

2005 年国際ワークショップ及び公開講演会報告

日本発達心理学会企画委員長 田中 みどり

2005 年国際ワークショップは、ハーヴァード大学のロバート・セルマン (R. L. Selman) 教授を講師とし、渡辺弥生法政大学教授をホストとして、8月17日(水曜)~20日(土曜)の4日間「対人理解および社会的文脈理解に関する発達研究 理論の構築と教育・臨床実践への活用」というテーマで早稲田国際会議場会議室で開催されました。大学の研究者や院生から小学校や相談機関などの現場の方々を含めて54名の方々にご参加いただきました。公開講演会は「教育における対人理解および社会的文脈力の育成」というテーマで8月19日の午前中に同会議室で開かれ、116名の方々にご参加くださり、盛会のうちに終了しました。共催して下さいました(財)発達科学研究教育センター及び早稲田大学人間総合研究センターの関係各位に厚く御礼申し上げます。

セルマン先生は、日本ではジレンマ事態を用いた社会的視点取得の発達段階の研究が1970年代から広く紹介されご高名ですが、今回のワークショップではその後30年以上にわたって発達理論研究と現実の子どもの発達評価と子どもへの臨床/教育実践をお互いに緊密に関連させて研究を進ませて来られた姿を、幼児期から青年期にわたる種々の例を交えてお話くださいました。これは先生ご自身が、研究者の視点ばかりでなく、学校の教室と大学の研究室を架橋する大学院生の視点、現場で毎日子どもに教える教師の視点、さまざまな社会階層出身で多様な文化的背景をもつ子どもたちの視点などを自在に取られて、それらの視点を十分理解して協調させながら進めて来られた実践的な成果であることが理解されました。先生は最初は臨床家をめざされたとのことでしたが、一人ひとりの子どもの成長を援助できる研究を誠実に貫いていらした姿勢に深い感銘を受けました。

特に公開講演会では日本人が書いた「からすたろう」を用いたアメリカでの研究=教育実践例もつぶさにお話してくださいました。先生の視野の広さや、子どもたちの視点から発達を捉えようとするきめ細やかな配慮とともに、実際の研究を進める生の姿が印象的でした。ホストを務めてくださった渡辺弥生先生のご説明とともにセルマン先生が当初ご用意くださった大学院生と共著の原稿を掲載させていただき、ご報告と致します。是非ご一読くださいますようお願いいたします。

日本発達心理学会 2005 年度国際ワークショップ担当特別委員：渡辺 弥生 (法政大学)

2005 年度国際ワークショップの講師として、ハーバード大学の教育学研究科および医学部の教授でもあります、Selman, R.L. 先生をお迎えすることができました。ご多忙なスケジュールをぬって、8月の酷暑の中来日していただいた Selman 先生には深い感謝の意を表させていただきたいと思えます。こうした機会を実現できましたのは、日本発達心理学会ならびに、共催していただいた(財)発達科学研究教育センターと早稲田大学人間総合研究センターのおかげです。心より感謝いたします。この企画が実現するまでのプロセスを振り返りますと、本当にたくさんの方々にサポートしていただきました。特に、日本発達心理学会企画委員の先生方にはワークショップまでの長期間本当に助けいただきありがとうございました。また、裏方で奮闘していただいた早稲田大学と法政大学の大学院や

学部生のみなさん、素敵なポスターを作成していただいた谷口高士先生、かなりの英文を短期間で訳していただいた公開講演会通訳の水野修次郎先生、に御礼申し上げたいと思います。さらには、国際ワークショップをグループワークや研究発表、懇親会と素晴らしい国際交流の機会にさせていただいたのは参加者の皆様お一人お一人のお蔭です。改めて感謝申し上げます。

Selman先生は、ボストン大学で博士号を取得され、1960年代後半から1970年代前半には、道徳性の発達段階で著名なKohlberg先生と共同研究をされていました。1975年から1990年には、ジャッジベーカーセンターにあるマンヴィル校の校長をつとめられ、社会的、情緒的な問題をもつ子ども達の特別支援や臨床支援に、ペアセラピーなどを導入してかかわってこられました。1973年に対人発達研究グループを組織し、1992年からはハーバード大学大学院でリスクと予防のプログラムを展開されています。1990年代からは、子ども達の対人理解の発達理論を基盤に、人格形成プログラムとして、幼児から児童を対象にVLF (Voices of Love and Freedom)や、青年期生徒を対象にFHQ (Facing History and Ourselves)を教育現場に導入され、教師のトレーニングや子どもの発達における効果を検討されています。2003年、『The Promotion of Social Awareness』をまとめられ、対人理解の発達理論だけでなく、社会性を育むVLF実践や、教師のかかわりかたの重要性など幅広い観点からまとめられています。

今回は、国際ワークショップのテーマとして、Selman先生から「対人理解および社会的文脈理解に関する発達研究 - 理論の構築と教育・臨床実践への活用 - 」というタイトルをいただきました。今日、世界中の子ども達が、人と人が争うニュースや攻撃シーンに毎日のように曝されています。しかし、社会的な文脈や状況を理解し判断することに未熟な子ども達が、そうした出来事、事件をどのように受け止めていくのか、その発達についてはいまだ明らかにされていません。ワークショップでは、こうした子ども達が成長する段階で、個人間の争いだけでなくグループ間の対立、差別などそうした社会的な世界や対人関係の文脈をどのように意識し、理解していくのかについて、今迄の研究成果を多数のパワーポイントやプリントを用いて盛りだくさんにご紹介いただきました。

また、児童期、青年期の対人理解の研究が、教育実践にどのように活用されるかについてお話いただき、具体的に取り組まれている実践方法であるVLF実践やFHQ実践について紹介していただきました。対人関係における自己と他者の視点を調整する能力の発達が、対人理解や、個人や集団の葛藤を解決する方略、さらには、より広い社会的な関係の文脈を考慮することいかに重要であるかについて説明いただきました。その際、発達差や文化差、さらには判断する人間が今どのような状況におかれているかという状況差についても配慮すること、すなわち、個々の人間がもつ個人的意味の重要性についても示唆されました。

公開講演会は、「対人理解における社会的文脈力の発達と育成 発達心理学研究を教育現場で活用して - 」のテーマでお話されました。学校の授業の中で児童・生徒の社会的な文脈力をどのように育み道徳的な認知や行動レベルを高めていけばよいのか、そのプロセスにおいて、教師がどのような役割を果たすのか、という問いを、教育現場に介入した大学院生の視点を通してお話いただきました。いじめが頻繁に起こる教育現場で、それに取り組むある担任教師の対応に大きな刺激をうけながら、しだいに互いに寄り添いコラボレートしていくプロセスが丁寧に語られました。また、従来、経験的には理解され

ながらも、強烈な社会的テーマをもつ文学作品を読むことが、実際に子どもたちの読み書き能力や、生徒の人格形成に大きな影響を及ぼしていることを実証した研究がないことを批判されました。そして、良質な文学作品を子供たちに与えることは、人間の動機や行動に社会的文脈の違いが大きく関与していることに気づかせ意識を高めることができること、また、そうした意識の高まりが他者を疎外したりいじめたりする誘惑に抵抗力をもたせ、寛容な望ましい行動を導くことを述べられました。

教育実践に取り上げたいいくつかの文学作品を紹介されましたが、特に「からすたろう」という文学作品の中の「ちび」という登場人物の理解を通して、子どもたちにどのような社会的文脈力があるのか、またどのような違いをもつのかを把握しようとした研究プロセスが説明されました。「ちび」がおかれた疎外の事実を子どもたちが単に「良い」「悪い」と判断するのかどうかや、「なぜ」疎外されたのかという判断理由を考えさせるのではなく、「どのように」違いを感じ解釈したのか、という個人の反応差をできるだけ漏れ溢さず取り上げるために、発問の内容や数から非常に苦労されたことが語られました。さらに興味深かったのは、Selman 先生ご自身が 30 年来研究されてきた、発達段階についての評価方法、すなわち、子どものプロトコルによって発達差を読み取ることができるという考え方が、教育現場にいるとかならずしも発達差だけでは説明しえない、学校のまさにそのクラスのそのときの状況や、個々の子どもが住んでいる特定の社会、文化環境の文脈とダイナミックに絡み合う事実ふれ、子どもを理解することの難しさや奥深さを感じられたことを赤裸々に語られたことです。質的な研究方法を取り上げられたプロセスなども詳しく説明されているので、発達心理学の研究者として理論と実践の関係、研究者の姿勢やリサーチクエスションの持ち方を考えるうえでとても有意義なお話をいただいたと思います。どうぞ、後頁に、Selman 先生が公開講演会のためにご準備された原稿をそのまますべて掲載しましたのでぜひご一読ください（公開講演会では時間の関係から一部のみでした）。

全体を通して、対人理解や友情などについてこれまで第一線で研究されてきた成果を盛りだくさんに講義していただき、非常に貴重なワークショップになりました。1970 年代からの研究で用いられたジレンマストーリーの映像材料も始めて拝見することができましたし、貴重な教育実践の一コマも紹介していただきました。個人的には、在外研究でご指導いただいた以来 VLF 実践について指導していただいておりますが、今回そのほかの教育実践やプロジェクトについても新たにふれることができ多くの刺激を受けました。特に、Selman 先生ご自身が、子どもの発達研究について方法論的にこれまでいろいろな苦労をされてきたプロセスを垣間見ることができ、発達研究の奥深さを感じることができました。個別にジレンマストーリーを呈示して反応から段階を提唱しようとした臨床法から、発達段階を客観的にアセスメントするための質問紙法の開発過程、理論を教育現場に活用するための教育実践への介入過程、そして現在、子どもたちひとりひとりのプロトコルから子どもたちの心の構造や発達過程を明らかにしていく質的なかわりの意義など豊富な経験から語っていただき、発達心理学に携わる研究者のあるべき姿勢を教えていただいたことに深く感銘しています。

