This paper discusses a study based on current research and literature regarding racial stereotypes in children. The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of social studies instruction on existing racial stereotypes and on the development, if any, of new stereotypes. It was hypothesized that the described instructional program would contribute to the dispelling of existing stereotypes as well as to the prevention of new stereotypes.

Thirty subjects, ages 7 through 9, participated in this study. All the subjects spoke Spanish as a primary language, but while all of the subjects in this study were of Hispanic origin, the school setting contained a diverse ethnic population. Each subject was administered a pretest independently to collect baseline data for the entire class, as well as subgroups within the class. During a 3-week instructional program anecdotal records were kept that included student responses in discussions and teacher observations of student behavior in the classroom and on the playground. Teacher observation of student behavior during the unit of study guided many of the discussions. The instructional program centered around a unit on the local community relating to an appreciation for people from many cultures. The direct lessons and discussions aimed at dispelling stereotypes were modified to respond to observations. A posttest was administered at the end of the 3-week instructional program. The study provided evidence as hypothesized, that the instructional program had a positive impact on eradicating racial stereotypes. (Contains 31 references.) (DK)
Applied Research
of the Effects of Classroom Instruction on Racial Stereotypes

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Presented to Dr. Mary Jo Lass
Advanced Studies in Teaching Social Studies
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Current psychological and educational research suggests that children develop racial stereotypes as a result of cognitive processes during the developmental period and the process of socialization (Aboud, 1988; Derman-Sparks, 1993; Katz, 1993; Levy & Katz, 1993).

According to Gary Levy and Phyllis Katz (1993), several aspects of a child's social cognitive development affect the formation of racial stereotypes. These aspects include the salience of the race dimension in social information processing, preferences for peers of the same or other race, and memory for stereotyped representations.

Louise Derman-Sparks (1993) asserts that, by the age of 2, children begin to ask questions to explain the differences and similarities among people. Between 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 years of age, children begin to "absorb prevailing negative stereotypes" (Derman-Sparks, 1993). Children continue to expand their ideas about individual differences throughout the early childhood period. In the primary grades, children begin to attach a group identity to individuals.

Several researchers have examined existing racial stereotypes in children. According to Frances Aboud (1988), racial attitudes tend to maintain constancy after the age of 9 unless a life changing event occurs. Valerie Lawrence (1991) asserts that when a child holds strong racial stereotypes, the stereotypes have an affect on the organization of encoded information.

While research provides evidence of how children develop stereotypes, as well as cognitive characteristics of existing stereotypes, it does not suggest how to hinder the development of or dispel existing stereotypes. The field of education has assumed much of the responsibility for dispelling racial stereotypes. Subsequently, educational literature regarding stereotypes has been developed.
James Banks and Louise Derman-Sparks are major contributors regarding the treatment of stereotypes in education. James Banks (1993) advocates the use of multicultural curriculum to prevent and hinder racial stereotypes. According to Banks, the goals of multicultural education should guide the curriculum at every level. Banks (1988) calls for a Social Action Approach to multicultural curriculum. In this approach, students make decisions and take action to deal with stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

Louise Derman-Sparks (1989) is a proponent of anti-bias curriculum. While multicultural curriculum has a broader focus of educating children in regard to a variety of cultures by accurate portrayals, thus dispelling stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes, anti-bias curriculum specifically concentrates on actively challenging stereotypes and prejudice.

An important contributor of curriculum in the area of dispensing racial stereotypes and reducing prejudice is the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith (ADL). The ADL trains teachers in the program “A World of Difference”. One of the goals of the program is “to challenge the stereotypes and biases which inhibit intergroup understanding” (ADL, 1985). An objective of “A World of Difference” is to counter stereotypes through student exploration of numerous experiences, within cultural and religious groups, that run counter to stereotypes.

In addition to “A World of Difference”, there are many curriculum guides dealing with stereotypes developed by educational agencies and publishers. The curriculum guides providing activities are abundant, however, there is a lack of guides aimed at the management of a comprehensive curriculum which has the goals of multicultural education embedded in its structure. There is no widely used guide for beginning and managing a school program that teaches all required content areas in the context of multicultural/anti-bias teaching.
The research of racial stereotypes was prompted by incidents in this author's classroom. Several students in the author's class displayed stereotypical beliefs through discussions about other ethnic groups and interactions with members of other ethnic groups. During an introductory lesson for a unit on Japan, students were asked to share any existing knowledge about the country of Japan or the Japanese people. As students began to share, several stereotypes arose. Many students believed that all Japanese people are employed as managers and that all Japanese people "talk funny". Subsequent discussions during the introductory lessons for units produced evidence of stereotypical beliefs in regard to Native Americans, Africans, and African-Americans.

In addition to the stereotypical statements made in class, two Hispanic students in the author's class were involved in an after-school quarrel with several African-American students. During the quarrel, derogatory racial comments indicating a stereotypical belief about African-Americans were made by the Hispanic students.

