FIRST-YEAR LATINO TEACHER

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written over the last two decades on the difficulties that many Latino students continue to face in U.S. public schools (Garcia, 2001). In this article, we will look at some of the most pressing of these problems in a particular middle-school in a Rocky Mountain state (which we will call "Madison Middle School"). We examine these issues from the point of view of a first-year Latino teacher at that school (whom we will call "Carlos") through extracts from a journal that he kept during that first year as a novice teacher of color.

Unlike most studies that deal with the problems of Latino public school students, this study also allows us insight into a Latino teacher's *own* internal and institutional dilemmas as he helps his students makes sense out of theirs. We feel that focusing on the teacher as well as the student is important for several reasons.

First, there have been declining proportions of teachers of color in the public schools since the growth of Affirmative

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Action in the 1970s—largely because the incentives and opportunities afforded by Affirmative Action make it easier for people of color to find professional advancement in fields other than education as had traditionally been the case previously (Watras, 2001). It is important that we understand the problems faced by teachers of color in order to create policies and encourage practices that attract and retain such teachers.
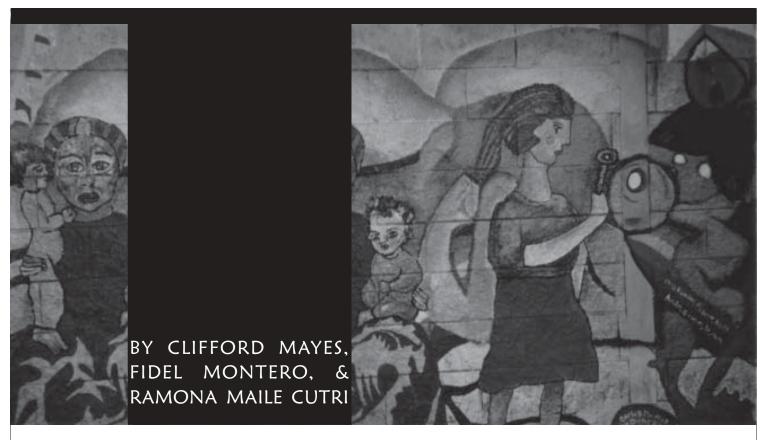
Second, there have been many studies that have examined the fact that the acculturation of a teacher or administrator into the culture of a school site is rarely an easy process under the best of circumstances (Matthews, 2003). Very little has been written, however, about how the larger cultural discontinuity between the first-year teacher's race/ethnicity and the dominant race/ethnicity at the school might make acculturation even more difficult. And third, we can gain even greater insight into the difficulties faced by students of color by viewing those problems through the eyes of teachers of color, who naturally tend to be more aware of the nature and nuances of these problems.

This study is also unique, we believe, because it attempts to frame these multicultural issues not only in instructional and political terms but also in various ethical contexts. This is an especially important consideration in this present study because of what we know to be Carlos's strong

political commitments as a young Chicano and religious commitments as a devout member of his church. Considering that deeper ethical and spiritual commitments probably play a significant role in many teachers' sense of "calling" (Serow, Eaker, & Ciechalski, 1992), we believe that including these factors in our analysis of Carlos's experiences offers one possible model for interpreting and enhancing the teaching experiences of teachers for whom such issues are important in their lives and profession (Bullough, Patterson, & Mayes, 2002; Clift, Houston, & Pugach, 1990; Joseph & Burnaford, 1994; Valli, 1990).

We thus offer analyses of Carlos's journal entries as well as our concluding suggestions for policy and practice not only in social, institutional, and political terms but also in ethical and spiritual ones. Indeed, we believe that a truly holistic approach to multicultural issues includes all of these elements (Mayes, 2003, 2004; Miller & Seeler, 1985).