参加された皆様のご興味や背景の多様性を考えますと、今回の国際ワークショップが今後さらに多くの研究や実践を生み出すきっかけになるのではないかと楽しみに思います。本論を通してこの領域の広がりや奥行きが益々発展していくことを心より願ってやみません。

Practice-Embedded Researcher Tales
A Search for the Origins of Teasing in (and all over) the Real World:
A Public Lecture: Tokyo, Japan
August, 2005
Delivered by Robert L. Selman, Harvard University
Sponsored by: the Japanese Society of Developmental Psychology
Written with:

Shira Lee Katz, Rochelle Johnston, Jen Mason, and members of the Project Aspire
Practice-Based Research Group (August 11, 2005)

Prologue

“My children are being downright cruel to each other,” said 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Barnes. “There is a group of boys that refuses to sit near Stan because they say he smells ‘funky’. They taunt him, “Why are you so black? Did your mama keep you in the oven too long?” It’s really becoming a serious problem. Isn’t there something your program can do to help them?” Mrs. Barnes was addressing her plea to Shira Katz, a second year doctoral student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Shira already had a good deal of experience with the promotion of elementary grade students’ social relationships. Before coming to our doctoral program, Shira spent several intense years working as a prevention specialist in the public schools in Chicago, Illinois. There, she provided needed social skills and violence prevention services to students thought to be at risk for psychiatric or legal difficulties--or both--if something was not done to help them before things got worse. Shira heard Mrs. Barnes’ lament at the beginning of her second year in the role of “the Practice-Embedded Researcher” in the program to which Mrs. Barnes made reference--Project Aspire.

Project Aspire is our multi-leveled prevention program focused on building an elementary school’s capacity to address student social and emotional learning and to improve school climate.¹ One of our goals is to teach elementary school children in the Boston Public Schools about issues of cultural identity, social awareness, conflict resolution, ethical relationships, and citizenship, through high-quality children’s literature. Another goal is to understand through research how *all* children make meaning of texts with powerful social themes. The Practice-Embedded Researcher is a very important role in Project Aspire. This past year, Shira supervised masters level practice interns who were learning to teach a literacy and social skills curriculum, and research interns who collected and analyzed data on what the students knew about these issues and what they were learning.

Each year for the past six years, masters level practice interns from HGSE have partnered

with teachers at one of two elementary schools in Dorchester, a neighborhood in Boston which has been the home to immigrants who come without many economic resources to the United States from all over the world for the past 200 years, to use children's multicultural literature to promote children's social skills and conceptions. They serve as a teacher or co-teacher one hour per week, using books selected from a curriculum that focuses on the intersection of literacy and social awareness (Lobron and Selman, 2005). Each four-to six-week unit focuses on one book from our list of multicultural literature.ⁱⁱ For the 2004-2005 school year we selected four books as the cornerstones of our research and practice efforts for the year: *Crow Boy* by Taro Yashima, *Angel Child Dragon Child* by Michele Maria Surat, *Girl Wonder* by Deborah Hopkinson, and *Freedom Summer* by Deborah Wiles. Each of these books brings a powerful message to students about social equity and equality, dealing with issues of ethnocentrism, sexism, racism, and in the case of *Crow Boy*, the book I will focus on today, ostracism, teasing and bullying (See Appendix A for a synopsis of each of these books

During each four-to-six week unit, the practice focused interns, under Shira's supervision, systematically collected data on students' written reactions to these books. Interns began the unit by reading the book aloud to 3rd and 4th grade students, who then filled out a worksheet with three or four questions about the book. (Interns and teachers interviewed 1st grade students in small groups because of their limited writing ability, asking the same questions that are on the 3rd/4th grade worksheet.) At least one question addressed the central social tension of the story; at least one focused on ways students thought the characters could negotiate the social conflicts that arose in the story, and at least one focused on the perspective of one or more main characters in the book as they made meaning of their own experience of the narrative plot.

These questions (or in research lingo, "prompts") were developed based upon a pilot study¹ begun in the summer of 2004, as well as our past theory, research and practice experience discussing socially complex stories with elementary school children. Students completed the same questionnaire at the beginning and end of this four-to-six week unit. One purpose of collecting data, both at the beginning and end of the unit, was to explore if instruction and classroom interaction had any identifiable effects on children's ability to understand and to interpret social issues in stories. What theories, we asked, do children bring with them to help them comprehend these stories; what ideas do they have as they read and discuss these books with their teachers and fellow students (and hopefully with their parents). What beliefs, insights and interpretations of the stories and the characters' experiences do they take away from this educational experience.

¹ This pilot research and the research undertaken this year have been funded by the Third Millennium Foundation, an innovative foundation which focuses on the connection between research and practice in the field of tolerance education and human rights, especially the early and middle childhood years.

The Classroom: A place for Practice-Embedded Researchers to obtain theoretical inspiration and to return with usable knowledge.

Having heard pleas similar to Mrs. Barnes's from several teachers at Kimball Elementary, Shira spun through her mental Rolodex of articles, books, and talks for an answer to Mrs. Barnes request. Shira's initial inclination was to offer practical articles and a summary of research findings on school based preventions, but this approach was not ideal. For one thing, her experience in the Chicago Public Schools told her that throwing abstract data at the problem, or even concrete generalities about classroom management, would not provide a satisfactory answer.

Like the public schools in Chicago, the Kimball was an urban school attended by students who were mostly of African-American and Latino-American heritage and from families with low incomes. Much of the research on the nature of bullying, on how to create a caring climate in a classroom community and on social-emotional programming, however, was based on children from middle class backgrounds. In addition, if there was one thing that cultural anthropology and psychology research literature emphasized, it was that teasing has very different meanings and boundaries in varying cultures, and with so many cultures represented in the school, no "one size fits all" rule would work. Furthermore, this was a school with its own culture and rules of conduct by which students must abide. Shira knew her response would require an in-depth understanding about the specific and particular issues that her students faced and ample time to determine what techniques would best address these issues and resulting classroom conflicts.

Instead of citing research, Shira asked: "Well, what kinds of things are you doing so far?" Mrs. Barnes listed ten elaborate strategies that she had tried, including group discussions and a list of rules about "No teasing" generated by the class. She had also taken Stan to the nurse to address his body odor, which appeared to be an actual problem. Shira was astounded by Mrs. Barnes's creativity in confronting the teasing in her classroom.

"But it's not working," the teacher said, exasperated. "The teasing never completely stops, and even after they make rules for no teasing, in a short while it picks right up again. Mrs. Barnes and Shira commiserated about the difficulty of helping students modify their behavior.

"I can tell them that it's wrong all day long but it's just not registering." Mrs Barnes said.

"Why do the children say they tease?" Shira asked.

"What do you mean?" Mrs. Barnes replied.

"You know. I presume that you know *what* they say when they tease, but do they say *why* they tease? Or have you noticed any patterns about the *way* they tease?"

With more discussion, Mrs. Barnes and Shira decided that it was important to find out as much as possible about the nature of bullying and teasing from the students' perspective. Who's in and who's out in her classroom? What does teasing mean to the students themselves? How

do they weigh its costs and its benefits; how do they judge its risks and rewards?

Back at Harvard's Project Aspire offices, Shira discussed the dilemmas with our research team. One of the books we had planned to develop for our research-based curriculum was *Crow Boy*, the story of a young boy in Japan who is ostracized by his classmates—because they view him as “different— from the very first day he comes to school through until five years later, the last year at the school. He is a shy and undersized for his age. He lives far away in the countryside and walks a great distance to and from school. He wears a coat made of zebra grass when it rains, plays with insects, and brings the same lunch—a rice ball wrapped in a radish leaf—to school every day. Right from the beginning of his first days at school, he is given a nickname, Chibi, which means “tiny boy.” We decided that we would use students' responses to questions about this classic book to begin to explore the origins of their thinking about teasing—as well as about tolerance—of those who are different, who don't fit in. When *Crow Boy* was published fifty years ago, the New York Times review said “This picture book about childhood in Japan is a gentle reminder that children are much the same everywhere.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The Practice-Embedded Researcher's Tale: Shira's report to the research team of what she found when she returned to the field.

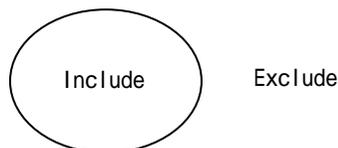
“Returning to the school, I read *Crow Boy* to the students and was met with outcries of “grooooooooooooooooooss” and “eeeeew” when I read the parts about the little boy, Chibi's rice ball lunch and zebra grass coat. Students' outbursts did not seem particularly hateful, yet there was a sense that they believed that there were aspects of Chibi's personality that were, at the least, idiosyncratic. There was also a strong sense that his behavior seemed off because it did not fit with the culturally American model in which most were immersed. During the read-aloud, I viewed my job more as researcher than teacher, and refrained from responding to students' negative view of Chibi with instructive (or prescriptive) lessons about the venality of teasing. Instead, I called upon all of the self-restraint I could muster and helped them only to summarize their statements and correct any factual or overt misunderstandings. I wanted the collection of their ideas to be as pure, spontaneous and unguarded as possible and was afraid that any type of commentary on my part would taint our data collection.

Following the book reading, we collected students' responses to our prompts, one of which was: *The children made fun of Chibi because he had a funny jacket, played with insects, and looked at the ceiling all of the time. Why do you think the children made fun of Chibi for doing these things?* When our research group initially analyzed students' responses we had many interesting findings. Most of the 3rd grade students and virtually all of the 4th grade students discussed how the children called Chibi names because of something (e.g., looks, dress) that was *wrong* with him. We had anticipated responses in which students responded that children teased Chibi because they had never known anyone who played with insects or because they were

jealous that he was recognized by their teacher for being an exceptional artist. To our surprise, few students placed blame on those that teased Chibi. Instead, they located the problem totally within Chibi.