In light of the behavior of the students, a need for instruction aimed at dispelling existing stereotypes and hindering the formation of new stereotypes became apparent.

The study conducted by this author is based on the current research and literature regarding racial stereotypes in children. After a thorough examination and analysis of research and literature, the need for classroom application became apparent. The research of how children develop stereotypes is abundant in the area of how African-American and European-American (White) children develop stereotypes of the other group (Branch & Newcombe, 1986; Ramsey & Myers, 1990; Lawrence, 1991; Levy & Katz, 1993). However, there is
little research relating to stereotypes involving other ethnic groups. This study is significant in that it focuses on Hispanic students.

The literature is very clear in presenting theories and approaches, however, classroom-based research is lacking. This applied research will attempt to close the gap between the academic ventures of recent research and the realities of today's classrooms.

Statement of Hypothesis

The primary purpose of the present study is to investigate the effects of social studies instruction on existing racial stereotypes and the development of new stereotypes.

It is expected that instruction in a social studies unit on the community will have a positive effect on the eradication of existing racial stereotypes and the obstruction of new stereotypes. It is hypothesized that the described instructional program will contribute to the dispelling of existing stereotypes as well as the prevention of new stereotypes.
Description of the Subjects and School Setting

Thirty subjects, ages 7 through 9 (mean=7.97), participated in this study. All of the children are in a second and third grade combination classroom at A.L. Gauldin Elementary School in Downey, California. The city of Downey is located approximately 15 miles southeast of Los Angeles.

All of the children in this study are of Hispanic origin. Countries of birth and/or affiliation include Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, and the United States. All students speak Spanish as a primary language. Within the class there is a wide span of proficiency levels in the English language. Most of the classroom instruction is conducted in English using sheltered strategies. Spanish is utilized by the teacher and the instructional assistant to support instruction and deepen student understanding.

Of the thirty children, 17 are female and 13 are male. There are 14 second-grade students and 16 third-grade students. Table 1 classifies the students by gender and grade level.

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Sixty-three percent (63.3%) of the students reside with both parents. Thirteen percent (13.3%) reside with one birth parent and a step-parent (or live-in companion) and twenty-three percent (23.3%) live in a single-parent home. Eighty-three percent (83.3%) of the subjects have siblings, while sixteen
percent (16.7%) are an only child. Almost all of the subjects reside in apartments near the school.

While all of the subjects in this study are of Hispanic origin, the school setting contains a diverse ethnic population (See Figure 1: Ethnic Distribution per 1992 CBEDS Report) of approximately 600 students in kindergarten through the fifth grade.

Figure 1 - Ethnic Composition of School Setting
(per CBEDS Report 10/92)

Approximately 36% of Gauldin students receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). In addition, approximately 85% of students receive free or reduced-price lunches. Three of every four Gauldin students live in apartments. This contributes to an annual transiency rate exceeding 50%.
Research Design and Methods
Evaluation and Assessment Techniques

Each subject was administered a pretest independently to collect baseline data for the entire class, as well as subgroups within the class. The stimuli for the pretest were eight 4 1/2” X 6 1/2” white unlined index cards containing color photos of adult faces. The photos were carefully selected from magazines and newspapers. A male and female from each of four different ethnic groups were represented. These groups are: African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American, and European-American (White). Each individual pictured is facing the camera and has a closed or partially closed mouth.

The cards were evaluated by several adults (teachers, instructional assistant, administrator) for extraneous factors within the photos which could influence the subject’s response.

During the first part of the test, each student was asked to describe each card according to several characteristics. These characteristic choices included happy / sad, rich / poor, nice / mean, and honest / dishonest. The verbal responses of each individual student were recorded by the author on a form (See Appendix A). Testing was conducted in both English and Spanish according to the level of English-language fluency of each individual subject.

For the second part of the test, each student was asked to choose the career of the pictured individual. Each card contained three career choices, representing a white collar profession, a blue collar profession, and a service occupation. Responses for the second part of the pretest were also recorded by the author on the same pretest form. The author recorded any additional observations (such as response set, test anxiety, interesting trends, etc.) during the pretest directly on the form.
During the three-week instructional program, anecdotal records were kept. These records included student responses in discussions and teacher observations of student behaviors (in the classroom and on the playground).

Teacher observation of student behavior during the unit of study guided many of the discussions. The direct lessons and discussions aimed at dispelling stereotypes were modified to respond to observations. In addition, several unplanned discussions arose in the interest of the "teachable moment".

A posttest (See Appendix B) was administered at the end of the three-week instructional program. The pictures on the pretest cards were replaced by new photos (adhering to the same criteria). The cards were modified in this way due to the short amount of time between the pretest and the posttest, which increases the probability of a strong recall or memory effect.

