in the boiling steam. Murdered. Murdered by the evil."

In this particular Stine, a Fear Street Super Chiller titled *Cheerleaders: The New Evil* (not to be confused with *The First Evil*, *The Second Evil*, and *The Third Evil*), shocks abound at intervals of no more than 12 pages, as lithe, teenage girls are incapacitated, variously, by confetti-cannon backfire, immolation, drowning, a bus crash, and, most memorably, a backflipping fit requiring hospitalization ("Lena tossed her head back—her eyes rolling around frantically—and uttered scream after scream"). The convulsing coed is barely strapped to a gurney when Stine comes through with this (incidentally, far from climactic) bit of carnage:

The Tigers coach lay with his arms stretched out. The neck of an enormous green water bottle from a cooler had been shoved into his mouth.

The huge bottle rested on his face. Empty.
The water had all drained out into his body,
Corky saw.

The coach had drowned. His belly
and chest were bloated. Like a big
water balloon.

What have we done? Corky thought,
turning her head away.

Good question. Shock fiction launches a beginning reader, pinball style, into a vapid quest for actual physical gratification, a bodily experience of accelerated pulse rates and queasy stomachs. The desired effect is something scientists call the "fight-or-flight" response, in which hormones surge and the blood pressure rises as a stress-induced panic takes over the autonomic nervous system.

The sensation, of course, can be strangely pleasurable. As one 10-year-old girl, a veteran of 40 Stine titles, put it to a Canadian newspaper, "I like how the creepy feelings and shivers go through your body." And so, reading becomes a crude tool of physical stimulation, wholly devoid of mental, emotional, or spiritual engagement.

Does that sound like a working definition of pornography? This certainly is a disquieting thought. But after immersing myself in this murky genre (30 books in all), I could not help but perceive an unmistakably pornographic pattern of means and ends. As graphic, horrific, and exciting as Edgar Allan Poe's stories may be, for example, the act of reading them requires a mental engagement with language, with character, with the author's interpretation of events that transforms the action and elevates it above the cheap thrills of a rap sheet. But in shock fiction, a raw catalogue of horrors and grotesqueries is used—not interpreted, not stylized, not in any way transformed by a writer for good or bad—to charge the nerve endings of young readers. In less than deathless (indeed, less than grammatical) prose, shock writers deliver fix after blunt fix to shock (in other words, satisfy) their audience.

It doesn't always take much; after all, a lot of blood goes a long way, as in this excerpt from *Broken Hearts* from the series Fear Street Super Chiller:

He stared at the bloody wound in her side.
Stared at the puddle of blood at his feet.

Erica.

The girl was Erica.

He huddled over Erica, staring at the stab wound.

The blood red swirls floated angrily in Dave's eyes. Blinding him.

Suffocating him.

So much blood.

Poor Erica.

Such a big, red wound. And so much blood.

Puddles and pools.

Such an angry, angry red...

Of course, shock readers can't live by blood alone, even puddles and pools of it. Subsequent Stine narratives combine hot tar, boiling grease, and chunky vomit to great effect. Note that Stine refrains from sexual stimulation. Not only that but, as Stine has told the



New York Times, "I don't do drugs. I don't do child abuse. I don't really ever do divorce." Stine says he prefers to traffic in what he calls "safe scares." This is true enough of his books for younger readers, with their false alarms and improbable monsters. As for his fare for older readers, maybe jealous teens with homicidal tendencies, supernaturally-stalked babysitters, and spirit-murdered younger brothers are, by some strange measure, safer, more wholesome subject matter than child abuse. Then again, so what? (Thankfully, no shock fiction writer is, as yet, telling tales of child abuse.) If Stine's pledge of restraint

would seem to lift him a cut above his smuttier and more lurid competitors, such as Christopher Pike and Eric Weiner, the distinction is ultimately academic. Whether sexual, deviant, or just plain violent, the aim of all shock fiction is the same: to set off a bodily response which debases the act of reading—and, more important, the reader himself.

Most parents (who are, after all, the financial power behind the phenomenon) react with a myopic joy that their children are reading anything at all. "I'm thrilled," 11-year-old Bill's mother told the now-defunct *New York Newsday*. "He's literally reading a book a day. He always says, 'Just a few more pages,' when it's time to go to bed. He devours [them]."