One student, Malique, wrote a response that epitomized the mentality of victim blaming. Responding to the prompt, Malique opined “Because, it's dumb to do those things. Some people have insects. He has a weird jacket. They probably thinks he a freak. When people look at the ceiling they might think he's a retarded person just like special-ed children.”

Answers similar to Malique’s were echoed by several other students, so Mrs. Barnes and I decided to learn more about the victim-blaming mentality that was so pronounced in students’ written answers. We wondered if the wording of the question had unduly influenced students to place more blame on the victim, Chibi, rather than to look at what was going on with the perpetrators. I drew on the blackboard the following diagram and asked students to define the words “include” and “exclude.”



We defined these words together and then made a list of the ways that Chibi was included and excluded in the story. It was apparent from students’ responses that they held Chibi responsible for being different. “He’s a weirdo,” said one child. “He’s just different,” said another. When I asked students if they thought that the children who teased Chibi were mean or unfair to Chibi, only two students said they did think the treatment was unfair and the others in the class looked blankly at me. Said one of the few students who defended Chibi: “Maybe they are jealous of Chibi because he is the teacher’s pet and that’s why they teased him.” (Incidentally, this student scored consistently high on perspective taking questions in our research throughout the year.)

After the informal discussion with the students, I talked with the teacher. I asked her about teasing in her classroom. “It’s tough,” she said. “I’m surprised at some of the children who get teased. I mean...they are good, sweet children who get teased because of their skin color or things that are superficial. But there are some other children who are actually annoying and I do understand why they get teased. Shaniece *has* to raise her hand every time I ask a question. I mean *every* time, even though children say she’s a teacher’s pet. She is.” Mrs. Barnes’s comments about the students who also annoyed her were jarring. I had entered the class with the impression that students who teased were jealous of those that they teased or that the teasing that occurred was completely unfounded—almost random. To hear that the teacher felt there was some “objective,” or at least partly justifiable basis to the teasing forced me to reexamine my assumptions.

The Return to the Research Laboratory

With Shira's report to the lab group, our understanding of teasing was now being triangulated—our picture becoming more complex if not complete—with different data and information from different sources. We had learned:

- 1) Most students in the 3rd and 4th grades blamed those that were teased for being teased.
- 2) Most students felt that other children's non-normative behavior or appearance *deserved* negative reactions.
- 3) While much of the reason for teasing seemed to be based on superficial characteristics (e.g., looks), there was also a sense that some students were objectively more annoying or socially awkward than others and that these characteristics were at the root of the reason that they were teased.

In light of the classroom data on teasing, we discussed Stan as our case study. Was it the best approach to take Stan to the nurse and at the same time make class rules about teasing? Yes, we agreed. He needed to learn how to use deodorant because his Mom had not yet noticed him maturing, but other students should have handled their disgust in a wholly different manner. Both actions seemed sensible.

One of the boys who teased Stan mercilessly was Malique. After reading Malique's response and asking around at the school Mrs. Barnes found out that Malique had been in special education class himself until 3rd grade. When he got to 3rd grade, students had teased him because his head had been misshapen at birth. Malique's insecurities about himself were likely playing out as he teased Stan. Another student who teased Stan, however, was one of the most popular and intelligent students in the class. There seemed to be no obvious self-esteem issue that might cause him to act out against Stan. With these two prototypes in mind, we held two period-long class discussions with Mrs. Barnes's class.

Here, Shira's tale continues.

Mrs. Barnes and I decided to use the knowledge we had gained from the data collection to talk with the class. We used the exclude/include diagram from above, personalizing the discussion to focus on actual issues in the classroom. We asked the students to generate a list of ways that children in the class were excluded as well as reasons that children who excluded others might do this. I thought students would be shy about admitting the ways in which they teased each other. However, they were vocal and specific. Their list was as follows:

Reasons students in this classroom get teased:

- They are fat
- They are developing physically faster than other students
- Other students think they are nerdy
- Of the way they dress

- Of their hair
- They wear glasses
- They have trouble reading
- Of how they talk
- Other students think they aren't manly or womanly enough
- They bring a packed lunch from home
- They aren't very good at sports
- Of the family they come from
- They are from a religion that most students are not
- Of their skin color
- Of their name

Reasons students in this classroom tease:

- Some children are annoying and do stupid things
- They don't like some children
- They want to rule the class
- They want to be popular
- They've been teased themselves

We held a class discussion at length about the items on our lists. Mrs. Barnes and I told the class that when we read over their response in *Crow Boy* we had noticed that almost all, if not all, of them had come to the conclusion that there was something wrong with Chibi.

“But then *he* shows them at the end with the crow calls,” one boy protested.

“That is true,” I said. “Did you like that part?”

“Yea!” said many of the students with enthusiasm.

I was intrigued by the students' responses because it clued me into the fact that while they located blame with Chibi, they were also rooting for him to stand up for himself, and to fight back against the tormentors. In essence, their story about teasing (and therefore my story about teasing) could not end with the teasing. The response of the victim was important in determining how to judge the victim.

When I asked students what they noticed about the lists, they commented that the first list was longer and that some of the things on the first list didn't seem like “big things”. Several students also began to tell stories about ways in which they had been teased.

By the time our discussion ended, we had come to a few conclusions as a class. We concluded that:

- 1) Everyone except for two boys had been teased during the school year so far.

- 2) No one felt good about teasing and many students felt like they wanted to cry or tease back when they were teased.
- 3) Many students said they had teased other students because they had been teased themselves.
- 4) Based on the list of ways that students in the class were teased, students concluded that children were teased most often for their accent, skin color, and clothing. Rarely were students outwardly teased for their academic performance in class or if their behavior in class was disruptive.

While at the same time trying to understand the motivation behind teasing and the instances in which it is the most prevalent in the classroom, Mrs. Barnes and I thought it necessary to take a firm stand on how students should be expected to treat one another. Instead of making an unenforceable and unrealistic zero tolerance “teasing policy” or finishing the lesson on teasing with pedantic rhetoric about banishing all teasing for all times, we decided to treat the class discussion as our jumping off point for our expectations about teasing in the classroom.

We said that it was clear that teasing was very common in the classroom and that it occurred for a variety of reasons. We said that it seems that lots of times students who tease think they are *just kidding*, but those who are teased take the teasing *seriously*. Because it seemed impossible to eradicate all teasing, we told the students that we were going to concentrate on ending the *three types of teasing* that were the most widespread (teasing based on accent, skin color and clothing), and that the students thought were most serious in the class. We also made it clear that despite the fact that there may be reasons that children tease each other, it was unacceptable to tease in certain places: the classroom, the playground, the hallways and the cafeteria. That did not leave much space to tease. We also said that we were not expecting that all students had to get along perfectly but that we expected students to channel negative feelings into productive actions that did not hurt other students. And, if one student thought that he was just fooling but the victim took it seriously, the two of them needed to find ways to work that out, even if it meant getting the teacher involved. Most of the children seemed as if they were buying in, but of course, some were dubious.

The discussion with the students was a first step, and we tried to remind them of our discussion throughout the year. Over the next few weeks, there were still several instances of teasing, but Mrs. Barnes and I could refer back to our discussions about *Crow Boy* whenever an incident arose. This background knowledge was helpful for students to quickly assess the type of teasing they were engaging in and some reasons they were teased.

Eight months later, on June 20, 2005, the last day that I spent with Mrs. Barnes’s 4th grade class, she received a packet of letters from her students. Each student had written about the

activities and books that were most meaningful to them during the school year. The mixed look of glee and nostalgia on my face must have inspired LuLu to say: “Is that the kind of gift that keeps on giving?”

“Yes, LuLu,” I laughed at her sweetly Hallmark comment.

Later that night when I was able to read through the children’s letters, I made an interesting discovery. More than a third of the class had selected *Crow Boy* as their favorite book (out of the four books that Aspire had selected to have the students read during the year).

“I liked Crow Boy because he did cro calls at the end and he showed them,” said Terra.

“Crow Boy was my favrit book cuz he had special talents and that’s why they called him Crow Boy.”

I was excited that students remembered and enjoyed the books that we read, and dumbfounded that they viewed *Crow Boy* as a story of triumph. More memorable to them than his strange or atypical behavior and the way he was teased was that he was victorious in the end. These letters, an unexpected source of data, helped us to understand another aspect of teasing that we had not before considered. Students can still have a strong sense of empathy for those characters that are teased and may even secretly want those people to triumph. As for me, I felt like their teacher in partnership with Mrs. Barnes, and I thought about how naïve it had been to think of myself as only a researcher. Mrs. Barnes and I may have thought we had different roles with the children, but it was clear that our conversations and common interest in them had necessitated us to integrate these two domains. In fact, we had acted both as teachers and researchers—two identities that were now inextricably linked.

PART II: How and Why Teasing Happens in the Real World: Exploring the Students’ Own Location of the Problem

The fourth floor of Larsen Hall at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, is about five miles from the Kimball School in Dorchester, but it is not that easy to get from one place to the other. Public transportation from the area around the University, where most of the research and practice interns reside, requires a subway ride, and then a bus ride and finally a mile walk, to the school. A car ride during the day must pass through a great deal of traffic, and at certain times can take longer than the trip using public transportation. If a teacher from the school is invited to Cambridge for a meeting with the research team, parking on the street is hard to find, and parking lots expensive on a teacher’s salary.

But it is hard to get from one place to the other culturally as well as geographically. Often, students and faculty from Harvard are seen to the school staff as simultaneously arrogant and naïve. They are perceived as thinking too much of themselves, and knowing too little of the “real world” of urban education.

The Practice-Embedded Researcher in ASPIRE bridges these worlds. At the beginning of the school year—when teachers had conveyed to us that teasing was a serious problem in their classrooms—the research group knew there were literally thousands of ways to measure and understand how and why teasing occurred in the classroom. As both a research and practice representative, Shira felt obligated to represent the voice of the teachers while at the research meeting, and that of the researchers while in the classroom. She wanted to represent both sides' wishes and concerns fairly, to stay true to the spirit of an effective partnership. The pull from both sides was oftentimes overwhelming for her.