Another modification of the posttest was the order of the career choices. The choices for each card were randomly rearranged due to the tendency of several students to choose the last option presented in the pretest. The order of the characteristic options did not seem to have an effect on the student response, thus it was not altered for the posttest. The recording format for the pretest was utilized for the posttest.

**Instructional Program**

The three-week instructional program was centered around a unit on the community of Downey. This unit integrates second- and third-grade social studies curricula. In line with the second-grade curriculum, based on *The History-Social Science Framework* (California Department of Education, 1988), the unit contains lessons and objectives relating to an appreciation for people from many cultures. The third-grade curriculum includes continuity and change in the community. In the context of the curricula for both grade levels, an
integrated unit was developed to teach content, concepts, and dispel racial stereotypes.

The lessons within the unit were written to include both cognitive and affective objectives. Descriptions of objectives within the cognitive domain (Bloom, 1956) and the affective domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964) were used as a reference to provide for higher-level thinking skills and the development of values.

Another reference used to ensure quality of instruction was *With History-Social Science for All: Access for Every Student* (California Department of Education, 1992). All six of the access strategies presented in this state publication were utilized during the unit. These strategies include: enriching history through literature, connecting history with other learnings, connecting history to personal experience, adapting to different learning styles, integrating social participation skills in the curriculum, and linking students to their communities.

The unit consists of three simultaneous components related to the community of Downey. The components are: content, literature, and lessons directly aimed at dispelling racial stereotypes.

**Component 1 - Content**

The content component of the unit is based on a comparison of the community in the past to the present. Many of the activities in this component were derived from the district guide for teaching the history of Downey. Within these lessons were both cognitive and affective objectives. Lessons in this component were taught in chronological order according to the history of the Downey area. A large bulletin board in the classroom was devoted to an ongoing timeline in which student illustrations of events were displayed. The concept of a timeline was previously introduced through a personal history
project in which each student created a timeline to depict the story of his or her life.

The introductory lesson for the content component included brainstorming in cooperative groups about the first people to inhabit the Downey area. Students were asked to describe the people and discuss what they think they did to survive. This activity provided a basis for introducing the Cahuilla Indians. During the lessons on the Cahuilla Indians, special care was taken to avoid focusing on exotic characteristics of this group of people, which, according to James Banks (1988), serves to reinforce stereotypes.

Subsequent content lessons dealt with the realities of life on the missions, ranchos, and farms of early Downey. Other topics included town life in the 1900s and the origins of many of the landmarks and businesses in Downey today. Special emphasis was put on discussing the presence of different ethnic groups throughout Downey's history, the benefits the diversity produced, and the problems that might have occurred as a result of the groups living and working together.

These content lessons were structured to allow student discussion, cooperative learning, a variety of response options, and many visual tools such as videos and pictures.

Component 2 - Literature

The second component of this unit which is interwoven into the other two components is literature. Literature was utilized to heighten student interest, enhance understanding, and provide for language arts connections. Literature was used in the content lessons as well as the more direct lessons regarding stereotypes in the community.

To heighten student understanding of the concept of the changes of a city over a period of time, Virginia Lee Burton's book The Little House (1978) was
read aloud and discussed. Other books made available in the classroom include *House on Maple Street* by Bonnie Pryor, *My Place* by Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins, and *How to Use Your Community as a Resource* by Helen Carey and Deborah R. Hanka. These titles were recommended by *Literature for History-Social Science: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* (California Department of Education, 1993). Several of the titles recommended by *Literature for History-Social Science: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* were difficult to locate and one recommended book *Little Leo* by Leo Politi was filled with stereotypes of Native Americans and was not used.


During the lessons involving racial stereotypes of people in the community, literature was often utilized as a springboard for lessons. To introduce this series of lessons, the book *What is a Community?* by Edward Radlauer was read to encourage students to start thinking of their community. The invaluable book *People* by Peter Spier was read, discussed, admired, and reread.

**Component 3 - Stereotype Lessons**

The third component of the unit included lessons aimed at dispelling stereotypes within the community. These lessons began with the reading of *What is a Community?* and a brainstorming session of all the businesses and buildings in Downey. The book *People* by Peter Spier was utilized for
discussion of stereotypes held by students and as a prompt for student
drawings of "Who lives in Downey?".

Several class discussions were held to discuss the definition of the word
"stereotype" and to examine several stereotypes the students held or have
heard about. Special care was taken to create an open and accepting
environment for these discussions. Students were seated on the carpet close to
the teacher and ground rules were set so that all points of view and individuals
were respected.

A lesson derived from the "A World of Difference" program was done to
teach students what a stereotype is. In this lesson, students examined two
boxes of the same size and shape. One box was wrapped ornately with colored
wrapping paper and bows and one was wrapped in plain brown paper.
Students voted on which box they would like to open to receive the contents.
Both boxes were opened in the order decided by the students and the students
discovered that both boxes contain the same type and quantity of candy.
Subsequent discussion was guided to explore why a certain box was chosen
and about making assumptions based on appearances. The discussion was
extended to stereotypes of people and a written/drawn evaluation of the activity
was completed by the students.