Other mothers, perplexed by the repellent nature of the books, go along with them anyway. "They just weren't my choice of subject matter," 9-year-old Tommy's mother told the same *Newsday* reporter. "But I'm happy he's reading. If he wasn't reading this, he wouldn't be reading anything at all. Now he's at the point where he's constantly reading. He's fixated on horror."

Poor ladies. There they are, clinging to the hope that their children's enthusiasm for Stine will spread to say, Henry James and his foray into horror fiction, *The Turn of the Screw*. Not likely. Even where such non-literature pursuits as baseball card statistics and comic books may lead to more literary endeavors, shock fiction would seem to be a retarding, pre-literate experience. Will Bill and Tommy's demands for sensational incident bar them from the great literary voyages of growth and discovery? Will they graduate from shock schlock to the best that's been thought and said? Are you kidding? It's doubtful that they will be able to go cover-to-cover with Dick Francis.

THE STINE craze has its roots in 1986, when the erstwhile editor and humor writer at Scholastic Books (which now publishes Goosebumps) took a tip from a former colleague and produced his first work of shock fiction, *The Blind Date*. His initial, if unexpected, success led to the 1989 launch of Fear Street, the seminal shock series for 9-year-olds-and-up about the gruesome things that befall Fear Street's hapless residents. Five more Stine lines have followed onto Simon and Schuster's Archway Books list, all set in the town of Shadyside, through which the eponymous

Fear Street runs. Including a smattering of uncollected shock novels, the Stine oeuvre now edges close to 60 books. And that doesn't include the 35 slim installments of Goosebumps.

Where Fear Street brought Stine to an already viable youth horror market, the 1992 debut of Goosebumps marked the first time a writer had ventured to define such literary deviancy down to the level of 8-year-olds—persons still considered, so they say, to be of a tender age. Granted, in Goosebumps Stine truncates the voluminous detail of the Fear Street books, and the body count is actually negligible. Of the two deaths I came across in my Stine sampling, one occurs in *Say Cheese and Die* (#4 in the series), in which an evil scientist dies of fright after his picture is taken with an equally evil camera. Here's the description: "Eyes bulged out, the mouth in a twisted O of terror, the face stared up at them. Frozen. Dead."

To meet the thrill-per-chapter quota in Goosebumps, Stine tends to ring false alarms, early and often: Someone plays dead at the end of one chapter, for example, only to rise again in the next. Hysterics are common, if often unwarranted. A character will strike a pose of terror at what a turn of the page reveals to be...nothing, which may be uproarious to youngsters still tickled by knock-knock jokes. One of Stine's more effective tricks is the dream sequence, featuring some of the most menacing Goosebumps passages, as in the following excerpt from *The Scarecrow Walks at Midnight* (#20):

"Grandpa—*please—no!*" I shrieked as he lowered his straw arms toward me.

He bared his teeth like an angry dog and let out a sharp, frightening growl.

The straw hands reached down for me.

Grandpa Kurt's face was the same. The face I had always known. Except that his eyes were so cold, so cold and dead....

His cold eyes narrowed in fury as he reached for me again.

"Noooo!"

Wonder what happens? Let's just say Grandma Miriam is no bargain either. By the following chapter, the little dreamer has awakened, having successfully boosted the pulses of wee readers. In this way, Goosebumps is able to produce the same result as Fear Street: reading as a glandular activity.

No wonder 12-year-old Lucy Dark, heroine of *The Girl Who Cried Monster* (#8), can't get through *Huckleberry Finn*, "I thought I'd read some of the scary mystery novels that all my friends are reading," she laments. "But no way. Mr. Mortman insists on everyone reading 'classics.' He means old books." When asked what she liked best about the book, she answers: "the description." (This is a joke.) Although *Frankenstein* is more to her liking, she can't finish it either: "I kind of expected more action," she says.

