

**Adult  
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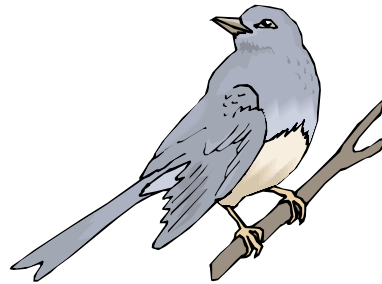


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the Boston BRA/EDIC/Office of  
Jobs and Community Services.*

**all write news**

## SUMMER READING BOOK REVIEWS

*For the past several years our summer issue has presented brief reviews of an eclectic assortment of books that A.L.R.I. staff (and others) recommend as good reading, for the summer or any other time. Many of the books can be found in the A.L.R.I. library.—Ed.*



***Upside Down*, by Eduardo Galeano (Metropolitan Books, 2000)**

Eduardo Galeano is a Uruguayan historian and writer who's probably best known in the U.S. for his three-volume *Memory of Fire* series depicting sort of a people's history of the Western Hemisphere in hundreds of brief vignettes. In his similarly witty, ascerbic, rapid-fire style, Galeano in this book presents a picture of (almost) everything that's wrong with the modern world, from globalization on corporate terms to the industry of prisons, from environmental degradation to the vapidness of the media. It's a non-stop condemnation of the state of the world (and especially the role of the U.S. in its creation and perpetuation), and, were Galeano not such an engaging writer and storyteller, it would be one terribly depressing read. Well, it is terribly depressing anyway, but it is also lively, provocative, and perversely fun. Galeano's approach and writing style is to bombard the reader with facts, stories, anecdotes, tidbits of analysis, all presented in language that is accessible to anyone and in a style that is often funny and always entertaining. The result resembles something like a cross between, say, Howard Zinn and Groucho Marx.

Though his topic is nothing less than the overall state of the world and though the U.S. is his primary target, Galeano is Uruguayan and brings a Latin American perspective to this project, so the reader hears a great deal about Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and other South American countries. Also, Galeano tries to end the book on a note of optimism, looking at

*continued on page 4*

## WORKPLACE EDUCATION STUDENTS DISCUSS MOTIVATION AND RETENTION

*by Fiona Ritchie*

*[This piece was originally written as a report on research conducted as part of a teacher workgroup exploring the issues of student retention and persistence. At that time Fiona was Director of the Education Program for Local 26 in Boston; today she is the administrator of the union's benefits program.—Ed.]*

**T**he Greater Boston Hotel Employees/Local 26 Education Program provides free adult education classes to Local 26 members as part of their health insurance and benefits package. Originally founded by the union to provide English as a Second Language classes to its members, the Education Program became part of a collective bargaining agreement in 1989. Since then the program has been funded exclusively by employer contributions for the use of union members and their families. The Education Program has grown considerably in the years it has been in existence and now provides ESL, GED/ABE, Citizenship, Computer, Spanish, and Literacy classes to over 500 students every year.

The Education Program is run by a teachers' collective. Program policies

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**A.L.R.I. Summer Hours:  
During July and August, our  
building will be closing each day at  
5:00 and on Tuesdays our library  
will be open only till 4:30.**

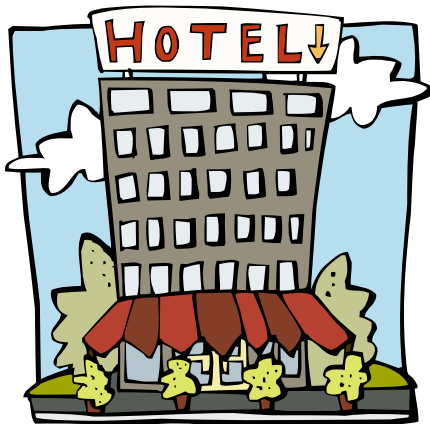
## Workplace Education Students

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are loose, with the goal that each student be served in the most timely and appropriate way possible. In the earlier years of the program, individual classes determined whether or not they would have open enrollment or attendance policies. One cycle, a class developed a particularly strict policy that made students accountable to the group for any time they missed. After hearing the reason for the absence the group decided if a student could return to class. One dedicated student was denied readmission to the class after she returned from a trip to her native country and never returned to school in following class cycles. Since that time, the program has had a policy of open enrollment and no rules regarding attendance.

Teachers have had reason to both curse and be thankful for the ease with which students can enter or leave their classes. On the one hand, it is very difficult, particularly in the beginning level ESL classes, to accommodate the needs of new learners in the middle of a cycle. On the other hand, attendance in the program reflects a great deal of turbulence. Students frequently have home or job situations that require them to leave class suddenly. Without open enrollment or attendance policies, it is possible that many classes would dwindle down to a few students by the end of a 14-week class cycle. (Even with these policies many classes do fade away.) As a Beginning II ESL teacher I used to wonder where the many students on my roster were at the end of a cycle. I took their disappearance personally and found it very demoralizing. I was sure my teaching had driven them away, and I was too cowardly to call the missing students and ask them why they had left.