In each section that follows, therefore, we begin by talking about the themes in the research literature that relates to one of Carlos's experiences, move on to that experience in Carlos's journal entry itself, and conclude with what we believe to be a few of the ethical and spiritual implications of that particular issue.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION
2

BY CLIFFORD MAYES,
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THE PYGMALION EFFECT

A teacher's expectations of a student often have a marked effect on that student's performance. High expectations of students correlate significantly with high student performance as do low expectations with low performance (Brophy, 1994). Called the Pygmalion Effect, this is a problem generally in the schools but is especially pronounced regarding students of color, for whom certain white teachers have reduced expectations (Rowe & O'Brien, 2002). In the following passage from his journal, we see Carlos struggling with this as the school year nears its end.

May 6, 2002

Many of my students are busy preparing for their transition to Lakeview High School [fictitious name of a mainstream high school in the area] *while others are preparing to attend Washington High School* [fictitious name of a low-prestige high school in the area, often seen as a "dumping ground" for low-performing students]. *Those preparing to attend Washington fulfill a stereotype that many teachers have. A large percentage at Washington are Hispanic, and most come from low-income families. If they wind up attending Washington, it is because they have failed to meet Madison's academic standards*

or have been involved in truancy issues.

My concern regarding these students attending the remedial high school is two-fold. First, I question how many of the students attending Washington will complete the graduation requirements. Second, I question why some of the students feel more comfortable attending Washington rather than Lakeview. The latter became apparent as I spoke today to one of my Hispanic students preparing to graduate from eighth grade. Sonia Delgado is a mature eighth grader, popular among her peers, outspoken, and very likeable. In the conversation I had with her, she expressed her desire to attend Washington High School rather than making the normal transition into Lakeview High. When I questioned her reasoning, she justified her decision by telling me that at Washington, she would feel more comfortable in smaller classrooms and also be secure around peers who will already be attending Washington High School. From what I have observed of Sonia and gathered in conversations with her, it seems that some of her teachers have not expected as much from her as I know she is capable of giving.

Her reasoning is disturbing because attending a remedial school will not give her the same preparation for col-

lege as a regular high school will. She will be surrounded by peers with lower aspirations and goals. As her teacher, I see the potential Sonia possesses. Her articulation of arguments is strong. She comprehends foreign notions, infers, and is able to contribute to classroom discussions. Yet, in the time I had her in my class, I did not once meet her parents. I consider Sonia a borderline student. If she decides to attend a remedial school, she might be setting patterns in her life that will lead her to other places rather than college. Currently, Sonia is failing most of her classes.

Sonia typifies many of the Hispanic students in our middle school. I can name ten students with similar cultural, social, and academic backgrounds. Most are likely to end up at a remedial school, and most will not attend college. What are we doing in our middle schools to discourage our Hispanic students from entering a mainstream high school and enrolling in a college prep plan? We have to find ways to encourage them not to lower their standards by attending a remedial school if they are capable of more.

AVOIDING THE PYGMALION EFFECT

Carlos's reflections prompt consideration of how teachers can look beyond tra-

ditional attitudes and approaches regarding language-minority students. Exploring the ethical dimensions of multicultural education may provide some direction. In our view, the ethical commitment to the *equitable* treatment of all students, in contrast to the merely *equal* treatment of all students, provides a key to overcoming the Pygmalion Effect.

The *equal* treatment of all students—truly an impersonal approach in which all students are simply treated in the same way—is sometimes seen as a way to combat the Pygmalion Effect because of its attempt to deal with all students uniformly regardless of any gender, racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic markers. Certainly, this was the approach that characterized the "liberal" pedagogies of the 1960s (Ravitch, 1983). However, we believe that *equal* treatment is fair only in a rough, *de jure* sense. By its very nature, however, it is insensitive to the wide range of psychological, cultural, political, and spiritual elements that uniquely constitute each student.

On the other hand, the *equitable* treatment of each student as a unique spiritual being is a powerful antidote to the depersonalization of *equality-based* perspectives that lump students together categorically. In other words, this type of commitment to *equitability* would motivate pedagogical adjustments that would allow both language-minority students and language-majority to enjoy the benefits of an equitable learning environment.