More is on the way, as shocks-for-tots teeters on the brink of a boom beyond Stine. A slew of copycat se-

ries will debut this fall, among them Spooksville by Christopher Pike. (Pike actually begat the genre in its new form, and must have watched in some horror as his star was eclipsed.) In the meantime, Stine's brand-name fame has already launched a companion series to Goosebumps, called R.L. Stine's Ghosts of Fear Street. (Stine is now such an institution that he isn't actually writing these books at all.) Noticeably more horrifying than Goosebumps, particularly the more recent numbers, this baby Fear Street competes by—what else?—intensifying the horror experience.

The result is anything but the growth and personal discovery of the young reader, which have ever been the markers of the best young adult fare, whether they be stories of horror, adventure, or romance. To be fair, Stine makes no claim to such greatness—or even goodness, for that matter. But because his brand of literary junk food has become a bookshelf staple to millions of young readers, some comparison with the books of the past is inevitable, not in terms of art or craft (which would be unfair) but rather in terms of theme and purpose.

In works ranging from *Grimm's Fairy Tales* to *Huckleberry Finn* to Booth Tarkington's seminal coming-of-age novel *Seventeen*, childhood and adolescence have been seen as a journey, a passage to adulthood. Moments of truth, phases of growth, discoveries of a wider world all transform the characters and enrich the readers, young and, in the best works, old. Not so in shock fiction, where there is no journey, and there certainly is no adulthood. Instead, immature characters flail in a stultifying realm of perpetual adolescence where hormonally fraught concerns exist forever out of context. Boyfriends frustrate girlfriends, brothers are unpleasant to their sisters, parents are props, voices scream, blood flows. And nothing ever changes. That is perhaps the biggest and saddest change of all. Ironically, as shock fiction has come to dominate the young adult genre, it has neutered it.

But, hey; relax. Kids need some beach junk of no value to read, don't they? Emphatically, no, children need no such thing. There are too many treasured books out there—deep and satisfying entertainments, from *The Wind in the Willows* to *Charlotte's Web*, from *The Call of the Wild* to *Ramona* to *The Once and Future King*, whose enduring value and appeal are unquestionable for the simple fact that they *do* endure. Instead, Stine's audience is being encouraged at a critical age to engage in literary pursuits devoid of content, crammed with shock.

Ours is, after all, a shock culture, all sensation and no feeling. A numbness paralyzes the arts, high and low, pretentious and proletarian, from the work of the supplicating grantees of government largesse to that of the plutocrats of rock and rap. Is it any surprise to see this trend reflected in children's books? Just as crimes against children still wound a numbed populace, so too should shock fiction, for its role in desensitizing the very young, stunting the life of the mind before it has even begun.

A cruel turn of the screw, indeed. □



EXTERNAL STANDARDS (Continued from page 18)

However, exam systems did not lead to reductions in class size. In fact, classrooms in provinces with exams had, on average, two additional pupils. Could it be that principals “know” that large classes do not hurt student achievement on tests and that they obtain the resources necessary to hire more qualified teachers by increasing class size? If so, they may also be willing to compensate teachers for larger class size by given them additional preparation time because this was also characteristic of exam provinces.

When social class was held constant, students from Canadian provinces with examination systems were substantially (23 percent of a standard deviation or four-fifths of a grade equivalent) better prepared in mathematics and 18 percent of a standard deviation (or two-thirds of a grade equivalent) better prepared in science than students from provinces lacking such exams. To view this from an American perspective: If you look at the effect of an exam system on the mathematics achievement of Canadian 13-year-olds in terms of a standard deviation metric, it is larger than the decline in math SAT scores between 1969 and 1980 that has been such a focus of public concern in the U.S.

The Case for External Exams

The school culture I found when I went to Nigeria surprised me, and I did not then know how to interpret it. Looking back, the connection between the seriousness and directedness of the students and the high standard they would have to meet when they took the all-important external exams seems clear enough. But external, curriculum-based exams do more than influence student behavior—particularly when they are high-stakes exams. They affect the behavior of all the actors as well as the allocation of resources. They get everyone to pull in one direction, toward academic achievement.

The 25 percent decline in the number of Swedish students taking advanced math and science courses that followed discontinuation of external exams suggests that such exams encourage students to do more than the bare minimum in terms of what courses they take. The apparent effect of the New York State Regents' exams on SAT scores suggests that external exams can have an impact even when they are not high-stakes. Perhaps this is because they constitute an external standard that teachers and students focus on, and this standard validates both the teachers who demand high-quality work and the students who choose to do more than the bare minimum.