As part of this component, students were required to look around them in
the community, record jobs they see people doing, and provide descriptions of
the people they see. Individual student data was brought back to the class for
analysis and discussion. Stereotypes involving jobs people do were identified
and discussed. In addition, students were required to interview adults at home
about their jobs and how they affect the community.

Lastly, an African-American female guest speaker visited the class. This
speaker's career, psychologist, runs counter to many common stereotypes of
African-American women. Students were given an opportunity to ask the speaker questions about her career and how she contributes to the community. This experience was based on the “A World of Difference” objective of providing students with personal experiences with individuals who do not fit stereotypes.

Throughout the three weeks, all three of the components were interwoven to produce a personally meaningful and educationally valuable unit of study.

**Results**

Before presenting the results of the study, a discussion of the criteria used in determining the presence of stereotypical beliefs is necessary. It is expected that responses for the class as a whole, as well as within the different subgroups would be evenly divided among the options presented if no stereotypical beliefs were present. If all thirty of the subjects were socialized in a racially-integrated environment in which they were exposed to individuals of many cultures employed in a wide variety of fields, one would anticipate little or no difference between the percentage of subjects choosing one characteristic (for example, happy) and the percentage choosing the opposite characteristic (in this case, sad) when looking at each individual item. This even split would indicate a general neutral attitude of the class. In addition, there would be an even split between the three career options under these conditions.

In short, if no stereotypical beliefs were present, responses to each item would be expected to result in a 50% / 50% or a 33% / 33% / 33% split depending on the number of options presented. For the purpose of this study, a percentage indicating “neutral” attitudes regarding a particular ethnic group will be considered as being in the 40% to 60% range for the items with two response options and in the 20% to 40% range for items with three response options.
**Pretest**

The results of the pretest suggest several prevalent stereotypes held by the subjects. For complete pretest data, see Appendices C through J.

**African-American**

80% of the subjects described the African-American male as poor, 70% as mean and 67% as dishonest. The only subgroup to differ significantly from the whole group data is the second grade male subjects. Only 40% of the second grade male students described the African-American male as dishonest.

60% of the students chose “janitor” as the occupation for the African-American male. This seems to be an indicator of a stereotypical belief. There are gender discrepancies between the male and female subgroups in relation to the African-American female. 15% of the male subjects chose “doctor” while 41% of the females selected this option. For the African-American female, 8% of the female subject chose “fast food cashier” while 38% (within the neutral range) of the male subjects chose this option.

**Asian-American**

For the Asian-American male, 93% described him as sad, 80% as poor, 77% as mean, and 73% as dishonest. 93% of the subjects described the Asian-American female as happy and nice, 80% described her as rich and 90% as honest. This suggests a gender difference in Asian stereotypes.

53% chose “store manager” as the occupation of the Asian-American female and 77% chose “gardener” as the occupation for the Asian-American male. This indicates commonly-held stereotypes regarding Asian-Americans.
Hispanic-American

A great majority of the students chose the "positive" characteristics (happy, nice, rich, and honest) for the Hispanic female and the "negative" characteristics for the Hispanic male.

The majority of the students reported the Hispanic male as being a policeman (63%) and the Hispanic female as a doctor (57%). A gender difference is apparent in that the female subgroup reported "doctor" as the choice 47% of the time while 70% of the male subgroup selected this option.

European-American (White)

A great majority (ranging from 80% - 100% for the subgroups) of the subjects chose the "positive" characteristics for both the male and female European-American cards.

For the European-American female card, only one student (a third grade male) chose "maid" as the occupation. About half of the subjects chose "secretary" and half "teacher". The majority of the students chose "mechanic" or "doctor" for the European-American male. 35% of the female (within the neutral range) subjects chose "doctor" while 54% of the male subjects chose this option. 23% of the males (within the neutral range) as opposed to 53% of females chose "mechanic" as the occupation for the European-American male.

Within the pretest results for all subgroups and items, there appears to be a lack of variability among subgroups responses per item for many of the items relating to the female cards. For example, pretest data shows a 100% response to the White female as "happy" for all subgroups while 0% chose "sad". In addition, there is less than 20 percentage points variability among subgroups for all items relating to characteristics of the Hispanic female. Within the career portion of the pretest, there is less than 21 percentage points variability among subgroups for all career options for the Asian and White females. There is a
higher prevalence of variability among subgroup responses for the African-American female and all of the male cards on the pretest, however, many are within 40 percentage points agreement.

