

# The AACCP Newsletter

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Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc.

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## Reading the World VIII

### A Conference Celebrating Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults

March 11-12, 2006

AACP encourages you to participate in the upcoming *Reading the World VIII Conference* that will take place at the University of San Francisco, March 11-12, 2006. Below is more information on this wonderful conference.

Keynote Speakers: Alma Flor Ada, Matthew Gollub, Linda Sue Park, Katherine Paterson, Joyce Carol Thomas, Tony Watkins, and Ed Young.

Workshops: By educators, librarians, authors, illustrators, and scholars in the field of children's literature, not to mention the Book Market and scheduled book signings with guest authors and artists!

Location: University of San Francisco, Presentation Theatre, School of Education Building, 2350 Turk Boulevard, San Francisco, California.

For more information and details, visit:

<http://www.soe.usfca.edu/departments/ime/rtwconf/>

### A Reading the World Interview

The following is an email Q&A exchange between AACCP and **Dr. Marianne M. Halpin**, *Reading the World*, Program Chair, about the *Reading the World Conference*.

**Q. What is the "Reading The World" conference about and what is its purpose/mission statement?**

A. We are a conference of educators, librarians, writers, illustrators, and publishers who come together to celebrate multicultural literature for children and young adults.

Our Vision Statement of Reading the World is: To create a national and international awareness of our annual conference, Reading the World, at the University of San Francisco as a sphere for study, reflection and dialogue on the potential of literature for children and young adults to bring about a greater understanding of the human experience in all its manifestations, and to develop a respect for cultures and diversity and the promotion of the values of equity, justice and peace.

The conference name comes from the writings of Paolo Freire, the great Brazilian educator and philosopher, who encouraged learners to challenge and change the world.

The Mission of Reading the World is: To create a forum welcoming scholars, students, authors, illustrators, librarians, teachers, editors, book sellers, and anyone interested in the field of literature for children and young adults. The main topic for this forum is the presentation, study, analysis, and celebration of books of literary and artistic merit created for children and young adults that present the human experience with respect for its multiplicity and diversity and that specifically promote unlearning biases and prejudice, counteracting racism and exclusion, fostering solidarity and respect for all human beings, and protection of all living beings; books that question and address problems, that do not propose merely happy endings but responsible solutions, that in short, invite children and young adults to see themselves as protagonists of their own human

(Continued on Page 2)

## 24th San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (SFIAAFF)

AACP is pleased to include the following announcement of the 24th San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, an event produced by the [Center for Asian American Media](#) (formerly the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA)). Like the Center for Asian American Media, AACCP seeks to inform and educate the general public about the Asian American experience. It is AACCP's intention to bring such an event to San Mateo in the near future.

### Announcement

The 24th San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (SFIAAFF), the largest and most prestigious showcase of movies by and about Asians and Asian Americans, will be held March 16-26, 2006 in Bay Area theaters.

Boasting more than 126 feature-length and short films and video from 21 countries, the 24th SFIAAFF spans the planet to offer the largest and most prestigious showcase of movies by and about Asians and Asian Americans. The Festival, produced by Center for Asian

American Media, will run March 16-26, 2006 in San Francisco, Berkeley and San Jose.

The Festival will open and close with two new distinctive and visionary American independent films - Eric Byler's AMERICANISE and Ham Tran's JOURNEY FROM THE FALL. The two films offer entry points into the Festival's exciting feature Narrative Competition, in which twelve films will compete. Seven incisive documentaries will compete in the Festival's Documentary Competition. This year the Festival not only looks forward to the future of Asian American cinema with these compelling new works, but looks back to those past works which inform them, with many retrospective screenings, including a tribute to actor James Shigeta. As always, the Festival will feature a strong showcase of international cinema, including works from as diverse places as Brazil, Tibet and a full slate of musical events and panel discussions.

For more information, please telephone (415) 865-1588 or visit [asianamericanfilmfestival.org](http://asianamericanfilmfestival.org) on the Internet.

## Give Us Your Feedback

Please feel free to send us your reviews, comments, and book suggestions. You can contact us at -  
aacpinc@asianamericanbooks.com

### Up Coming Events

Here are some events that AACCP will soon be attending. Invite us to your events.

Date/Time	Event	Location
Mar. 11-12	Reading the World VIII	USF 2350 Turk Blvd. San Francisco, CA
March 25	ShinenKai Northern California JA Senior Centers	Alameda Buddhist Temple Union City, CA
Mar. 30- Apr. 1	National Association for Ethnic Studies	Sir Francis Drake Hotel San Francisco, CA
April 21-22	Asian Educator Alliance	Lick-Wilmerding HS San Francisco, CA
May 20	Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration in San Mateo	Central Park Community Center San Mateo, CA
Other Event of Interest that AACCP May Not Attend		
Mar. 16-26	24st San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival	San Francisco, Berkeley, San Jose, CA
Mar. 22-26	Association for Asian American Studies National Conference	Grand Hyatt Atlanta Atlanta, GA
April 1-3	Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development	Lakeside Center Chicago, IL
April 28-29	NAAPAE 28th Annual Conference	Washington, DC
April 30	Nikkei Matsuri Arts and Crafts Festival	San Jose, CA

### A Reading the World Interview

(Continued from Page 1)

experience and unite them to embrace it with trust, love, and hope to contribute to the creation of a world of equality, justice and peace.