Canada still offers the fullest and most compelling evidence for the effect of external, curriculum-based exams. Students in provinces with external, curriculum-based exams achieve four-fifths of a grade-level equivalent higher in mathematics and two-thirds of a grade-level equivalent higher in science. And school administrators, parents, and teachers are more likely to do a whole range of things that are associated with higher achievement. For example, schools are more likely to hire specialist teachers of mathematics and

science, have high-quality science laboratories, and schedule extra hours of science and math instruction.

Two things should be noted. The exams providing the data for this study were given to 13- and 14-year-olds, students at the beginning of their high school career rather than the end. But this does not vitiate the evidence of the exam's importance. Instead, it provides evidence of what I would call a “backwash effect.” The prospect of exams at the end of high school is important enough to affect parent and student attitudes, curriculum, educational practices, and resources as much as four years before students actually have to take the exams.

A further point. Many of the differences in behavior between exam and non-exam provinces seem relatively slight, even though they are “statistically significant.” To say that students watch 40 minutes per week less television (or 8 minutes per school day), are assigned 10 minutes more math homework or 12 minutes more science homework per week does not seem to amount to much. And other figures—like the number of extra minutes teachers get for preparation time—are similarly tiny. But given the large differences in achievement between exam and non-exam provinces, this may suggest that relatively small changes, when they are all pulling in one direction, can make an important difference.

Sometimes people seeking to reform U.S. education speak rather wistfully about a national or quasi-national exam system such as the ones in France, England, and Japan. Politics would make introducing such a system here well nigh impossible, but, as the Canadian data show us, provincial exams also have a significant impact on student achievement and provincial education systems, and we might consider state examination systems or versions of the ETS Pacesetter exam or the ACT examinations.

Certain conditions would be crucial. In the first place, as I have already indicated, the exams would have to be linked to a specified curriculum. Exams that measure aptitude or general knowledge always reward youngsters who are lucky enough to be born smart or into families that are relatively well-off and well-educated. When aptitude tests are used to signal success—as is the case in the U.S.—most students have little incentive to work hard in school. The smart ones and the less gifted ones find “their level” whether or not they apply themselves. If we want to encourage hard work in school—and the higher standards of achievement that will be possible when students work harder—the exams must be something that students can study for and that will reward their efforts. Working hard must have some kind of immediate payoff.

For the same reason, it is also important to have achievement differentials. This is not a popular idea because Americans want to believe that everyone can and should be held to the same high standard. However, a single standard on the tests I am talking about would be counterproductive. Even given hard work and enthusiasm, students will always differ in the levels they can reach. An exam that every student can pass will be so easy that high-achieving students will do well without having to work. On the other hand,

When aptitude tests are used to signal success—as is the case in the U.S.—most students have little incentive to work hard in school.



an exam that challenges these students to do their best will discourage less talented youngsters. They will soon learn that they can't succeed and will give up trying. Either way, we will not have gotten what we want out of an external exam system, which is to recognize and encourage the achievement of all our students.

Translating the idea of external, curriculum-based exams into a U.S. idiom is not as far-fetched as it might seem. If we went with curriculums and exams set by private agencies, I can imagine individual school districts signing up for the reform and gradually creating a groundswell that would lead a large majority of the other districts to follow suit. There might even be a choice of exams within a state—one district might go with the revised ACT, for example, and another with the ETS Pacesetter. It would be preferable, however, to have a single system. If we expect colleges and employers to base important decisions on the signals that exams provide, the system has to be relatively simple and usable. There should be no hassles with trying to compare achievement on this set of exams with achievement on that set. Or we might find it worth-

while to look at the New York State system, which already includes, in embryo, a three-tiered system based on a specified curriculum: minimum competency tests; the Regents'; and Advanced Placement exams for high-achieving students.

Undoubtedly, there are many possibilities. Until now, we have not given much thought to how we might construct an external, curriculum-based system. But whatever we decided, we would need a system in which student achievement had a long-term payoff as well as an immediate one. So it would be extremely important to get both colleges and employers to recognize these exams. It is this recognition that gives the French *baccalauréat* its power to shape the way the entire French education system works, just as the exams that my Nigerian students took more than 30 years ago shaped the system in which they worked and learned. They knew that what they did would count for the rest of their lives. □

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EUROPEAN ETHNIC LITERATURE

(Continued from page 38)

relatives from Bohemia, and the customs of the Czechs and their attempts at Americanization.