Our research methods could have been drastically different from the ones we selected. We could have conducted observations of student teasing during school; we could have asked students to fill in a questionnaire about their attitudes towards teasing at the beginning and end of the year; we could have asked teachers and parents to discuss their child's teasing habits and patterns or done a case study of the school with an emphasis on understanding the culture of teasing.

However, the practice embedded developmental psychologist seeks to work as close to, and as closely with, educational practitioners as possible. This means doing research as immediately relevant to the needs of the school as possible, and in 2004, those needs were for instructional improvement in academics. It was not coincidental that our research on the promotion of social awareness was fully integrated into the academics of literacy, the most powerful concern facing principals and teachers.^{iv} And policymakers and politicians and parents. In the state of Massachusetts, as across the United States, for the first time in its history, the performance of all students on standardized tests (called the MCAS) are used as indicators of how well schools are doing, and if the scores in a school are low, the school's existence and the faculties jobs are at great risk..

Of course, many teachers have used books like *Crow Boy*, *Freedom Summer*, or *Girl Wonder* to improve children's literacy skills, as well as social emotional learning, multicultural awareness, or education for social justice. They know that the basic incentive to reading with comprehension is to have a purpose for reading and writing, for thinking and discussion.. They know that children form important social relationships that need constant repair, that children observe social inequity and want to combat it. These issues, teachers know, are uppermost in children's minds, and are the issues that motivate them to read, write think and discuss But there is very little research that tells us either how reading about powerful social issues actually improves literacy, or whether reading these books actually improves in any way students' character, or their social relationships, or prevents intolerance.^v

This gap in the scientific knowledge base led our group to pose the following guiding **Research Question:**

What are the developmental (e.g. chronological age, grade level) and cultural (e.g., gender, social class, ethnic) variations in elementary grade student's awareness of social issues portrayed in children's literature? In other words, we were interested in knowing what beliefs, theories, and concepts students brought to a text, and which ones they took away. This led to a research agenda with the following operational questions:

1. How do we measure children's awareness of social issues in literature?
2. How do children's levels of awareness of social texts vary across age/grade-level and as a function of their background? What role does school context play in the way they express their awareness
3. What is the connection between the development of students' literacy skills and social awareness?

In our case, social awareness means attentiveness to issues such as how we deal with others who are outside our group, and why we include or exclude others who are different from us, racially, ethnically, by gender, or simply because, like Chibi, they just don't "fit in". The four books we selected feature these central themes. As practitioners, we assumed that as students gain a greater awareness of human motivation and the influences of contextual and cultural variations on human behavior, they will be better able to resist the temptation to exclude and tease others. We know that greater social awareness is not nearly sufficient to control or predict all the complexities of children's social behavior, but our research demonstrates it is a necessary condition (Selman, 2003).

We considered our data collection strategy carefully. To acquire information about how children developed social awareness as they grew older, we needed to work with children of various ages. To understand students' thoughts on a developmental trajectory, we selected literature we could introduce in 1st, 3rd, and 4th grade—the grades in which we were both teaching and collecting data. Experience also told us that it was probably ineffective to ask children directly about teasing, either personally or abstractly, and that using fiction books might elicit more genuine reactions from the students. The experiences of fictional characters are one step removed from children's own lives and therefore less emotionally threatening to talk about. Finally, we knew that we had an opportunity to capitalize on the already established routine in the classroom, and we decided to integrate data collection as seamlessly as possible into the existing curriculum. We wanted students not to be taken too far off their normal course at school.

The Principal Investigator's Tale: The Data are My People

Our group met in early October to develop the question we would ask students about a central theme in *Crow Boy*: "Why do you think the children made fun of Chibi?" Around the

table with me were several doctoral students with interests in literacy and social awareness, including Amy and Iva, and three master degree students who had enrolled in my research experience course, Kelly, Ann-Marie, and Rochelle. Also there was Jen, the project manager, and Bernadette, a student at the Harvard Divinity School who was working on data from another of our research books, *Freedom Summer*. And of course, there was Shira.

“But what’s to say that children don’t just say that they make fun of him for wearing the weird coat or playing with insects,” said Iva. “Let’s just say they name the traits we are talking about but do not take it to another level of complexity or abstraction?”

“They’ll know what we mean,” said Shira.

“I’m not so sure. I might answer with all of the factual details of the book instead of answering with the ‘deeper’ answer we are looking for, and I’m an adult,” replied Iva.

“I agree that adults might not even think to answer at the so-called deeper level that we are intending,” pointed out Jen.

“Does it really matter, though? Aren’t we interested in whether a child interprets that question as one in which he has to list the behaviors versus one in which he has to explain the behaviors from a broader perspective?” said Bernadette.

“Yea, but if all the children from all the grades say that he’s weird because of the coat, then we’ve just constructed a bad prompt or question,” I said. “We won’t see any variation. A question that seems appropriate to a teacher because all the children in her class can answer it correctly, is not always as useful to a researcher who wants to see how students at different ages (or from different backgrounds,) or under different conditions will vary in their answer to it, and is not as concerned if the question is too difficult for some of the students.”

Besides, what does “answer it” mean? We need to find some questions for which answers are not simply accurate or objective comprehension of the text, like what did Crow Boy eat each day for lunch, but that require students to interpret the actions and motives, the reasons behind the choices made by the characters.. We will need to look at responses in terms of both how they differ from one another, and whether some interpretations seem not just different but deeper than others to us, rather than whether they are “correct” or not. If one response to our question is “Chibi is teased because he is different,” and another, “Chibi is teased because the other students don’t like children to be different,” both responses are technically correct, but is one a more insightful response than the other? I think so, but that’s because I have a theory in my head that biases me in that way.

The group continued to discuss the wording of the questions over several meetings. Finally, we came to the consensus that the first research question/prompt should read: *The children made fun of Chibi because he had a funny jacket, played with insects, and looked at the ceiling all of the time. Why do you think the children made fun of Chibi for doing these things?* With this

question, we explicitly stated the descriptive details that we thought children might mention straight from the text. Thus we were explicitly encouraging the children to go beyond the description to think more deeply about motivation. We hoped that students would go beyond thinking about *how* Chibi was different to ponder instead *why* he was teased for those differences.. As social awareness researchers, we are primarily interested in how the students interpret the motivation and actions of the characters.. Crow Boy is certainly a story about unrecognized talent, and it is also a story about a child growing up in rural Japan in the 1920s. Fundamentally, however, Crow Boy tells a story about how children deal with and negotiate differences among individuals.

By the end of our talks we had agreed on five questions. But Shira, our Practice-Embedded Researcher, brought us back to the classroom, “Five questions seems like a lot for the students. Usually, their teacher gives them three questions, and they aren’t as complex or involved as some of ours.” We deferred to her, and to the classroom teacher, about the number and length of questions, agreeing that we preferred fewer questions, each encouraging rich and variable responses, than more questions likely to elicit superficial responses, or exhaust and bore the students. The process of bridging the research and practice arenas reminded us of the importance of balancing perspectives from both. ²

Shira noticed how differently she communicated when working at the school as a Practice-Embedded Researcher vs. when working as a member of the laboratory research group. The needs and issues of each group were quite different. Teachers tended to be oriented towards goals and products; and to be aware of how the current social dynamics in the classroom affected the students’ responses to the stories. One teacher explained that in her classroom some students were routinely teased for being larger or smaller than their peers, a difference that became a major issue at recess. She encouraged the practice intern, working with Shira, to be sensitive in describing Chibi’s size, suggesting, for example, that they not label Chibi as “too small,” but rather explain that the children teased him because they *thought* he was too small.

The intern took the cue from the teacher and was also intentional about the way she positioned students for the reading of the book. The teacher had shared her observation that during read alouds, the larger students usually moved chairs to the periphery of the rug because they could not comfortably sit on the floor. . The intern and the teacher agreed that it was important to create an atmosphere of equality so that the larger students would not feel “different” or “weird”, as Chibi did, because of their size. So the intern asked all students to bring chairs to the rug. Incidentally, this seating modification had the added advantage of encouraging more overall student participation, and the teacher and intern used this

² See Appendix B for the three questions we finally decided to ask for this story in our research.

configuration for the rest of the school year.

From their perspective outside the classroom, the research team was much more concerned with *why* and *how* we were measuring social awareness. By “why,” we mean the pressing questions to answer about why children teased one another. By “how,” we refer to the methods we used to shed light on our questions. Our group could afford, literally and figuratively, to think deeply about the protocol we used to collect data and to systematically analyze the students’ responses. Funded by a grant with no immediate or urgent constraints, we had the mental and physical space to engage in the perpetual act of fine tuning elements of the data collection and analysis process. However, I knew our grant also would eventually run out of funds, and if we wanted more funding, we would have to produce results and publish our findings in peer reviewed journals. So we also were under real and important, if not urgent, time and outcome pressures, and our methods and findings would be closely scrutinized.

Faced with strict deadlines and bottom lines, teachers and interns reached out to each other to figure out how to accommodate both research and practice goals. For instance, the interns intentionally incorporated state-mandated teaching practices (the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) that makes schools accountable for academic performance) into the techniques they devised to help the students think about issues of social relations and mutual respect presented in the stories. . For instance, when Shira read *Crow Boy* to students she asked them to *make predictions* about what the children would think of Chibi’s crow calls at the talent show. Students were required to state the problem, predict how some of the different characters might feel, and explain what they think might happen next. The teacher then capitalized on this lesson to reinforce the literacy notion of “making predictions.” She asked the students for evidence from the book to support their predictions. Students based their responses both on facts explicitly stated in the book and on inferences derived from their own personal understanding of social relationships, thus demonstrating a combination of literacy skills and social awareness. ^{vi}

Data collection, Shira reported, went as we had envisioned in the 3rd grade, but not as smoothly in grade 4. The 3rd grade teacher is a seasoned educator able to elicit remarkably good behavior from her students. Most of her students seemed engaged while listening to the story and were cooperative about heading to their desks and answering the questions about *Crow Boy*. The 4th graders, on the other hand, had taken advantage of the regular teacher’s absence for several weeks early in the year to develop a persistent classroom atmosphere of rowdiness. Their lack of focus was evident as we administered the writing prompts: they were restless during the reading of the story and less attentive answering the worksheet questions.