Of course, one sometimes—although still too rarely!—sees such an individually sensitive approach in various new pedagogies. Too often, however, they are based on the utilitarian motivation of creating an "excellent" educational system that will produce more effective economic warriors in the transnational corporate capitalist economy (Mayes, 2003, 2004). By this view, the political economy of a postmodern, information-based democracy such as the United States both shapes and relies upon such an educational system (Cutri & Ferrin, 1998). If certain skills and behaviors are not in place, it is argued, the society will not be sufficiently robust socioeconomically to prevail in the new "global economy."[1] Furthermore, because linguistic diversity is a powerful geopolitical asset in creating and controlling markets, we should cultivate that diversity.

This argument illustrates Gelberg's (1997) assertion that postindustrial capitalism has co-opted certain student-centered approaches for its own political purposes. Gelberg argues that many of the "new student-centered" approaches to in-

struction are not new at all but are pedagogically based in Progressive social reconstructionism.

What *is* new about these pedagogies is that—unlike in Dewey's, Ruggs's, and Counts's vision of pedagogical innovation in the service of political and economic democracy (Cremin, 1964)—the new pedagogies are rooted in the agenda of transnational corporate business, an agenda that actually runs quite counter to the Deweyan vision of social reconstruction (Dewey, 1916).

We do not believe that such motivations for responding to linguistic and cultural diversity in our students are morally authentic or educationally sound. Further, such utilitarian approaches are highly unstable since policy makers will be committed to a certain educational approach only as long as it maximizes the "bottom-line." When it no longer does so, it will quickly be abandoned in favor of one that does, leaving language-minority students once more in the lurch.

Carlos's religious convictions, however, contain a basis for grounding a pedagogy of *equity* in his ontological commitments. Specifically, Carlos religious beliefs include a doctrine called *eternal progression* (*The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* 132: 22). According to this doctrine, each individual is a radically unique soul engaged in a process of eternal evolution toward a divine status. One can hardly imagine a pedagogy more consistent with this idea than one stressing *equitable* treatment of each student because of his or her unique and unbounded potential.

We want it to be clear that we are using Carols's religious commitments simply as one way of illustrating how this particular teacher's spiritual commitments might connect with his or her reflectivity and classroom practice as a teacher. However, it is easy to see how a wide variety of other sorts of spiritual commitments—both formal and informal—would also be consistent with a pedagogy of equity. The point is that, whatever the teacher's spiritual commitments, a pedagogy that is based in them will tend to be more deeply rooted, durable, and effective in responding in a *sustained* way to the needs of *every* learner in a pluralistic democracy.

AUTHORITATIVE TEACHING

The literature in instructional theory as well as adolescent psychology generally affirms that the best way to help both students and teachers avoid the debilitating consequences of the Pygmalion Effect is to

teach *all* students in an "authoritative" manner, for adolescents tend to respond best to a teaching style that is high in both "care" and "demand" (Brophy, 1997). That is to say, students do not respond well to teachers who demand a great deal but do not seem to care about them—the "authoritarian" style of teaching. Nor do they respect the opposite type of teachers who might seem to care about them but do not expect much from them—the "permissive-indulgent" style of teaching. Rather, they respond best to the high-care/high-demand style of "authoritative" teachers.

This is a multicultural issue because it seems that not a few teachers take either an authoritarian or a permissive-indulgent approach to students of color as a means of either rigidly controlling or anxiously appeasing them (Pai & Adler, 2001). Students of color, however, need an "authoritative" approach no less than other students do (and arguably even more so). Thus, Carlos notes the following in a journal entry.

November 29th, 2002

The term is quickly coming to an end. It is sad to review grades with many of my Hispanic students. In many cases, their grades are very low. Many of them struggle to pass a few classes and then fail the rest.

Today I asked Ricardo Valencia who his favorite teacher has been in the last few months. He thought about it for some time, and then he mentioned Mr. King. Several of his buddies agreed that Mr. King is a very good teacher. I asked them what they felt made Mr. King a good teacher. They said, "He's not too mean, but he IS strict." They continued by telling me that they understand his classes and his assignments. Often I have seen them working on homework for his class.