DiDonato, Pietro. *The Love of Annunziata* (1941): A one-act play based on the lives of the characters in *Christ in Concrete*, but done with a light touch.

Housepian, Marjorie. *A Houseful of Love* (1957): A novel about the various members of an Armenian American family of incurable optimists.

Kelly, Myra. *Little Citizens—The Humours of School Life* (1904): Stories about an Irish schoolteacher's attempts to Americanize East Side Jewish immigrant children.

Lessing, Bruno. *Children of Men* (1903): A collection of humorous tales showing immigrant workers surviving amid the inhumanity of the sweatshop and savoring the freedom America offers after the pogroms of the Old World.

Levenson, Sam. *Everything But Money* (1949): Anecdotes about growing up in a poor but tightly knit immigrant family in New York City.

Minter, Edith. *Our Naputski Neighbors* (1916): A Polish family purchases a farm in West Holly, Massachusetts, and the story is a humorous treatment of the family's acceptance by its neighbors.

Ross, Leonard Q. *The Adventures of Hyman Kaplan* (1937): Humorous sketches about an Americanization class in a New York City night school.

Poverty and Prostitution

Crane, Stephen. *Maggie, a Girl of the Streets* (1896): A story about a poor immigrant family in New York City and of Maggie in particular, who becomes "a girl of the streets."

O'Neill, Eugene. *Anna Christie* (1921): One of his many plays that touch on the Irish American experience; in this one, on the efforts of a prostitute to turn toward a clean life.

Liberation from the Traditional Constraints on Gender Role

Puzo, Mario. *The Fortunate Pilgrim* (1965): Conflicts between Italian and American values form the core of this book, as a young Italian woman seeks to move out of a traditional role.

Yeziarska, Anzia. *Bread Givers* (1925): A Jewish immigrant girl from a religious family achieves a secular education and establishes herself as a writer.

Third, teachers should try to select works from European ethnic literature that can be compared or contrasted in a revealing way with works by or about members of those groups now classified in the four affirmative action categories. How different are the experiences, for example, of Chinese American or Mexican American women today in comparison with Italian American or Jewish American women who came from traditional homes at the turn of the century? Are there any universals in women's experiences when traditional communities come into sustained contact with an open, secular society that educates boys and girls relatively equally and allows ambitious and intelligent young women to go beyond their traditional role? The

female protagonists in Puzo's *The Fortunate Pilgrim* and Yeziarska's *Bread Givers* offer an informative comparison to Maxine Hong Kingston in *The Woman Warrior* (1976) and Linda Chavez in *Out of the Barrio* (1991). Or as another example, how different are the acculturation problems for the men in Ludwig Lewisohn's *The Island Within* (1928); Younghill Kang's *East Goes West* (1937); and Richard Rodriguez's *The Hunger for Memory* (1982)? Or how different was the impact of the Great Depression on the families in Dean Brellis's *My New Found Land* (1963), a story about the Greek community of Newport, Rhode Island, during the Depression years; August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson* (1990), a play about a black family in Pittsburgh during the Depression; and Yoshiko Uchida's *Jar of Dreams*, A story about Japanese Americans during the Depression?

Anthologies Containing European Ethnic Literature

Let me close by listing a number of anthologies that contain numerous selections on the experiences of European ethnic groups in this country. Most can be obtained in school or public libraries, and, as can be seen, most date back to the 1970s, before the term *multicultural* became prominent and before it began to mean the exclusion of European ethnic writing. I offer so many older titles because, as I described earlier in this article, the newer collections of multiethnic works are usually put out under the rubric of *multicultural* and contain extremely few selections by European ethnic groups.

The anthologies I list here can serve to counter the extraordinary narrowness in current conceptions of American diversity. They will also help to make students aware of the imbalance that now exists. These eight titles are older ones, and their annotations are drawn from Inglehart and Mangione (1974).