As two junior interns witnessed data collection in the grade 4 class, they wondered how the chaotic atmosphere might affect the validity of our data, and ultimately affect our conclusions,

which hinge on valid assessments of developmental and cultural variation in social awareness. Here, the classroom context, not developmental capacity or cultural experience, seemed to be the dominant influence on students' responses. From our own experience that in practice embedded research, we know that no two data collection sessions are identical, despite major efforts to make them so. I tried to reassure the interns that, although unfortunate, disparity is a normative feature of conducting practice embedded research in schools.

"But what if the 4th graders do worse on the prompts than the 3rd graders?" questioned Annmarie. "We can't just take that finding at face value."

"True," I agreed. "That's why you two interns are here today telling us about the differences in data collection and I'm making mental notes about the climate of the classroom and students' reactions to the book." The research team marveled at how important knowledge of this contextual information is to the interpretation of the data, if not its coding. And, of course, we discussed at length what Annmarie meant by "worse." This led to long theoretical discussion of what one means by different versus better responses in the domain of the development of social awareness.

It is hard not to place a value judgment on students' responses when you collect data. We became even more aware of this when we considered the evidence before us. At Project Aspire, we have historically assigned levels to indicate the depth of student social thinking in their responses.. We usually label the levels as *egocentric*, *unilateral*, *reciprocal or cooperative*, and assign corresponding numbers 0, 1, 2, or 3. We consider zero a low or shallow level response; and three to be a high (or deep) level response. This scoring model comes directly from developmental theory about the growth and trajectory of perspective taking and perspective coordination capacities in childhood and adolescence that I have worked on for over thirty years. It was so hard for me to put this theoretical construct aside! (Selman, 2003).

The research team and interns kept pushing me, however. Iva reacted strongly to a response from Nakita that received a perspective coordination score of 0- because it did not seem to take anyone's perspective into consideration. "But I've worked with her and she's really smart. She just wasn't performing to the best of her ability."

"We're not judging how smart she is," I said. "We're simply evaluating her response to this particular question on this particular day. We realize that it may not be a true reflection about how she best thinks or even acts. In fact, it may sound cruel, and definitely it is provocative and a bit misleading for me to say this, but given our research question we don't care that much about Nakita at all, just her response as one of many from the third grade girls as compared to responses of the fourth grade girls...or even of the boys!"

"Then why are we measuring her ability this way if it's not an indication of how she acts? Aren't we interested in learning about how children actually act and think, not how they appear

to act and think based on a small amount of data that might not fairly represent them?" Iva responded.

"Well, sort of yes, sort of no," I responded. "We are part of a pilot project focused on the *description* of how children at different ages and from different backgrounds develop their awareness of social issues--like inclusion and exclusion, teasing and respect. (At this point, we do not have a study that can focus on how Nakita, or any other student, acts, or even on her best thinking. In this phase of our research we are not *testing hypotheses*, e.g. fourth graders locate the problem less often in Chibi than do third graders. We are more interested in *developing methods to describe, and ultimately be able to assess* how concepts of difference develop in the minds of children in general than in the accuracy of our assessment of any one student. In that sense Nakita is just one of many participants. Of course, later on, once we have mapped out the scope and sequence of the concepts, we will want to do justice to each particular child. But, even now, we would not like to systematically underestimate the awareness of all of the students, or even a subset, say students with writing difficulties, for example. We also don't want to miss out on any of their theories of individual differences. This is what we have chosen to do now with our resources. Since you interns are actually in the field, not just reaping data from subjects, but watching teachers and students in classrooms, we have the terrific opportunity to see if our methods are systematically biased, and to develop some hunches about the connection, or disconnection, between children's measured depth of social awareness and what they actually say and even do in the real world of human interaction. In that sense, your observation is crucial."

This discussion between Iva and me is reflective of a larger issue that has consistently concerned our group since its inception. What specifically are we evaluating when we "level" (or assign numeric values to) students' answers. Might we get other kinds of helpful, complex, or interesting understandings of students' thinking by grouping students' responses by theme without necessarily leveling them? Wasn't there value in what students said because they would clue us into what *types* of things they were thinking as well as the *complexity* of their thought? Maybe several 3rd grader students, or the boys in both grades, had focused on Chibi's strange qualities while the 4th graders, or the girls, might have focused on the treatment of Chibi by others. What might that mean?

This discussion reopened the floodgate of all the questions for which we wanted answers, and deepened our level of thinking (just as we were hoping the children would do)... What role does reading ability play in how the students respond? What about the students who score well on written tasks of our measure of social awareness but who have difficulty getting along with their peers, or ones who score poorly on social awareness measures but get along well with classmates? Meetings with the research team were often marked by an examination of our assumptions about

children, research, and practice. It was hard to disentangle research questions that were simply descriptive (e.g., what does this response look like compared to other responses) from those that were focused on explanations (e.g., what causes the quantity and distribution of that kind of response, the quality of this one). We often ended up discussing the reasons why students were responding in one way versus another. To keep us focused on the descriptive research goals of creating ways to code the data, with only minimal concern for the conditions under which they were collected, and to make the point that there were several ways to interpret students' responses, I gave everyone at the table the following assignment:

"Here are all the responses, the data, I said, as I passed out typed sheets devoid of identifying characteristics such as the students' grade or gender. I want each person here to adopt their own method for scoring students' responses to *Crow Boy*. The exercise, I said, would be a way for us to see that the responses were very complex and that there was no "right" way (theory) to make sense of them.

"And remember," I provocatively exclaimed, "**The data are our people!**"

"What does that mean?" asked one of the junior interns who was not familiar with what at first glance appeared to be a "hard-nosed, uncaring" attitude toward child development research. It sounded like a very cruel comment to make, as if researchers, like me, really did not even care about the children..

"All I mean is that when you code data at this very early developmental phase in the construction of coding schemes, you should think of the data as responses, not as judgments about the humans who utter them. You're not judging the intelligence or the moral worth of these particular children. You're trying to get to the bottom of a phenomenon, in this case the developmental differences and the thematic differences in the students' own theories of what psychologists like to call "individual differences." Here this means the different reasons why students at the Kimball think that in *Crow Boy* the other children teased Chibi in class for the different types of food he ate and the different kinds of clothes he wore."

After more discussion, most of the group understood that I did not mean for us to discount the context of the school or to ignore salient personal details about students in trying to understand our data, but that we should try to be as theory-oriented as possible in understanding the phenomenon of teasing, and that "de-contextualizing," if only temporarily, the data would be a good first step towards a freer understanding. Furthermore, being open to more thematic and cultural (heterarchical), as well as developmental (hierarchical) models, would allow us to discuss the drawbacks and benefits of conducting different types of analyses. Many theoretical issues loomed to cloud what we were doing, and somehow we had to reserve judgment until we looked at how children's theories of teasing and exclusion looked. Our practice embedded research at the Kimball School had suggested to us that negative social interactions,

such as teasing, were never going to entirely go away, and that if, as researchers, we suggested they would if only we had the proper interventions, we were probably going to be seen as very naïve. However, our research might suggest some ways to contain teasing, or at least its most virulent forms, but not eradicate it. In fact, it could turn out that exposure to mild forms of teasing might actually build resilience and resistance.

Everyone worked hard on scoring students' responses that week. When we reconvened, there was excitement in the room. Each novice researcher used, or adopted, a different theoretical framework of their own choosing with which to understand the data. Kelly had analyzed the data by categorizing the types of reasons that children gave for thinking that Chibi was weird. Though students had not listed the same behaviors that we had listed in our question, they had listed other behaviors that to them seemed out of the ordinary (e.g., eating a riceball wrapped in radish leaf, not having any friends). Because students had simply extrapolated from the list that we had provided them, she felt that the wording of the question could be improved—could lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon of teasing and alienation in the story. Rochelle had coded the responses from an advocacy position. She had made a map of the ways that students blamed or defended Chibi, and thought about these responses in terms of the extent to which children were sticking up for Chibi's rights.

Discussion of Kelly and Rochelle's responses together underscored that most of the Kimball School students' responses had focused on what was wrong with Chibi.

As Shira put it, "Not one student in either grade speculated that Chibi was teased because people didn't like him or because the children who were teasing were jealous that their teacher had complimented Chibi on his drawings."

"Yea, but we didn't ask the question that way. We could have asked, 'What reasons might the other children have had for teasing Chibi?'" said Annmarie.

"Our question was open-ended enough," Shira replied, based on her own growing awareness that one could only ask so many questions, and any given question had both strengths and weaknesses.

"Maybe, maybe not," I replied. "Why don't you find out by talking to the students?" I asked. "Go back, show them what they wrote, and ask them what they meant. Then it won't be a guessing game and you will be doing real practice-embedded research."

The group agreed that a very important way to understand if 3rd and 4th grade students naturally blamed the victim of teasing or if the wording of the question biased their responses was to find out through more class discussions and in-depth individual interviews. It was at this juncture, when we had exhausted what we could know from our perches in our offices, that we modified our lessons on teasing and *Crow Boy* for the classroom and trudged back into Mrs. Barnes's class to discuss the new challenge with her and work with her students to learn more

about teasing.