**Anecdotal Records**

Several situations arose during this study that provided the author with information regarding student-held stereotypes. One situation arose on the playground as a student in the author's class and a African-American student in another class argued over a ball. The student in the author's class called the African-American student "Black boy". This led to a one-on-one discussion with the author and her student about the student's beliefs about African-Americans. From the discussion, the author uncovered several stereotypes held by the student, possibly as a result of being assaulted outside his apartment building by a group of African-American boys. In addition, it appeared that this student was strongly influenced by older Hispanic playmates who may contribute to the stereotypical beliefs.

Classroom discussions during the unit provided much of the information regarding student-held stereotypes. Discussions at the beginning of the unit yielded many stereotypes to discuss such as Asians as managers and business people, European-Americans as discriminatory to people of other cultures, African-American men as unemployed and unwilling to work, and Hispanic men as "macho". The negative stereotypes which arose involved men more than women. By the end of the three weeks, students were more apt to question stereotypes discussed without prompting from the teacher. More students began to offer reasons why stereotypes develop and logical reasons why they are harmful.
Posttest

The analysis of posttest responses revealed several significant effects. For complete posttest data, refer to Appendices K through R. In contrast to the pretest results, there is a high prevalence of variability among subgroup responses to the Asian female characteristics items. The responses among the subgroups for these items vary up to 49 percentage points. The Hispanic and White female responses show only slightly more variability between the subgroups. Posttest responses to the items relating to the African-American female and the four males presented in the test have a higher variability (many around 50 percentage points) for many subgroups. This increase in variability for several items indicates possible changes in attitude over the three-week period.

There are several significant effects suggesting a movement towards neutral attitudes. In contrast to the 29 of 360 (8%) responses in the neutral range (for whole class and subgroups) for the pretest, 77 of 360 (21%) fall in the neutral range in the posttest results. This represents an increase of 13% from pretest to posttest.

Several posttest items revealed significant changes from pretest scores. Significant changes are discussed for each ethnic group represented on the test.

African-American

The characteristic item which stands out among the African-American male items is the honest / dishonest option. The tendency among the subjects was to describe the African-American male as "dishonest" during pretesting. This remained constant during posttesting for all subgroups except the male group (from 38% to 54%) and the second grade male group (from 60% to 80%). An interesting switch occurred in the whole class group. During
pretesting, 27% chose “football player” and 60% chose “janitor” as the occupation of the African-American male. The data shows that 60% chose “football player” and 27% chose “janitor” during posttesting.

Many of the movements in percentage points towards neutrality took place in the section of the test relating to characteristics of the African-American female. In the section relating to occupations, most subject chose “bus driver” during both the pretest and the posttest. Fewer subjects chose “doctor” as the career of the African-American female during posttesting than during pretesting.

**Asian-American**

There appears to be a shift towards neutrality in the characteristic section of the test relating to the Asian-American female. In this section relating to the Asian-American male, however, the data shows a shift in responses from the “negative” options to the “positive” options.

In the section presenting career options, the data for responses remains fairly constant from the pretest to the posttest for the female but shifts for the male. During the pretest, 77% of the subjects reported “gardener” as the occupation for the Asian-American male while 13% chose “teacher”. On the posttest, only 17% of the subject chose “gardener” while 57% chose “teacher”.

**Hispanic-American**

“Doctor” remained the option chosen most often in all subgroups from the pretest to the posttest. All subgroups continued to choose the “positive” characteristics on the posttest.

The data shows a switch in the responses to the happy / sad and nice / mean items for the Hispanic male. On the pretest, only 17% of the subject chose “happy” and 20% “nice” for the Hispanic male. On the posttest, 83% chose “happy” and 73% “nice”.

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**European-American (White)**

The responses for the European-American male and female tended to remain fairly constant between the pretest and the posttest. The data shows a slight increase in percentage points towards the “positive” traits. Very few of the subjects chose the service jobs (gardener and maid) for the pretest and the posttest.

During posttesting, several students shared experiences and comments that relate to the study with the author. One second-grade female shared that she does not like Asian men because her father changed jobs after an Asian boss treated him unfairly. A male in the class described his experience of being kicked and thrown against the wall by several African-American boys after refusing to give them his bicycle. Although several students shared negative incidents and seemed resistant to changing attitudes about the ethnic group involved, some students offered qualifications for their choices which indicated that they were affected by the program. One student stated it beautifully when she responded to one of the test items on the characteristic portion by saying, "I don't know for sure if he is nice or mean. I can't tell by the way he looks. I have to know him first."

The results of the study suggest that the instructional program had some degree of positive effect on the eradication of racial stereotypes as shown by the movement towards neutrality of attitudes on the posttest. The obstruction of new stereotypes may or may not have been affected due to the several instances of change from a high negative percentage to a high positive percentage (or vice versa).
Conclusions
Interpretation of Results

As a result of the data obtained in this study, several conclusions can be made. This study provides evidence that an instructional program consisting of social studies content, literature, and direct lessons aimed at dispelling racial stereotypes can have a positive impact on eradicating racial stereotypes.