Brooks, Charlotte (ed.). *The Outnumbered* (Dell 1967). Includes material by Willa Cather (on the Bohemians), Stephen V. Benet (on the Irish), Donn Byrne (on the Italians), Bernard Malamud (on the Jews), and William Saroyan (on the Armenians).

Faderman, Lillian & Bradshaw, Barbara (eds.). *Speaking for Ourselves* (Scott, Foresman 1969). Although only 200-odd pages out of 600 are devoted to the European ethnic experience, it contains a wide range of selections. Ethnic groups included: Italian American, Greek American, Polish American, Armenian American, Jewish American, Irish American, Scandinavian American, and Russian American.

Gross, Theodore L. (ed.). *A Nation of Nations* (Free Press 1971). Includes Mario Puzo, William Saroyan, Jo Pagano, Philip Roth, John Logan, and Ole Rolvaag.

Leinwand, Gerald (ed.). *Minorities All* (Washington Square Press 1971). Designed for urban schools, the focus is on the interaction of old and new immigrants who people the American cities. Includes selected readings about most of the major ethnic groups.

Miller, Wayne (ed.). *A Gathering of Ghetto Writers: Irish, Italian, Jewish, Black, and Puerto Rican* (New

York University Press 1972). The introduction offers a critical, historical, and social description of the immigrant experience.

Rose, Peter I. (ed.). *Nation of Nations: The Ethnic Experience and the Racial Crisis* (Random House 1972). An anthology of essays and articles that includes views of ethnic groups by "outsiders" such as James Fenimore Cooper, Henry James, and John Steinbeck, as well as by "insiders" such as Jerre Mangione, James T. Farrell, Piri Thomas, Richard Wright, and Vine Deloria Jr.

Simon, Myron (ed.). *Ethnic Writers in America* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1972). An anthology based on the historical development of ethnic writing.

Wheeler, Thomas C. (ed.). *The Immigrant Experience: The Anguish of Becoming American* (Penguin 1972). Autobiographical memoirs of the ethnic experience include Irish (William Alfred), Italian (Mario Puzo), Norwegian (Eugene Boe), Jewish (Harry Roskolenko), and Polish (Czelaw Milosz).

Two newly published anthologies that I would recommend are both eminently suitable for high school students. One collection of short stories, poems, and excerpts from longer works entitled, *In a New Land: An Anthology of Immigrant Literature* (Grossman & Schur, 1994), is organized in broad thematic categories, which are for the most part designed to stimulate students to think about similarities and differences across a range of diverse ethnic groups. Using themes such as "Fresh Off the Boat," "American Dream/American Reality," and "New Words for a New Land," Grossman and Schur offer selections (followed by excellent discussion questions) that illuminate both the older and more recent European and Asian immigrant experience, the experience of immigrants from Central or South America, as well as the experiences of black Americans and indigenous Americans. The selections also reflect a wide range of moods, from the humor of George and Helen Waite Papashvily's account of his first day in America, or of Frank Chin's "Donald Duk," to

the pains and losses in setting down roots in a new land.

The other collection of short stories, essays, and excerpts from novels, entitled *Kaleidoscope* (Perkins & Perkins, 1993), is a historically organized overview of American and ethnic literature. It begins with excerpts from the writings of such explorers as Giovanni da Verrazzano and Samuel de Champlain in the 16th and 17th centuries, includes works by such 19th-century American writers as Harriet Jacobs, Rebecca Harding Davis, and Kate Chopin, as well as by such early 20th-century European immigrants as Abraham Cahan, Mary Antin, and Jerre Mangione, and concludes with selections by a variety of ethnic writers in the late 20th century. It can serve as an excellent companion to chronologically organized American history and literature courses. □

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LETTERS

(Continued from page 8)

themselves. Their article was entitled "Resolving the 'Great Debate,'" yet by definition, a debate requires at least two points of view. The authors seemed to solve the "great debate" by ignoring both the holistic perspective and research that supports holistic teaching and learning. The American Federation of Teachers publishes this magazine and claims to support teachers. However, it seems that the AFT must only support certain educators with certain opinions and beliefs. As a member of the AFT, my voice was not heard, along with the many excellent whole language teachers who have helped children to read and write with purpose and joy. I am looking forward to a coming issue where the voices of whole language can be heard.