Part 3: Practice-Inspired Research: Taking our findings “upstream” to the laboratory for further analysis

While some of us trudged back to the sometimes calamitous atmosphere of the classroom to deepen and re-contextualize our observations, others took the decontextualized data Shira and the practice interns had collected and brought them to the lab for cleaning and further analysis. In practice-embedded research, basic research analysis done in the lab is not only inspired and informed by its origins in practice but also collected in the activity of practice, even if not collected under what one often thinks of as controlled laboratory conditions. For instance, we did not “run subjects” in this branch of our Project Aspire research, although we do that kind of “experimental” research within our larger practice-based research operations.”³ However, we did go to the empirical journals to see what researchers who had done related work under laboratory conditions and with controlled experimental designs had to say about this issue. The answer: Not much. Most child development research on how children perceive and deal with differences has focused on children’s attitudes and perceptions about broad social categories of difference, such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Less research, at least in the American journals we scoured, had focused on children’s developing attitudes toward those who, like Chibi, were socially atypical.⁴

By April, we had collected our data. Each research intern then used a “grounded theory” approach to analyze students’ responses to the questions. This meant reading through the responses for themes and providing an ‘interpretive code’ for the cluster of responses. What we mean will become concrete and clearer when we share what Rochelle, one of our research interns, did with the students’ responses to *Crow Boy*. In particular, we asked Rochelle, who had a strong interest in human and individual rights work, to analyze the students’ responses to the prompt we described earlier as well as the following one:

“Why do you think the children changed how they felt about Chibi after they heard his crow calls?”

This prompt, too, requires students to do more than comprehend the literal meaning of the text. It asks the student to infer the story characters’ awareness; here, other students in Chibi’s school, of the personal meaning key events in the story have to them. In *Crow Boy*, toward the end of the story, the narrator tells us, “Every one of us cried, thinking how much we had been wrong to Chibi all those long years.” That certainly captures a personally meaningful moment

³ See the work of Amy Dray, for instance...

⁴ We have included a list of some relevant references to empirical research at the end of the paper.

in the story for all the players, and our question is designed to ascertain what the readers of the story think is the reason for why “the children changed.”

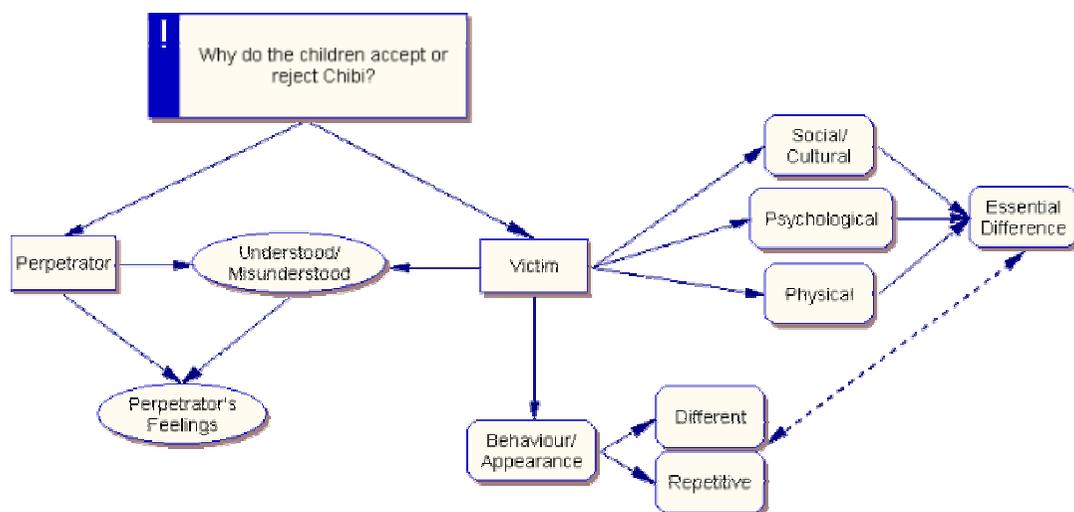
The Research Intern, Rochelle’s, Tale; Confessions of a Novice Grounded Theorist

When Bob, the P.I. asked me to come up with a theoretical framework, which would help us organize the data we had collected on *Crow Boy*, I was delighted. The reason I had decided to pursue an advanced degree was to understand how one could do research on matters of children’s rights, such as respect for individual differences. I decided to use a “grounded theory” approach we had studied in our research experience. Rather than having an explicit theoretical framework in mind, for example, looking for how well the students’ responses reflected the use of lower or higher levels of perspective coordination, I looked for common themes in the data to answer the question -- why do the children either accept or reject the outcast. A close and careful reading of each of the fifty or so student responses led me to cluster them within five interpretive themes.

The first theme was used by students who focused on Chibi’s (the victim/scapegoat/ excluded child’s) actual *overt behavior* as the source of the problem: that it was simply different (he did not do what other children did) or, more specifically, that it was repetitive (he *kept* looking at the ceiling) as well as different. Something about the repetition seemed to capture the concerns of a subset of our “sample.” The second theme focused not on his behavior or actions but on Chibi’s *appearance*: “his jacket was funny looking, he wears the same clothes every day, he dressed differently.” A third theme focused on Chibi’s *essentialism*. Students using this theme focused on some kind of essential or categorical difference between Chibi and the other students: They either thought he was a freak, or he was stupid, or as Malique said, “When people look at the ceiling they might think he’s a retarded person just like special-ed children.” This set of responses focused on Chibi’s “psychological essence.” I also identified another form of essentialism, e.g., he was short or funny looking which I called “a physical difference.” Students who used this theme suggested Chibi was teased because he was poor or lived on a farm. I labeled this “a social or cultural difference,” however, it was unclear whether the responses suggested this cause was or was not changeable.

Infrequently, but nevertheless more often than we observed in class discussions, two other themes emerged. One very rare theme was that Chibi was *misunderstood* by his classmates (“They never saw the cool stuff he could do. They never asked Chibi why he liked bugs or ate the same food everyday”). About five percent of the approximately fifty third- and fourth-grade responses were put into this category. The other theme was a focus on the *perpetrators’ or excluders’ feelings or motives*; for example that the other students wanted to start trouble (for excluding) or they felt mad at themselves for calling him names. About 10% of the responses were of this kind.

To be rigorous, and to ensure that the themes I perceived could be seen by other readers of the data, I wrote a coding manual (see Appendix C), and recruited two others members of our research group to apply these thematic and categorical codes to the data. The training went well, and I found very good reliability among coders. We agreed over 80% of the time, and it was not hard to resolve our differences. Coders agreed with each other on which of the five themes they assigned to the responses they read. I then put my analysis into a concept map of the interpretive codes, which I have drawn below: I drew a dotted line between the “observable behavior” codes and the “essential difference codes.” This represented my speculation that one pathway to thinking in stereotypical or prejudicial ways starts with the “essentializing” of behavioral evidence. I located the misunderstanding theme between perpetrator and victim,.



I then began to connect the coded responses to the various “predictor variables” in our data: the students’ grade, gender, and whether they were responses from the beginning part of the lesson plan (time 1) or the end (time 2). I have included one of the many tables I made up as I quantified the qualitative codes and the distribution of codes for both questions at both time one and two. This cursory work supports Shira’s observation that a preponderance of responses were in the victim blaming clusters. But it did not confirm that all the students thought this way. A small but meaningful minority were able to express what our research group called a “perspectival” orientation. These students seemed to see the problem as located in the connection among people, not in one person. This raised even more questions for me than when I started. How to account for these various orientations; to what degree are they developmental, or cultural, or even contextual. I yearned for more data and more refined methods. (Insert Table 1 about here)

Final Thoughts of a Practice Based Researcher.

Even though our sample is small, and may not be representative of all students, the evidence is intriguing, with implications for the future directions of both research practice. For instance, while the actual class discussion was dominated by those who blamed the victim, apparently there is a “silent minority” of students who in their writing, even if not in their spoken contribution to the class discussion, see the problem as located not in Chibi, but in his connection to his oppressors. And there is the intriguing finding that there are a very few students who locate the problem as one of communication between Chibi and his peers.

With data like these, our biases as researchers begin to show. Because we would like to see more responses of the latter two kinds, we now begin to want to know more about what the students behind the data are like. That’s because we feel these latter kinds of responses represent the thinking, if not the behavior, of students who are able to provide a deeper, more insightful, analysis of teasing and to raise the “insight average” of the entire class. Who are those students, what competencies do they have, what are their literacy skills, their social awareness skills, their family backgrounds? Are they all in one class with a teacher who helps them with this idea? Are they unusual or could many more, if not all, of the students come to this interpretation of the book in a supportive educational environment? This last question reminds us of Mrs. Barnes’s concern for the children of atypical stature in her class, which lead her to make the seemingly modest shift from objectifying Chibi’s height (the problem is he is short) to relativizing it by saying, “His peers *thought* he was too small.” This may seem like a minor step in educating toward a “perspectival” way of thinking, that is, toward emphasizing the importance of the coordination of perspectives among parties, but it may be a crucial part of an educational process that leads to less prejudicial and more tolerant judgments.

Such small steps toward social awareness may help those real and everyday students who are powerful in the classroom and who dominate the playground to realize that what they consider to be “just kidding” can feel “very serious” to the isolated or vulnerable target child. It is at moments like this, when findings start to emerge, that we are frustrated that it is just the data who are our people in this research. Now we want to know so much more; more about all the students, the teachers, the real faces that stand behind the data.