Stereotypes of some ethnic groups (and gender within the group) seemed more resistant to change than others. This could be due to the intensity of the attitude. The stereotype of African-American men as dishonest is reinforced in today's society through the media. This area was the most resistant to change which is shown by the data. During the study, an attempt was made to schedule an African-American male guest speaker whose personality and career is contrary to several stereotypes. The speaker was forced to cancel due to the flu and an African-American female served as a guest speaker instead. The influence of the contact with the female speaker could have affected the degree of change in the African-American female items from the pretest to the posttest.

Many of the changes that took place in the characteristics section of the pretest and posttest involved African-American and Asian-American females. This could be explained by the control of exposure that took place during the study. Most of the exposure of the students to these two female groups took place as part of the instructional program which provided for exposure to the groups in a variety of roles. Hence, students viewed these groups in a nonstereotypical mode only in a neutral setting, which contributed to the effect on the stereotypes. Hispanic female and White female data tended to remain fairly constant in this section. The students in this study are exposed to Hispanic and White females on a daily basis in very fixed roles. Most of the
Hispanic females they come in contact with are homemakers or work in service occupations. Most of the White females they come in contact with (in the school setting) are professionals. It makes sense that the attitudes regarding these groups would be resistant to change since the students are not personally exposed to many individuals not fitting into these categories.

This study supports Frances Aboud's (1988) supposition that stereotypes can be resistant to change by the age of 9. Many of the stereotypes that could be examined in this study have taken years to be formed and are reinforced in the child’s environment.

Due to numerous extraneous factors influencing the subjects during the period of time the study was conducted, it is impossible to determine the exact interaction which exists between the instruction and the dispelling of stereotypes. During the duration of the study, students were influenced by parents, relatives, friends, neighbors, and the media. The neighborhood surrounding the school setting is not representative of California’s population in racial or socioeconomic dimensions. There is a concentrated Hispanic and African-American population, some Asian-American families, and very few European-American families. In addition, the economic state of the school population (as described by AFDC and free lunch statistics) indicates a concentration of service and blue collar workers. Thus, it is probable that the children involved in this study are not exposed to individuals from a wide variety of racial groups in various professional careers. This inequity in the child’s environment affects his or her socialization and therefore, impacts the stereotypes the child holds.

The changes that occurred between the pretest and the posttest represent only one step in the process towards dispelling the racial stereotypes of every child. A year-long program within the social studies, as well as all other
curricular areas, may lead to a higher degree of eradication of stereotypes. This author feels that a longer duration of time for this study (as well as more control over attitudinal influences) would have resulted in stronger positive effects.

Challenges Faced in this Study

There were several special circumstances during this study which may have affected the outcome. During the study, the students were preparing to take the California Achievement Test (CAT). This introduced time constraints as well as a shift of focus to exposing students to many different concepts that appear on the test instead of spending an extended period of time working towards mastery of concepts. The pressure of the upcoming test may have caused some students to feel tense, thus affecting the instructional program and results of the stereotype tests.

Spring vacation occurred between weeks one and two of the instructional program. The time spent away from the classroom could have resulted in more exposure to negative (or positive) influences regarding stereotypes for some students.

There are several challenges inherent to this type of testing. The pretest and posttest for this study are noncognitive self-report measures. The validity and reliability of such tests are often lower than with cognitive tests (Mehrens & Lehmann, 1991). In addition, noncognitive measures of attitude are often susceptible to faking and response set. It is unlikely that faking affected the results of this study due to the rapport that exists between the researcher and the subjects (teacher - student relationship). One response set that was apparent in a few testing sessions was a quick response alternating between the “positive” and “negative” characteristics on the first part of the test. Efforts were made to modify the pace of the test with these subjects as this behavior surfaced.
Implications of this Research

One of the major implications of this study is that classroom teachers can impact students in this area. To this author’s knowledge, the subjects were not exposed to any other delineated conditions directly aimed at dispelling racial stereotypes during this time. The limited gains made in three weeks can be greatly increased in one school year (and beyond).

The ethnic identity of the subjects in this study is significant in that stereotype research involving Hispanic students is very limited. The nature of this study (applied research) is significant in that there are few studies published regarding effects of classroom instruction on stereotypes in a comparable setting.

Recommendations

In light of the results of this applied research, several recommendations can be made. These recommendations are directed to teachers, administrators, parents, school districts, state educational agencies, private agencies, future researchers, publishers, and the media.

It is the author’s recommendation that teachers deal with stereotypes directly. Pretests such as the one employed in this study can be utilized to assess the greatest areas of student need in dispelling stereotypes. The issue of stereotypes should be integrated across the curriculum throughout the school year. Children should be taught to think critically about stereotypes they hold and/or stereotypes they see portrayed in literature, textbooks, and the media. Teachers should be alert to remarks and other actions which suggest racial stereotypes and deal with the situation immediately. Teachers should create an open and accepting classroom environment in which these issues can be
discussed. Materials should be previewed to identify stereotypical representations of any ethnic group. If these materials are utilized, due to other positive attributes, a class discussion should be conducted focusing on the accuracy of the portrayal and the implications of the stereotypes.