—ANN GRIFFIN
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

It was gratifying to find that *American Educator* gave much needed space (Summer 1995) to three excellent articles on why all the practices of "whole language" that are original to it are faulty. These articles make clear that none of the unique procedures of whole language is corroborated by the relevant experimental research.

As the preface to these articles rightly notes, whole language does carry out some highly recommendable practices. By doing so, it might be said that whole language "has brought fresh life to many classrooms." In this respect it is necessary to remember, however, that these practices were borrowed from the past by whole language, not invented by it. I refer, for example, to having children write frequently on topics of their choice, of reading high quality literature, and of being involved in a "wide range" of interesting literacy-developing events.

In short, in discussing whole language, we must never lose sight of the fact that the major guiding principles of the scheme are (1) that children best learn to read and write in school in the same way they learned to speak at home as preschoolers, (2) that children should be empowered to add, omit, and substitute words and meanings

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in written materials as they see fit, (3) that each child has a unique learning style and therefore no set nor sequence of basic reading skills should be taught to all children, (4) that all reading skills must be learned simultaneously; they cannot be arranged into a hierarchy of difficulty, and (5) that English spelling is too unpredictable for the application of phonics skills to work well. None of these principles is confirmed.

When discussing whole language, it therefore is vital to carefully strip from it the practices that it has appropriated from previous times. By doing so, it will be revealed clearly that there is little if anything about the novel aspects of whole language that are worth retaining, and much that is harmful to children learning to become literate.

—PATRICK GROFF
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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

I was ecstatic to read your article on reading in the latest edition of the *American Educator*. Although I am a fundamentalist when it comes to the reading process, I am not an extremist. I have studied with Don-

ald Graves and feel I have a firm grasp on whole language and thematic teaching.

As a site-based administrator, I find it extremely hard to get teachers to integrate the two systems for the benefit of the child. Being an inner-city, minority, low-income school, I would love to have assistance in establishing a concrete, cohesive reading program across the grade levels. I am open to new ideas, research, and assistance. If you are looking for schools to work with, please call upon me. We would gladly volunteer to be part of any pilot or research project. I thank you for a wonderful article and your keen research.

—MICHAEL J. JEFFERS
PRINCIPAL, HARRISON SCHOOL
LOS ANGELES, CA

I enthusiastically applaud your Summer 1995 issue on reading instruction. My child failed to learn to read in a first-grade whole language classroom. She was later evaluated and found to have an IQ in the 98th percentile with no evidence of any learning disability. She made very good progress once she began tutoring with an emphasis on phonics.

Our experience was very painful. Having a very bright child who, at the end of first grade, calls herself "stupid" and is totally turned off to reading is heartbreaking for a parent. We were fortunate enough to be able to afford private tutoring. My heart breaks for the thousands of children who are suffering emotionally from the "dyspedagogy" of certain aspects of the whole language philosophy, namely, the prohibition of systematic phonics instruction and the over-reliance on context-based instruction....

If schools are so easily willing to experiment with the children in their care, having no firm evidence to support major changes in curriculum, can you blame parents for acquiring a profound mistrust in the public school system and its "professionals"?

This journal's attention to the subject of whole language and relevant scientific research has restored a measure of my faith in the education profession, but it will not be fully restored until I see educational decisions consistently based on sound scientific evidence.

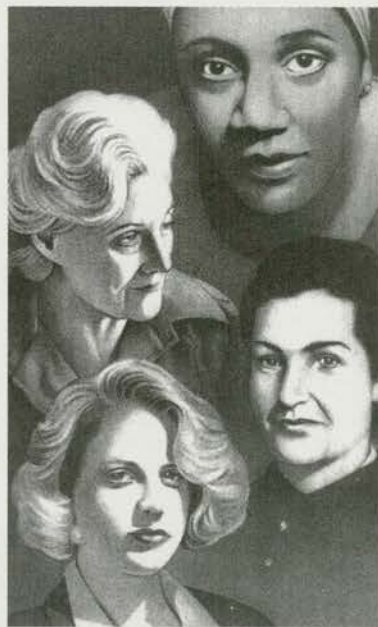
—CATHY FROGGATT
ASHEVILLE, NC

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