**Q. What do you want to achieve through this conference? What are the conferences' past accomplishments and goals and inspiration for the present and the future?**

This conference is a significant contribution to the Bay Area, as there are currently only one or two children's literature conferences west of the Mississippi and none that focuses on the multicultural aspects of the field. The goal is to invite speakers of all ethnicities and nationalities and to acquaint our audience with the rich materials available. The conference committee is very proud that all the artists, authors, and presenters stay for the two days to converse and interact with the participants, a feature unknown at other conferences.

## Editor's Message

Hello Everyone,

It was great to meet and see you at the Day of Remembrance Anniversaries, California Council for the Social Studies Conference in San Diego and the Chinese New Year's festival in Stockton. If we didn't see you there, there are lots of other events and opportunities on our schedule for us to meet.

The plans for a 2006 Asian Pacific American Film Festival in San Mateo have been placed on hold, but we have brought back the San Mateo Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration instead. We are still looking for some performers and volunteers. If you would like to participate or attend, please contact us for more information.

A special big thanks to Sophie Wong for doing much of the work for this month's newsletter. Thank you Melissa Eng for getting us started with the Reading the World interview and another big thank you to Marianne Halpin for giving your time so generously to answer all of our questions.

Leonard Chan  
**Executive Editor**

Presented by the International and Multicultural Education department at the USF School of Education, Reading the World is a creative and imaginative addition to the goal of seeking to develop critical literacy geared to promote social justice, equality, inclusion, and peace, objectives in line with the mission statement of the University.

We strive to enhance the "magical encounter" between children and books - our hope for all children.

**Q. What types of people will be in attendance and what do you want for the participants to get out of the conference?**

A. We hope to inspire participants to greater understanding of the wonderful array of diverse perspectives in children's literature. Speakers are selected to provide their points of view and ways in which specific multicultural literature can be used to enhance a reader's appreciation of diverse voices. We hope the teachers, librarians, authors, and illustrators who come to Reading the World will celebrate that diversity and share its richness with their students and readers.

**Q. What is the current status and future predictions for multicultural education and curriculum (as opposed to standardized, mainstream education)?**

Teachers and librarians seek to be inclusive in their choices of literature. Attendance of between 400 and 500 educators at each Reading the World Conference for the last 7 years is testament to that! Research shows that good readers do better in cognitive ability and creative and critical thinking. If a child doesn't see the relationship between herself and the content of a story, a great opportunity can be missed. Reading should be like a mirror or a window, a chance to see yourself or others more clearly, to provide a better understanding of the world in which we live. If a child never has the opportunity to see herself reflected in story, there is an assumption made that her existence is less valued than the lives of the people who are reflected. Do we, as educators intend to say that? I think not, but failure to understand that this happens leads to making the same choices of assigned literature that can be very hurtful and marginalizing. Inclusion of authentic multicultural literature in the classroom leads to greater understanding and acknowledgment of personal value accorded to all people. The more engaged the reader, the greater the awareness is of the depth of story. The more a child reads, the better student she becomes. She is no longer in the shadows but in the limelight!

**Q. What are the pros and cons of multicultural education and curriculum when compared to standardized education and curriculum? What are the benefits of having a multicultural education?**

A. There is absolutely no reason why any place of learning should not always teach the diverse voices of many people. Standardized education should include those voices as a "standard of excellence." Instead, we hear the term and tend to think about less content and more testing, as if content were meaningless. Inspired teachers should be able to draw out opportunities to read stories about growing up in the Mexican community (Francisco Jimenez, Gary Soto), in a Cuban family in the 50's (Ada, Osa), Asian American protagonists (Milly Lee, Ruthanne Lum McCunn, Linda Sue Park, Lawrence Yep, Ed Young), South Asian characters coming of age (Rachna Gilmore, Uma Krishnaswami), African American protagonists in literature (Joyce Carol Thomas, Virginia Hamilton, Leo and Diane Dillon, Nikki Giovanni, Ashley Bryan, Patricia McKissack), Japanese American sisters coming of age in the 1950s (Cynthia Kadohata), Cherokee, Keresan, Hopi or Abenaki stories (Joseph Bruchac, Michael Lacapa, Simon Ortiz, Gayle Ross), growing up Palestinian American (Ibtisam S. Barakat, Naomi Shihab Nye), Mixed Heritage families (Cynthia Leitich Smith, Greg Leitich Smith, Toyomi Igus). There are so many more excellent literary works for all ages. These are only a few to draw from. So many of these authors have come to Reading the World to share further insights of their work. Educators are seeking these authors out more and more due to the efforts of educators who promote the exchange of ideas through literature.