Administrators should seek in-service training for school staff on how to present accurate portrayals of ethnic groups and the effective use of instructional programs aimed at dispelling stereotypes. Administrators should evaluate program goals to assess the presence of stated objectives regarding stereotypes in the context of multicultural education. A high standard should be set for maintaining a school environment that actively dissipates stereotypical portrayals of ethnic groups and does not tolerate prejudice or racism in any form. In addition, parent education workshops dealing with strategies parents can use to dispel stereotypes in their children should be offered by the school.

Parents should take an active part in dispelling the stereotypes held by their children by first, examining their own beliefs about other ethnic groups, and second, creating and encouraging positive attitudes towards all ethnic groups. Parents should be aware that the media has a powerful influence on children’s images of ethnic groups (Cortés, 1991). According to Wilma Longstreet (1989, p.4), “Our children are literally at the mercy of television...” It is recommended by this author that parents monitor programs their children watch on television for portrayals that contribute to racial stereotypes. If such programs are viewed due to other positive attributes of the program, parents should watch with the children and discuss stereotypical portrayals and their implications in society. Parents should also examine children’s toys and literature in the home to assess stereotypical portrayals of ethnic groups.

School districts, state educational agencies, and private agencies should continue to create curriculum aimed at dispelling racial stereotypes. Every
effort should be made to develop curriculum that integrates all curricular areas while attaining the goals of multicultural/anti-bias teaching. Training in the implementation of this curriculum should be offered to teachers to ensure dissemination of the curriculum and effective strategies.

The author recommends that additional research be conducted on the effects of curriculum on the stereotypes of children. More studies should be conducted in fairly racially homogenous classrooms such as the one in this study, as well as heterogeneous classrooms. The results in the context of these two levels of racial integration in the classroom should be compared to assess the effect of racial integration on stereotypes. Longitudinal studies are necessary to assess long-term outcomes. Research should be conducted involving all cultural groups represented in California. Most of the previous studies have focused on African-American and European-American groups. The present study extends this focus to Hispanic-Americans. However, there are still many groups (Southeast Asian in particular) not yet studied in this capacity.

Publishers should refuse to publish books that portray individuals or ethnic groups in a stereotypical manner. As more literature is published portraying ethnic groups accurately, children will have more exposure to true representations of ethnic groups. In addition, teachers will have a broader base of literature materials for instruction.

Lastly, the media should work to dispel stereotypes instead of creating them. A high standard in this area should be set by production companies and broadcasting agencies. All programs should make extensive efforts to portray individuals from all ethnic groups accurately.

High standards should be set in all facets of a child’s environment (school, home, neighborhood, television, etc.) to ensure maximal affects in
hinder the development of racial stereotypes and dispelling existing stereotypes. Classroom instruction can have a significant impact on dispelling children's stereotypes. However, the classroom environment cannot single-handedly eradicate all racial stereotypes originating from and reinforced in a societal environment plagued with inequity, prejudice, and racism.
Appendix A - Pretest Form

Stereotypes Pretest

Student name__________________________________________

Card 1: Hispanic man
Card 2: Hispanic woman
Card 3: Black woman
Card 4: Black man
Card 5: White man
Card 6: White woman
Card 7: Asian woman
Card 8: Asian man

Part One: Characteristics

Circle student responses to "How would you describe this person?"

Card 1: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
          Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

Card 2: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
          Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

Card 3: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
          Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

Card 4: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
          Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

Card 5: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
          Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

Card 6: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
          Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

27
Card 7: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

Card 8: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
Nice / Mean Honest/Dishonest

**Part Two: Employment**

*Circle student responses to "What job does this person do?"*

Card 1: lawyer policeman farm worker
Card 2: maid doctor store manager
Card 3: bus driver fast food cashier doctor
Card 4: teacher football player janitor
Card 5: gardener mechanic doctor
Card 6: teacher maid secretary
Card 7: maid lawyer store manager
Card 8: store manager teacher gardener

*Special notes/ explanations*
Appendix B - Posttest Form

Stereotypes Posttest

Student name______________________________

Card 1: Hispanic man
Card 2: Hispanic woman
Card 3: Black woman
Card 4: Black man
Card 5: White man
Card 6: White woman
Card 7: Asian woman
Card 8: Asian man

Part One: Characteristics

Circle student responses to “How would you describe this person?”