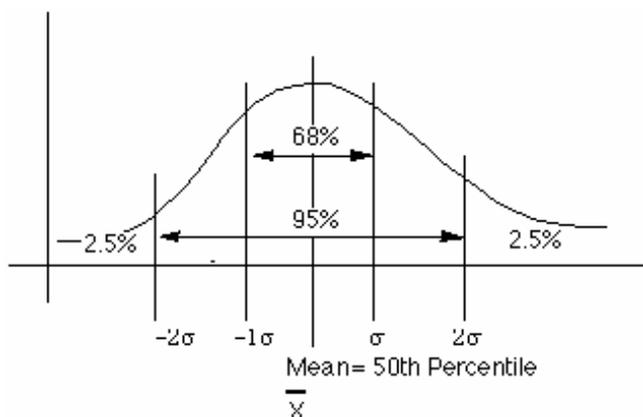
There are optimistic implications of our preliminary findings, which show us things we want to *promote*. What then do our data suggest about what to *prevent*? How do we recommend to work with the “not so silent majority” of students who blame Chibi for all the abuse and neglect that is heaped on him? What can our data say about them?

Even within this group, we think there is an important difference between those students whose responses we designated as “essentialistic,” as if differences are fixed, and those whose responses indicates an awareness of situational or malleable (researchers like the term,

contextual) factors that are given as the cause for excluding Chibi. So among the “victim blaming” responses, some say Chibi *cannot* change, and others are less absolute, for example those who think it is his repetitive behavior that needs to stop. Certainly, it is essentialism we want to prevent.⁵

Finally, it is intriguing to follow the path from responses to the first question to the second, “Why do you think the children changed how they felt about Chibi after they heard his crow calls?” These responses suggest that in many of these students’ minds, Chibi does not go from weird/bad to normal, as if he is traveling from some place far out on a normal distribution curve of difference to the average part of the “bell curve.”

Chart 2: The Classic Normal Curve and where students locate Chibi/Crow Boy



Weird (Chibi)

Cool (Crow Boy)

No child said, “They realized Chibi was normal,” or “When they heard him do the Crow cries, they realized he wasn’t weird.” Rather, most responses suggest that it was an instant metamorphosis; from being an idiot to being a savant, from totally gross to absolutely cool, from ugly duckling to swan. Perhaps that is part of the almost universal appeal of this story, and why the students in Mrs. Barnes’ class remembered it so vividly eight months later, and claimed to like it the best. *Crow Boy* may strike a chord that resonates with the developmental phase these students are in. Maybe children are looking for a strong transformation of their own identity to protect themselves from becoming the victim blamed.

SOME FINAL NOTES ON OUR METHOD AND THEORY

A practice-embedded approach to research presents both opportunities and challenges.

⁵ Interestingly, even among the essentialist responses, there are cultural reductionist responses that locate the problem in Chibi’s upbringing, and biological reductionist responses that suggest he’s just plain different.. This distinction among responses may be academic, but it is not just academic.

While the children's picture books and the writing prompts may bias the children's responses to the world of difference, they also scaffold them to respond with a range of ideas that children are often not credited with grasping let alone producing. Both the items and the codebook produced enough variation in responses to justify scaling up this exploratory study, increasing both the sample size and the differences in age and background of participants so that developmental and cultural differences can be more easily detected. Following children across time is, of course, always the aim of a committed "developmentalist."

The prompts elicited a range of vocabulary central to the research question, with ambiguous and conceptually rich meanings that were difficult to categorize, words like "weird", "normal", "cool" and "freak". Rather than being fixed, the meanings of the words used to speak about differences among individuals (and groups) may be negotiated, context dependent, and even contradictory. In addition to being culturally variable and socially unstable, this type of language may be developmentally unstable (and thus mean something different for the adults coding the data than for children generating it). Further investigation into how children speak about difference, including the connotations and denotations of these words, would improve the validity of our adult interpretation of responses as well as reveal more about children's theories about differences.

These results indicate that together the actual content of children's ideas in collaboration with the complexity or level at which children think may help us understand the development of prejudice and tolerance. Development is about cognitive change—but it is also about adapting to social environments delineated by age milestones. Yes, children's theories about difference interact dynamically with the context of the particular social dilemma they face. But children's theories about difference also engage with the particular social and cultural environment they inhabit. Thus children's general conceptual theories and especially their particular interpretations are hard to separate from their interpretations of that environment. Therefore, research to understand these theories of difference must engage children in the world. On the flip side, research into children's ideas about difference also reveals the values and ideologies that children are being taught, giving us as adults a privileged view on our own culture. Children's theories are both different from and similar to the other sources – philosophy, religion, science, art – that we as adults consult for guidance in understanding and managing difference. Through listening to children's evolving ideas we learn more about ourselves and increase our repertoire of perspectives on the pressing social and moral topic of dealing with human difference.

Appendix A: Selected Books: Themes, Synopses, and Rationale for Selection

Book and Theme	Synopsis	Rationale
<i>Angel Child, Dragon Child</i> , by Michele Maria Surat (Cultural discrimination)	Is about a young girl, Hoa, who, with her sisters and her father, immigrates to the United States from Vietnam. While at school, the other children tease her and call her, "Pajamas," because of her traditional Vietnamese dress. She has further difficulties in school adjusting to the English language and adapting to American school culture. The teasing comes to a climax when one of Hoa's classmates, Raymond, throws a snowball at Hoa and they begin to fight. To settle the conflict, the principal tells Hoa to tell Raymond her story of life in Vietnam and immigration to the U.S. Despite initial resistance, Raymond listens to Hoa's story, writes it down, and gains an appreciation for her and her culture. He then initiates a Vietnamese fair to raise money to bring Hoa's mother to the United States to live.	Selected to investigate students' understanding of cultural differences and their awareness of conflicts that arise from cultural difference. Its central interpersonal conflict, the fight between Hoa and Raymond, lends itself to social awareness measurement. Children can explore the nature of the conflict between Hoa and Raymond, coordinating the perspectives of the characters to infer how cultural understanding and misunderstanding can inform issues of tolerance and prejudice.
<i>Crow Boy</i> , by Taro Yashima (Exclusion and harassment based on individual differences)	Takes place in a school in Japan, and is about a strange boy whom everyone calls Chibi, which means small boy. Because of his idiosyncrasies, the other students make fun of him and exclude him from all activities. For six years even the teachers ignore him. That is, until Mr. Isobe, his sixth grade teacher, gets to know him, befriends him, and highlights his strengths and talents in class. For the annual talent show, Mr. Isobe encourages the boy to demonstrate crow calls. The students, parents, and all those who witness the event come to appreciate the boy and his unique gift and give him a new nickname, Crow Boy, of which he is proud.	Selected to investigate students' comprehension of individual differences, and how those differences contribute to the development of conflicts and problematic behaviors. Assessing students' understanding of individual differences in addition to socially salient differences such as race, class, and gender, contributes to studying the roots of tolerance and prejudice. By exploring the central tension of the boy's ostracism, students demonstrate their understanding of the role difference plays in the exclusion and persecution of others.
<i>Freedom Summer</i> , by Deborah Wiles (Racial inequality)	Takes place in the American South in the 1960s during the Civil Rights Movement. The friendship of two young boys, Joe, a White boy, and John Henry, a Black boy, is challenged by segregation, as the boys struggle to find places where they can spend time together. At last, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 becomes law and public places are required to be desegregated. Thrilled with the prospect of being able to swim together in the public pool, the boys race excitedly to their destination, only to have their hopes dashed upon arrival. The pool is filled with tar. It seems the town leaders would rather close down the municipal pool than allow it to be desegregated. Ending in bittersweet melancholy, the book closes with the boys deciding to go to the general store and buy ice pops, thus confronting challenges and opportunities presented by desegregation.	Selected to investigate students' understanding of racial inequality and discrimination. Assessing students' comprehension of the nature of racial inequities and discrimination and how racism can affect different people involved provides material for discussion about prejudice and tolerance at both the individual and the societal levels. By exploring the pressures on the boys' relationship and life in a segregated community, children can demonstrate their own capacity for grappling with complex societal issues such as racism and discrimination.
<i>Girl Wonder</i> , by Deborah Hopkinson (Gender stereotyping)	Takes place in the early 1900s, and is about a young woman named Alta who loves to play baseball, and is an extremely talented pitcher. But when Alta wants to play for her town's semipro team, the coach refuses to let her play because she's a girl. With clever thinking and smooth talking, Alta convinces the coach to let her play, arguing that he'll sell a lot of tickets because people will come out to see a girl play baseball with the boys. Motivated by self interest, rather than fairness, the coach allows her to play. And fighting nerves and self-doubt, Alta pitches a great game and her team wins. The coach applauds, saying that he always knew she could do it, and Alta pitches two seasons with the team. Alta goes on to become a doctor, and the story closes with her encouraging another young girl to play baseball.	Selected to investigate students' understanding of gender stereotyping and discrimination. Its central theme about sexism against women provides an avenue for discussion of themes about gender stereotypes that exist to limit gender roles in our society. The main character's story of determination against the odds encourages students to think of ways to overcome prejudice in their own lives.

Appendix B: The Prompts we used

And Chibi could hold and watch insects and grubs that most of us wouldn't touch or even look at—so that not only the children in our class but the older ones and even the younger ones called him stupid and slowpoke.

(1) So I have a question for you. The children made fun of Chibi because he had a funny jacket, played with insects, and looked at the ceiling all of the time. Why do you think the children made fun of Chibi for doing these things?

(2) The students called Chibi "stupid" and "slowpoke." If you were a student in Chibi's class, and you heard people calling him stupid and slowpoke, what are two of the best ways that you can think of to deal with the situation? (Give children some time to think.) What are your ideas? (Make sure everyone answers.) If you were a student in Chibi's class, which solution would you choose? Why? (Make sure you get a choice and reason from each child.)

Turn to the fourth marked page. The text begins, "At the end, to imitate a crow..."

The illustration is of a crow in a tree.

Read four pages, through "Every one of us cried..."

At the end, to imitate a crow on an old tree, Chibi made very special sounds deep down in his throat. "KAUUWATT! KAUUWATT!" Now everybody could imagine exactly the far and lonely place where Chibi lived with his family. Then Mr. Isobe explained how Chibi had learned those calls—leaving his home for school at dawn, and arriving home at sunset, every day for six long years. Every one of us cried, thinking how much we had been wrong to Chibi all those long years.