Ricardo also mentioned that he knows what is expected of him everyday he walks into class. I was very impressed by Mr. King's ability to reach these students. When I asked the students about their other teachers, they used words not appropriate to repeat. In short, today I learned that the Hispanic students will respond to teachers, not because of racial or cultural identity alone but rather to teachers who understand and have high expectations for them.

THE AUTHORITATIVE "SPIRIT"

The high-care/high-demand qualities of authoritative teaching correspond to two

components of Cutri and Ferrin's (1997) definition of spirituality in educational settings: (1) a compassionate desire to connect with other people and oneself in a way that promotes an individual and collective sense of a mission for the greater good and (2) a holistic consideration of a student in all of his or her multifaceted complexity—physically, cognitively, affectively, socially, culturally, and spiritually.

As Noddings (1995) has made clear in her notion of "ontological care," the desire to connect with others and self in complex patterns of interaction and intersubjectivity creates a pedagogy that is *both* demanding *and* nurturing. Such instructional approaches not only recognize but thrive upon both the similarities and differences among students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds—and what is more, they do so because of the belief that we can all teach and learn from each other in intellectually rigorous ways in our personal, political and spiritual journeys.

Such a consideration and commitment not only acknowledge a karmic connectedness between one's own actions and what one receives from the world, but also a selfless concern for others' well being in the context of high-expectation intellectual exploration.

INTRA-GROUP VARIABILITY AND ENTRY CONDITIONS

When teachers and administrators see students of color, they may be tempted to see them as being members of a single, homogenous group, not understanding that there is great variability among sub-groups within that student's racial/ethnic group. Thus, for instance, the perspectives and needs of a student from a middle-class family from Venezuela may differ in important respects from those of a student from a migrant farm-working family from Mexico.

However, the teacher may see both of them simply as "Hispanic students"—whatever that term may mean to him or her—without seeing the significant differences between them and the role those differences may play in the two students' differential performance in the classroom (Ogbu, 1987; Valencia, 1991).

Four of the most important variations within groups relate to: (a) how long the student has been in the United States at the time of first enrollment in the public schools, (b) how old the student is at the time of enrollment, (c) what grade level the student is first placed in at the time of enrollment, and (d) the student's level of English proficiency upon initial enrollment (Gibson, 1986; Valencia, 1991).

Students who have been in the U.S. only a short time, who are adolescents, who have limited English proficiency, and who first enroll at the middle or secondary levels typically face the greatest challenges. Below, we see Carlos encountering such a student and beginning to ask himself how he and his school can better respond to the needs of such students in the future.

November 26, 2002

Walking through the main office today on my way home, I saw that the principal was in need of some help with translation. He was in the middle of a parent conference with a Hispanic parent and his son. When I offered my assistance, the principal quickly accepted and the discussion continued. The tone of the conversation was very stern. The boy under the magnifying glass was Juan Flores.

Juan has been getting into a great deal of trouble since he has enrolled in our middle school. This time he had been fighting with other boys who appeared to be teasing him. In days past, he has been kicked out of English class for not participating. The principal is very disappointed with Juan and his patience is running low. Today he told Juan he can no longer participate in any after-school classes until after the new school year. During our conference with the parent, Juan's dad was very quiet. He recognizes that his son is causing a lot of trouble and that Juan is going down a dead-end path.

As I have gotten to know Juan, I'm the first to recognize he's no angel. He curses, is cocky, does not show respect, and the list goes on. However, it's necessary to see both sides of the story. Today after digging deeper into his past and talking to his father, I discovered a completely new side to Juan. Juan has only been in the United States for a year and a half. Juan's reading and writing skills are very low, at second or third grade level. His father told me that, even in Spanish class, Juan struggles to structure simple sentences. Another discovery I made was that Juan lives alone with his father. For some reason Juan's mother is not around. Thus, many of Juan's emotional needs are not met at home. His father is a mechanic, but his lack of schooling is very apparent.