Card 1: Happy / Sad  Rich / Poor
         Nice / Mean   Honest/Dishonest

Card 2: Happy / Sad  Rich / Poor
         Nice / Mean   Honest/Dishonest

Card 3: Happy / Sad  Rich / Poor
         Nice / Mean   Honest/Dishonest

Card 4: Happy / Sad  Rich / Poor
         Nice / Mean   Honest/Dishonest

Card 5: Happy / Sad  Rich / Poor
         Nice / Mean   Honest/Dishonest

Card 6: Happy / Sad  Rich / Poor
         Nice / Mean   Honest/Dishonest

Card 7: Happy / Sad  Rich / Poor
         Nice / Mean   Honest/Dishonest

29
Card 8: Happy / Sad Rich / Poor
Nice / Mean Honest / Dishonest

Part Two: Employment

Circle student responses to "What job does this person do?"

Card 1: policeman farm worker lawyer
Card 2: doctor store manager maid
Card 3: fast food cashier doctor bus driver
Card 4: janitor teacher football player
Card 5: gardener doctor mechanic
Card 6: secretary maid teacher
Card 7: lawyer maid store manager
Card 8: gardener store manager teacher

Special notes / explanations:

30
### Appendix C - Pretest Results: Hispanic Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
Appendix D - Pretest Results: Hispanic Female

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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Maid  | 23| 29 |15 |14  |31  |22  |0   | 37 | 25 |

Doctor | 57| 47 |70 | 71 |44  | 56 |100 | 37 | 50 |

Store Manager | 20|24 |15 |14  |25  |22  |0   | 25 | 25 |

Whole Class and Subgroup Codes

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35
**Appendix E-Pretest Results: African-American Female**

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
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Appendix F-Pretest Results: African-American Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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Teacher 13 11 15 29 0 22 40 0 0
Football Player 27 24 31 21 31 11 40 37 25
Janitor 60 65 54 50 69 67 20 63 75

Whole Class and Subgroup Codes

W = Whole Class (n = 30)
F = Females (n = 17)
M = Males (n = 13)
2 = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
3 = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
2F = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
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### Appendix G-Pretest Results: White Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
### Appendix H-Pretest Results: White Female

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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| Teacher | 47  | 53  | 38  | 43  | 50  | 44  | 40  | 63  | 37  |
| Maid    | 3   | 0   | 8   | 0   | 6   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 12  |
| Secretary | 50  | 47  | 54  | 57  | 44  | 56  | 60  | 37  | 50  |

**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
### Appendix I-Pretest Results: Asian Female

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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### Appendix J-Pretest Results: Asian Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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### Whole Class and Subgroup Codes

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
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### Appendix K-Posttest Results: Hispanic Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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#### Whole Class and Subgroup Codes

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
### Appendix L - Posttest Results: Hispanic Female

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
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## Appendix M-Posttest Results: African-American Female

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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### Whole Class and Subgroup Codes

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
Appendix N-Posttest Results: African-American Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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Teacher 13 6 23 29 0 11 60 0 0
Football Player 60 53 69 36 81 33 40 75 88
Janitor 27 41 8 36 19 56 0 25 12

**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
## Appendix O: Posttest Results: White Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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### Whole Class and Subgroup Codes

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
Appendix P-Posttest Results: White Female

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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Teacher | 60 | 59 | 62 | 57 | 63 | 56 | 60 | 63 | 63 |
Maid    | 7  | 6  | 8  | 14 | 0  | 11 | 20 | 0  | 0  |
Secretary | 33 | 35 | 31 | 29 | 37 | 33 | 20 | 37 | 37 |

**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
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Appendix Q-Posttest Results: Asian Female

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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Maid   | 20| 29| 8 | 21| 19| 33 | 0  | 25 | 12 |
Lawyer | 20| 12| 31| 29| 12| 11 | 60 | 12 | 12 |
Store Manager | 60| 59| 62| 50| 69| 56 | 40 | 63 | 75 |

**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W** = Whole Class (n = 30)
- **F** = Females (n = 17)
- **M** = Males (n = 13)
- **2** = Second Grade Students (n = 14)
- **3** = Third Grade Students (n = 16)
- **2F** = Second Grade Females (n = 9)
- **2M** = Second Grade Males (n = 5)
- **3F** = Third Grade Females (n = 8)
- **3M** = Third Grade Males (n = 8)
Appendix R-Posttest Results: Asian Male

Percentage of subjects (whole class or subgroups) choosing response

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**Whole Class and Subgroup Codes**

- **W = Whole Class (n = 30)**
- **F = Females (n = 17)**
- **M = Males (n = 13)**
- **2 = Second Grade Students (n = 14)**
- **3 = Third Grade Students (n = 16)**
- **2F = Second Grade Females (n = 9)**
- **2M = Second Grade Males (n = 5)**
- **3F = Third Grade Females (n = 8)**
- **3M = Third Grade Males (n = 8)**
References
(* denotes research)


Hankin, R. (1985). *I can be a fire fighter*. Chicago: Children's Press. (In the *I Can Be Series*)