(3) So my question is: Why do you think the children changed how they felt about Chibi after they hear his crow calls?

Appendix C: Our preliminary code book

Code Book for Crow Boy – Questions 1 and 3.

Question 1: The children made fun of Chibi because he had a funny jacket, played with insects, and looked at the ceiling all of the time. Why do you think the children made fun of Chibi for doing these things?

Question 3: Why do you think the children changed how they felt about Chibi after they hear his crow calls?

Central Theme: Why do the children accept or reject Chibi?

Theme 1a*

Label – Victim’s behavior (VB)

Definition – Student names something Chibi does or doesn’t do or answers that it is because of what Chibi does. Excludes responses that could be coded as either VB-R or VB-D.

Indicators – Coded when the student lists things Chibi does like hiding under the floor.

Excludes reference to who Chibi *is*.

Anchor: “What he was doing,” “Chibi made crow calls”

Theme 1b*

Label – Victim’s behavior – repetitive (VB-R)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi does something a lot, all of the time or never.

Indicators – Coded when student writes things like “always,” “everyday,” “a lot,” or eating the same thing or staring at something for a long time. Includes student writing that Chibi never does something that children are expected to do.

Anchor: “He kept on looking at the ceiling all of the time”

Theme 1c*

Label – Victim’s behavior – different (VB-D)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi does something that is different.

Indicators – Coded when student writes that Chibi’s behaviour is different/nor normal/weird/crazy/funny or contrasts Chibi’s behaviour with the behaviour of the other students.

Excludes Chibi *being* different. Excludes simply characterizing what Chibi does as cool or gross (would code 1a).

Anchor: “The children did not do the same things as Chibi”

Theme 2a*

Label – Victim’s appearance (VA)

Definition – Student names something having to do with Chibi’s appearance.

Indicators – Coded when the student mentions the type of clothing Chibi wears or something about his appearance. Excludes reference to things Chibi cannot change, i.e. his height.

Anchor: “his jacket was made out of leaves”

Theme 2b*

Label – Victim’s appearance – repetitive (VA-R)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi wears the same clothes a lot/all of the time.

Indicators – Coded when student writes that he wears the same thing, “always” or “everyday.”

Anchor: N/A

Theme 2c*

Label – Victim’s appearance – different (VA-D)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi’s appearance is different.

Indicators – Coded when student writes that Chibi’s appearance/clothing is different/not normal/weird/crazy/funny or contrasts Chibi’s appearance with the other students.

Excludes reference to things Chibi cannot change, i.e. his height.

Anchor: “he did not dress like the children did”

Theme 3a*

Label – Victim’s essential difference (VE)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi *is* different. Excludes responses that could be coded as VE-Ps, VE-Ph or VE-S.

Indicators – Coded when student writes that Chibi is himself abnormal/a freak/weird/funny/cool.

Excludes Chibi’s behaviour being different. Includes the verb “to be.”

Anchor: “They probably think he is a freak.”

Theme 3b*

Label – Victim’s essential difference – psychological (VE-Ps)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi is intellectually/emotionally/psychologically different..

Indicators – Coded when student writes that Chibi is “smart,” “talented,” “scared,” “stupid” or “crazy.” Excludes Chibi’s *behaviour* being “dumb” or “cool.” Includes reference to children in

the story calling Chibi these things.

Anchor: “They thought he was stupid.”

Theme 3c*

Label – Victim’s essential difference – physical (VE-Ph)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi is physically different.

Indicators – Coded when student writes about a physical characteristic of Chibi that is different/abnormal/weird. Excludes mention of what Chibi wears or where he lives.

Anchor: “He was short”

Theme 3d*

Label – Victim’s essential difference – social, cultural, geographical (VE-S)

Definition – Student mentions that Chibi is socially, culturally or geographically marginalized.

Indicators – Coded when student writes about Chibi’s social situation. Includes where or how far away he lives, his economic status, his nationality, his relationship/lack of relationship with other students. Excludes him not being liked.

Anchor: “they also think he is poor”

*Valence for Themes 103

Neutral Valence (0)

Positive Valence (+)

Negative Valence (-)

Ambiguous Valence (?)

Theme 4

Label – Understood/Misunderstood (U·M)

Definition – Student mentions that children knew or didn’t know Chibi will, knew or didn’t know about the parts of Chibi that would have made them accept him, or knew or didn’t know how Chibi was feeling.

Indicators – Coded when student writes that children didn’t know Chibi, didn’t know how he was feeling or underestimated him. Also coded when student writes that the children got to know Chibi and how he was feeling.

Anchor: “they never saw Chibi acting like them or ever saw him doing cool stuff.”

Theme 5

Label – Perpetrator’s Feelings (PF)

Definition – Student mentions the feelings or motivations of the children who are teasing Chibi.

Indicators – Coded when student writes about how the children were feeling or how they “wanted” to tease or stop teasing Chibi or how they had some type of internal motivation (e.g. pleasure) for their actions. Includes mentioning that Chibi or what Chibi does was liked or disliked. Excludes not having friends which would be coded as 3d.

anchors: “Want to start trouble,” “They’re felt sad a mad at there self for calling him names.”

Theme 6

Label – Other (O)

Definition – Student’s response doesn’t fit under any of the other codes

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Voices Study Guide for Crow Boy

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Table 1: Frequency Table – Time 1 and Time 2 Comparisons for Both Questions

CODES FOR ALL RESPONSE				
QUESTIONS 1 AND 2 AT TIMES 1 AND 2	Time 1	Time 2	Time 1	Time 2
	Q 1	Q1	Q2	Q2
Victim Behavior/Appearance !	10	5	10	11
Victim Behavior/Appearance – Repetitive	8	1	1	0
Victim Behavior/Appearance – Different	14	18	1	2
Victim Essential Difference #	3	5	2	3
Victim Essential Difference – Psychological	14	5	3	3
Victim Essential Difference – Physical	8	1	0	0
Victim Essential Difference – Social/Cultural	3	5	3	6
Understanding/Misunderstanding	1	4	11	13
Perpetrator Feeling	4	4	12	6
Other	4	2	2	1

End Notes:

ⁱ Project Aspire brings together the resources from four institutions. The Boston Public Schools welcomes Aspire into three of its elementary schools; the Stone, the Trotter, and the Lee Academy. The Judge Baker Children’s Center supports the Project Aspire Senior Practice Staff who provide coordination and supervision of services. The Open Circle program at Wellesley College provides models of teacher and student support. The Harvard Graduate School of Education provides both research and practice interns through its Risk and Prevention program. Bethany Montgomery has directed with care and creativity the practice side of Project Aspire from its inception. We thank her for the contribution she has made to this research as well, sharing her experiences working in each of the Aspire Schools.

ⁱⁱ The origins of this application of social development theory and research to practice for us began as a partnership with an organization, Voices of Love and Freedom, Inc., that was founded by Patrick Walker in the early 1990s. That program focused not only on the selection of high quality multicultural literature, but also on integrating the most current research and theory in social development into it. Walker, as practitioner, and I, as practice based researcher have worked together for over 15 years on the design of an approach that integrates social awareness and social competence into the academic program of the school. In 2003, Zaner-Bloser Publishing, a subsidiary of Highlights for Children, acquired Voices of Love and Freedom, and invested in the transformation of Voices into a comprehensive reading and character development program.

ⁱⁱⁱ Crow Boy was written just about 50 years ago. The author of Crow Boy, Taro Yashima, was born Jun Atsushi Iwamatsu in 1908 in Kago-shima, Japan, a small village on Kyushu Island. His father, a country doctor who collected oriental art, encouraged him to develop his artistic abilities. Yashima enrolled at the

Imperial Art Academy in Tokyo and became a successful illustrator and cartoonist, but his opposition to the militaristic government of Japan in the 1930s finally resulted in a prison sentence for both he and his wife. In 1939, Yashima visited the United States. When war was declared he enlisted in the U.S. Army, and adopted the alias Taro Yashima to protect his relatives, especially his young son, who he left in Japan. In 1954 he moved from New York City to Southern California where he opened an art studio, and in 1955, he wrote and illustrated *Crow Boy*, which was selected in 1956 as a Caldecott Honor Book.

^{iv} Zaner-Bloser publishers will release a reading and “character development” curriculum this for grades kindergarten through second grade that is designed to promote the integration of literacy and social awareness. For more information, see the Zaner-Bloser website <http://www.zaner-bloser.com/>. The program is called *Voices Reading: Literacy to Live By*.

^v Practice-embedded research often requires an interdisciplinary approach. Our group of developmental psychologists has worked closely with a group of language and literacy researchers under the direction of Catherine Snow, a colleague of ours at the Harvard Graduate School of education. Snow’s focus on the value of texts such as *Crow Boy* on literacy balances our focus on its importance for the promotion of social awareness. Both groups focus on the improvement of social justice and Snow and I have worked together on the application of our research to the curriculum Zaner-Bloser is publishing.

^{vi} One awkward aspect of the research-practice partnership related to creating consent forms for students that met the needs of Harvard, our parent institution, and the Kimball. The use of language that could be easily understood by parents at the Kimball while still containing all of the information required by our Institutional Review Board (“IRB,” in place to protect the rights of research participants) were sometimes at odds. The principal at the Kimball significantly rewrote our first draft of the consent form so that the research aspect of *Aspire* sounded more like a natural part of the student’s classroom experience as opposed to an add-on that did not jive with the existing curriculum. But the IRB did not approve the language that this principal added because, as they said, parents should be aware that this is a separate endeavor and should not feel as if their child will miss out on learning simply because of an outside project that they did not actively sign up for. While the IRB is in place for excellent reasons, it was admittedly very difficult to meet the requirements of the university and the needs of the school without irking the principal. Furthermore, we could not use the type of monetary incentives that lab experiments use to entice parents to participate.