As I began to discover Juan's past, his present situation started to make more sense. At our school, Juan is not involved in any of the reading programs tailored to help students with reading deficiencies. He has just been kicked out of the after school program. The administrator was surprised to discover Juan has only been in the states for a year and half and will now look into providing some of the services Juan desperately needs.

As I drove home, disturbed at what I just witnessed, many questions flooded my mind. I wonder how Juan fell through the cracks? How did we not know about his lack of literacy skills prior to his enrollment? Have we labeled Juan as a trouble maker because of his appearance and behavior before giving him a fair opportunity to excel? Did we provide a mentor for him? Did I reach out to him? The questions regarding his situation will continue to be around for some time. The bigger question is what will we do with the next Juan Flores that comes into our school?

In the next brief passage, we see that Juan unfortunately is continuing to fall through the cracks of a system that is unprepared to deal with his needs as an older, late-arriving, limited-English-proficiency student. His future is not bright.

Today while spending the day at [a nearby recreation facility], *I ran into Juan Flores. Ramon was surprised to see me but was very polite as he filled me in on what has happened to him in the last few months. Since he was kicked out of Madison, Juan was enrolled at another middle school in the area. However, his stay at the school was not very long. Soon after his arrival, he continued to get into trouble and was quickly kicked out of that school. He completed the year at a third middle school in a different city but is uncertain about the next school year.*

THE "DOUBLE HERMENEUTIC" AT MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Carlos' impassioned query about how Juan was allowed to fall through the cracks institutionally raises important personal, professional, and ethical questions for a teacher like Carlos striving to respond to his students in the most ethically responsible ways. He wonders how much one teacher, especially a first-year ethnic-minority teacher at a predominately white school, can change the system? It would be easy for a teacher to despair in such circumstances.

Giddens's "double-hermeneutic"

theory (1990, 1991), however, says that an individual is not a mere victim of the institution. The individual is indeed influenced by the system, but he or she also has power to influence the system in turn. In other words, the system "interprets" the individual (hence the term "hermeneutic"), but the individual also "interprets" the system in a recursive process of mutual influence.

Carlos' presence as a teacher at the predominately white middle school has already influenced the institutional makeup of that school—most obviously because he is one brown face in an otherwise all-white sea of faces. But even more significantly, as is clear in other passages from Carlos's journal, the institution's dynamics *have* already changed to some extent through the relationships he has with other staff members as well as the Latino students.

Indeed, this article will probably be read by the administrator and other teachers at Carlos's school and will thus influence that school's culture in yet another way. It will also be followed up by another study in which we look at Carlos's experiences during his second and third years. In brief, one of the institution's *own* is an *insider* with the Latino student population.

This is cause for optimism in Carlos—particularly in light of his strong religious belief that we are, with God, co-creators of history in a macrocosmic sense. Here, Carlos can perhaps be helped to envision himself as a co-creator of history in a microcosmic sense at his school.

Nevertheless, the paradox of Carlos's positioning in the culture of Madison Middle School remains—namely that, just as he is both an outsider and insider in the staff culture of the school, he is also both an outsider and insider in the Latino culture of the school. We see this in the next section.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS
AS CULTURAL BETRAYAL

Beginning in the 1960s and expanding rapidly since the 1970s, there has been a growing body of literature documenting the fact that minority students who fail academically often do so because academic success might open them up to the charge (usually by their peers) that they are betraying their racial, cultural, or socio-economic group by trying to fit into middle-class, White culture (Gibson, 1988; Riordan, 2000; Willis, 1977).

An academically successful African-American student, for instance, might be accused by his or her black peers of being an "Oreo" (i.e., black on the outside but

white on the inside) just as a successful Native American student may be called an "apple" by his or her Native American peers (i.e., red on the outside but white on the inside).

In being categorized as "El Prep" (or "The Preppie") by some of his Hispanic students, Carlos is subtly stereotyped by them as being a Hispanic who has sacrificed some of his "Chicano" identity in order to succeed in the white world. This is especially problematic not only because of its troubling effect on Carlos but also because it highlights these students' belief that academic success is somehow inconsistent with cultural identity and solidarity.