**Q. Is multicultural education alive?**

A. Yes, most definitely! The wise administrator and teacher both know it is important to nurture the whole student no matter what the current methodology. It takes support, however, from parents, publishers, universities, and writers themselves if the government is not going to promote understanding through reading. Is it getting shut out? Not if teachers are still seeking ways to be

inclusive. It is certainly our mission at Reading the World to see that multicultural education is supported. Are there any requirements in California law to include such teachings in the school curriculum? Not to my knowledge.

**Q. What are some current issues/"hot topics" with multiculturalism and multicultural education today?**

Certainly authentic voice is an important aspect of choosing excellent literature. The perspective should be knowledgeable and honest. If the author says she is describing a particular perspective, it should be her own, I believe. If you are telling someone else's story, say so. "Who can tell my story" is a big topic of discussion. Another critical discussion is about citation of folktales. Authors of picture book format folktales now give extensive notes about the origin of the folktale they are retelling. This extends the story historically, culturally, and gives further meaning to the story. My own personal area of interest is literature that portrays contemporary Mixed Heritage characters. My family is Mixed Heritage and I never saw "someone like me" in a story when I was growing up. I did sometimes feel marginalized when everyone else claimed membership in a particular cultural group, which left me out. My children sometimes had a similar experience. If there had been a character in literature who mirrored my perspective I think it would have been great. Since the 2000 Census we know how many Mixed Heritage children there are in the U.S. I am always looking for authors who can tell a good story from that perspective! I think, above all, no matter what the perspective, to be good, it first must be an excellent story!

**Q. What is your take-home or inspirational message to the next generation of advocates for a multicultural education?**

A. We are teaching equality, justice, and peace through multicultural literature for children and young adults.

When we demonstrate our respect for all people by being inclusive in our choices of multicultural literature it sends a message to the community:

- Here is a place where you are honored.
- Here is a place where you are treasured for yourself.
- Together we can promote peace and understanding through our willingness to share insights, trust, and hope.
- We can start by Reading the World around us!

**Q. Can people still sign up and/or drop-in? How much is it?**

A. People can still register by visiting [the Reading the World website](#). Registration is \$175.00

**Q. For future reference, how does someone get on the mailing list to get invited as a conference attendee or as a guest author?**

A. I'm the Program Chair and am always seeking presenters for the next Reading the World conference. Dr. Beverly V. Hock is Conference Chair. She will take proposals from authors, illustrators, publishers or educators who are interested in becoming keynote speakers. You can reach us by emailing [rtwconf@socrates.usfca.edu](mailto:rtwconf@socrates.usfca.edu) in care of one of us.

Thank you for asking me to share thoughts about Reading the World. I'm looking forward to the wonderful feeling of solidarity the conference promotes. I know I'm part of a large effort to make the world a better place!

The following books are discounted an additional 20% from the listed price for subscribers to our newsletter. The discounts on these books end April 5, 2006.

	<p><b>Project Mulberry</b>          By Linda Sue Park          2005, 225 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>While working on a project for an after-school club, Julia, a Korean American girl, and her friend Patrick learn not just about silkworms, but also about tolerance, prejudice, friendship, patience, and more. Between the chapters are short dialogues between the author and main character about the writing in the book.</p> <p>Item #3394, Price \$16.00 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$12.80</b></p>
	<p><b>The Closet Ghosts</b>          By Uma Krishnaswami          Illustrated by Shiraz Bhabha          2006, 32 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>Anu gets some help from Hanuman, the Hindu monkey god, in adjusting to her new home and life, and with dealing with the ghosts in her closet. In its essence, this story is a classic tale of showing how one should face fears in life.</p> <p>Item #3392, Price \$16.95 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$13.56</b></p>
	<p><b>My Mei Mei</b>          Written and Illustrated by Ed Young          2006, 34 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>Antonia gets her wish when her parents return to China to bring home a Mei Mei, or younger sister, for her. Although Antonia's Mei Mei is not what she had expected, Antonia eventually learns the true joys of having a sister.</p> <p>Item #3389, Price \$16.99 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$13.59</b></p>
	<p><b>Shanghai Messenger</b>          By Andrea Cheng          Illustrated by Ed Young          2005, 40 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>A free-verse novel about eleven-year-old Xiao Mei's visit with her extended family in China, where the Chinese American girl finds many differences but also the similarities that bind a family together.</p> <p>Item #3393, Price \$17.95 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$14.36</b></p>
	<p><b>From Asahi to Zebras</b>  <b>Japanese American Baseball in San Jose, California</b>          By Ralph M. Pearce          2005, 119 pages, Paperback.</p> <p>Presents in microcosm the greatest American pastime. This book acts to preserve the legacy of Japanese American baseball in San Jose, California.</p> <p>Item #3383, Price \$15.00 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$12.00</b></p>

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