January 25th, 2002

A new semester, new classes, and some new students. My relationship with the Latino students continues to grow. Many stop by between classes just to say hello. Some students ask their teachers for permission to come into my classroom during their advisory period. I'm teaching some of these students how to play chess. Others already know how, and they love getting me into checkmate. Today, one of the students, Miguel Ortega, said something very interesting to me. Between classes he stopped by and before leaving he called back, "Later, Prep!" I was surprised at his comment. He didn't say it in a disrespectful tone. However, my surprise has grown as I have come to consider what he meant by "Prep."

To my Latino students, a "Prep" is one who dresses nicely, is clean cut, academically successful, and so forth. Most of my Latino students do not associate with "Los Preps" of the school. Those whom they categorize as "Preps" are the student body officers, the popular Caucasian students and athletes, and so forth. Clearly Miguel has noticed that I often wear a tie to school. He has recognized that even though I speak Spanish, I also attempt to speak English professionally. He recognizes that I establish relationships with others that are non-Hispanic. I treat everyone equally, so he must infer that because I do so, I am "El Prep." The most intriguing thing about today's incident is that today I realize that as much as I relate with my Latino students, there is still a gap between us. They know that I listen to Mariachi music, that my dad picks fruit for a living for just $10 an hour, and that many of my uncles crossed the border illegally. However, despite all our similarities, my college

education and my teaching position create a gap between my Hispanic students and myself. I'm struggling with this set of issues.

TEACHABILITY

Carlos' willingness to examine the complexities and contradictions in his own identity evinces great honesty and courage. Acknowledging the complexities of one's own identity can be a disturbing venture that most of us seek to avoid by turning our gazes on others and critiquing them instead of attending to our own issues (May & Yalom, 1995).

Carlos's honesty and courage in this matter can be summed up as the quality of "teachability" or willingness to learn from his experiences—in this case, to learn from the feedback given him from his Latino students. Such "teachability" is the *sine qua non* of all deep psychospiritual growth. In this manner, then, Carlos's growth as a teacher can also be linked—both in his reflectivity and classroom practice—to his evolution as an ethical and spiritual being, thereby creating a deep faith-based foundation for his pedagogy.

Carlos exposes and explores his identity issues and relationship with the Latino students with great authenticity. However, at this point he only does so within the safe confines of his journal entries. The next logical, though scary, step would seem to be for him to share his internal struggles with his students. In taking this next step, Carlos would be modeling one of the components of Cutri and Ferrin's (1997) model of a non-dogmatic spiritual morality—namely, a compassionate desire to connect with self and others in service of the greater good.

Carlos and his Latino students could explore identity-options together. In doing so, they might discover that other possibilities exist in addition to the opposite extremes of either attending "Remedial High" or being caught in the stereotype of "El Prep." Is there another identity-option that would remain true to one's Latino identity but also arm both the Latino teacher and student with the tools necessary to succeed in mainstream culture?

As Carlos acknowledges his own ability to both change the system at his predominately white middle school and also be changed by it, could he help his students see possibilities for them to positively change the dominant culture at the same time as they are changed *by* it in some positive respects—and remain *Latinos* throughout the entire process? Pursuing these extensions of a spiritually centered, culturally sensitive approach to these issues may

not only help Carlos bridge the gap between him and his Latino students but also help him negotiate the institutional hurdles of a systemically complex school.

LAU… AND BEYOND….

Bilingual instruction in the U.S. is historically rooted in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and the U.S. Supreme Court Decision known as *Lau v. Nichols* in 1974 (Rury, 2003). By these means, schools were informed that they must address the needs of limited English proficiency students.

However, there were very few suggestions or guidelines given to the schools as to how, precisely, this was to be accomplished. Consequently, LEP programs in American schools are extremely variable from site to site, are often more or less "jerry-rigged," and typically carry low prestige in the culture of the school (Garcia, 2001; Riordan, 2000; Valencia, 1991). Carlos discovered this during his first year as a teacher in his ESL assignment.

September 17th, 2001

*A month of school has gone by and today is the first day I recognize the issues facing my ESL students. I have one or two in each class, and in one class half of them qualify under this label. My ESL students are amazing kids. They have the courage to come into a completely foreign classroom and make an effort to adapt to the curriculum being taught. Most of them are very quiet. They only speak if spoken to. Rarely do they ask a question or comment during class. I am afraid that their needs are not being met. Really, I **know** that their needs are not being met!*

In my class they often cannot read any of the material I present to them, nor can they grasp the content of our classroom discussion. Some of the second language learners are enrolled in an ESL class here at school. I don't know much about the class, but from what I've seen I'm not very impressed. Suffice it to say that we don't have a full-time faculty member teaching these needy students. In fact, the ESL teacher doesn't even have a college degree. When I ask the principal why, the response is "funding."

Today I must point the finger directly at myself. I was an ESL student when I first arrived in the United States. I struggled through pull-out programs

to eventually reach a mainstream course in junior high school. I've completed my college education, which also includes a minor in teaching ESL. You would think that I'm the perfect candidate to teach the ESL population, yet today I've recognized my struggle to involve them in my class. I don't know the answers to all the questions regarding their education. I do know that their parents worry but don't know how to help. I know that their parents feel uneasy when they see their quiet, loveable son or daughter immerse themselves in a culture foreign to their Hispanic roots. The academic culture that their children need to master in order to succeed in today's public school is very distant from them. I need to come up with a better plan than what I have today. I recognize that I'm in an environment where I'm the "expert." Yet, I often find myself without tools and the resources to serve the student I once was.

THE CASE FOR SPIRITUAL REFLECTIVITY

Carlos's concern and vulnerability wrench the hearts of teacher educators and policy makers who are trying to help Carlos and other young visionary teachers like him in their valiant endeavors. The common response of most teacher educators and policy makers to Carlos's dilemmas is to search for better instructional, institutional, or fiscal models for reform.

Such externally oriented approaches are of the first importance; however, equally important is the internally oriented process of examining ourselves as teacher educators and policy makers. In doing so, we might well find, along with Carlos, that in many ways we have also become diminished or confused in certain respects and are "without the tools and the resources to serve the [teacher] [we] once [were]."

Hence, Mayes (2001) has called for "spiritual reflectivity" in colleges of education for both prospective and practicing teachers as well as for teacher educators who want to engage in such a process (see also Mayes & Ferrin, 2001). Through reflecting on and refining the spiritual foundations of his or her sense of having been "called to teach" by some deeper purpose or higher power (Bullough, Patterson, & Mayes, 2002; Stokes, 1997), the teacher may access the ethical and spiritual roots of his or her pedagogical and political commitments in a special way and, in so doing, both refine and strengthen those commitments.

Mayes has shown, using a wide variety of examples from various psychologi-

cal and spiritual perspectives, how such reflective processes can take many forms—none of which require (but also do not prohibit) specific religious commitments (Mayes, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004). Rather, these forms of reflectivity build upon the individual's personal relationship to a transcendent reality as he or she uniquely understands it. This is important because, as Giddens (1991) has pointed out, spirituality is still not only an important issue for most people but is also becoming less formal and more personal.

Moreover, we believe that political and pedagogical reflectivity that does *not* include spiritual reflectivity will produce but a pallid picture of the teacher for whom spiritual commitment is an important part of her life and practice. Such partial reflectivity will not involve or transform the teacher's existential complexity. Thus, it will have only a limited value in refining her reflectivity and honing his or her pedagogical and political potency.

For instance, working out of the Jewish tradition, Wexler (1996) and Purpel and Shapiro (1995) have used their religious commitments to frame their educational research and political stances. And of course, one need only look at the lives (and martyrdoms) of such figures as Mahatma Gandhi, Reverend King, and Archbishop Romero to see that political action is most passionate and productive when it is born of a spiritual vision.

Spirituality offers a unique basis for "justice-making" (Lepage, 1991, p. 73). We would even go so far as to contend that a political vision that has no spiritual grounding runs the risk of becoming totalizing and inhumane. We would also hasten to add our conviction that "spirituality" devoid of political considerations is at best limited and at worst vacuous.

Helping Carlos reflect on the spiritual foundations of his practice—all the while doing the same ourselves as teacher educators in ways that are legally and institutionally acceptable in both public and private venues (Mayes & Ferrin, 2001)—offers exciting possibilities for teacher renewal and empowerment at all levels of the teacher's personal, professional, and political life.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Having access to the thoughts and experiences of this first-year Latino middle-school teacher compellingly and concretely illustrates some of the major issues and

findings in the multicultural literature today.

First, it is clear that teachers must adopt an authoritative stance with their students—one that communicates the message that they as teachers both care about their students of color and have high academic expectations of them.

Second, when a student of color does not perform well despite the teacher's having related to him or her in an authoritative fashion, there might be non-academic reasons for this problem. In Carlos' journal, we saw three of those reasons: (a) the specific characteristics and perspectives of the sub-group from which the student comes; (b) the entry conditions under which the student first enrolled in a public school; and (c) pressure from the students' peers which make it seem a cultural betrayal to do well in school.

Third, the English instruction that language-minority students get is often haphazard, under-funded, and marginal in the school's culture.

The pedagogical, institutional, and ethical implications of all of this are many, and we can touch on only several of them here.

First, teachers and administrators must learn that, just as with any other students, students of color respond best to authoritative teaching. An overly strict attempt to merely "control" students of color or an overly generous attempt to "coddle" them ultimately serves neither the students, the teachers, nor the school.

Second, through multicultural workshops and selected multicultural readings for in-services, discussion groups, and retreats, teachers and administrators can learn more about intra-group variability and its relationship to academic performance, focusing on the sub-groups that are part of their particular school population.

Third, to the maximum degree feasible given the (usually limited) funds allotted to schools for LEP-student language instruction, the administration should try to create a program that has clearly defined teaching strategies and academic goals. Staff should also show an interest in its LEP programs, and students who perform well in the LEP programs should be given special recognition in the form, perhaps, of certificates, awards, and other media of school-wide communication. In this way, these students can be increasingly pulled into the mainstream of academic culture, not pushed out onto its margins (Gamoran, 2000; Hallinan, 2000).

Fourth, administrators and other faculty members should be sensitive to both the particular strengths and special challenges of novice teachers of color in order to maximize what those teachers have to offer the school both pedagogically and culturally (Mayes, 2000).

Fifth, we have attempted to show how all of these crucial pedagogical and institutional issues can be handled in a much more profound manner pedagogically, politically, and psychologically if teachers and teacher educators are allowed to frame these questions in spiritual terms. There is a wide variety of legally and institutionally appropriate ways that teachers in the schools as well as teachers and teacher educators in colleges of education can engage in this spiritual reflectivity (See Kniker, 1990; Mayes, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004; Mayes & Ferrin, 2001; Nord, 1995, for specific suggestions about how to accomplish this). The great benefit of doing so is that teachers' pedagogical, political, ethical and spiritual commitments will increasingly come to interact synergistically in such a way as to make the teacher more sensitive and effective as both an educator and an agent of social change.

Carlos' journal highlights some of the major problems facing students and teachers of color in the public schools today. Attending to the experiences and observations of teachers like Carlos is an important step in finding ways to achieve the overarching goal of making our schools challenging and nurturing for *all* of our students.

NOTE

[1] This argument does not directly address the Marxist critique that capitalistic economies require a certain number of uneducated people—an underclass which Marx characterized as "surplus labor"—who are willing to do manual and in-person service work at low wages, thereby keeping wages in general depressed (Marx, 1978). Although the authors of this article acknowledge the power of the Marxist critique in this respect, we have chosen not to emphasize it here in order to maintain our focus on the broader ethical issues at play.

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