Two years ago, I began literacy tutoring and was pleasantly surprised that my problems with student attendance vanished. I developed a roster of 15 students, some of whom I see individually, some of whom have been combined in a pre-citizenship group, and some who come to both types of sessions. These students have demonstrated amazing perseverance; even when they don't come they call me to tell me their reason and to schedule another time. I decided I would like to know why these students are so committed to school, what motivates them to come to class regularly (or at least to stay in touch with me) and how their answers can be used program-wide



### *Focus Group Questions*

1. Why did you come to the Education Program?
2. What happened on the first day you came here?
3. How did you feel when you came?
4. How did you feel when you left?
5. How long did you think about coming before you actually did it? Why?
6. Has coming to school changed your life at home or at work? How?
7. Is it difficult to come to school? Why or why not?
8. What do you like about this class? About the Education Program?
9. What do you want to change about this class? About the Education Program?
10. Why do you come to class every week?
11. How do you feel if you miss class?
12. How do you feel if someone else misses class?
13. Not everybody comes to school. Why do you think more members don't come?
14. Why do you think some people stop coming?
15. Is there anything else about class or the school that you want to tell me?

to reduce turbulence, boost retention, and focus our recruitment efforts. I used a series of questions (see box) as a means of guiding a conversation about student enrollment and retention with my literacy students. I designed the pre-citizenship class to accommodate four of my original literacy students; the class had grown by word of mouth to include nine students, and I decided to try my questionnaire with them. Because of time constraints I broke the list of questions in half and spent approximately an hour in each of two class sessions on this topic.

Although my original intention was to interview individuals, I decided that a focus group would yield more qualitative information, as students could translate for each other if they did not all fully understand my questions or if I didn't understand their answers. Both of the discussions were taped for later transcription and analysis. (By transcribing so much of individual students' speech, I garnered a much deeper understanding of the English grammar structures each student knows and uses that will find its way back into my teaching.) I began both discussions by explaining to students that they were the most dedicated group in the Education Program and that they could help to change and improve the program for everybody. I think students appreciated the emphasis on the value of their experiences in school and enjoyed having their opinions solicited.

The questions themselves came naturally from my experience at the Education Program. Most of my literacy students are foreign-born women over the age of forty who never went to school or who went for less than three years.

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## Workplace Education Students

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One of them has been very candid with me; she began volunteering her feelings about school when we filled out her intake together, and in the two years I have known her, she has gone from being scared to being proud. This series of questions was inspired in part by what she has told me, and I hoped they would elicit a rich discussion of what led students to enroll in school, their feelings about coming to class, and their ideas about the Education Program as a whole.

I was pleased overall with my data collection tool, but a number of my questions were non-starters for the groups. Students didn't discuss the nuances of their first day or our intake process in anywhere near the detail I had hoped, nor was I able to elicit criticism of or suggestions for improving our class or the program. Well, I lie—one student did have an answer for what she would change about our class. "Teacher, I would have class two days a week with you, not just Mondays."

The data I collected fell into three general categories with implications for the program: the first day, student motivation, and recruitment of new students. The events that led to the first day were somewhat varied for my group. Approximately half had thought about coming to school for more than one year before they actually started. Most of this group said they were very ashamed of their inability to read, and two didn't want to come when other people might see them. Three students didn't know about the program for a long time and eventually found out through a friend. One student said she was the last in her family to get a chance to go to school. First, her husband came to classes and got his citizenship, during which time they were joined by five of their children from their native country. She wasn't able to think about school for herself until everyone else was settled.

Since this was a citizenship class, it's not surprising that all of the students cited getting their citizenship as the reason they came so faithfully to class. They also all said that they come because they like their teacher, which I view as the corollary to the difficulty in soliciting constructive criticism from our students. One thing students did not mention but which I feel must play a role in their attendance is their response to the question, "How has coming to school changed your life?" This drew the most intense reactions from students. Half of the group said they were functioning better at work. One student reported that her supervisor used to draw pictures of her assignments every day, but she now understands oral instructions. Another woman said she is no longer ashamed when she goes to the doctor because she can fill out forms herself and no longer requires a translator. The group also said that the class time and location makes it easy for them to come to school. Most of the group said they don't like to miss class because they forget what they have learned. Age frequently comes up in class, usually in a humorous manner, but students definitely carry a self-image

of being old and slow and feel they are difficult to teach.

I was impressed with the matter-of-fact way that students rattled off the reasons more union members don't use the Education Program. Almost all thought the major reason is that more workers don't know about it. Students also said the location of the school is not good for some people, and that work schedules restrict others' ability to come to class. They also cited childcare and family responsibilities as being a problem for others.

The results of this study point to some clear areas for program staff to address. The most obvious is to publicize the program more, perhaps by utilizing students already involved in classes to tell others at work what is available. The fact that some students waited so long before coming to school also makes me think that repeated contacts with program staff and union members involved in classes over a period of time may help others to make up their minds to come to school. Once students come to the program, all of the staff need to be aware of the difficulties faced by a new student, particularly one who may be illiterate, so as to steer him or her to the correct class. Ideally, each student should leave after their first class thinking they have the nicest and most patient teacher possible.

On a curricular level, citizenship has turned out to be the key to motivating many people to return to school. If staff can identify other winning topics, it may be possible to boost retention rates in other areas of the program. Finally, the Education Program has long since been exploring the possibility of providing childcare and will watch closely to see if making childcare available leads to any appreciable change in student retention rates.

The *All Write News* is published every two months by the Adult Literacy Resource Institute/SABES Greater Boston Regional Support Center, which is primarily funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Boston BRA/EDIC/ Jobs and Community Services Department.

All signed articles represent the opinions of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the A.L.R.I. or its staff, nor does material included here necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Massachusetts Department of Education or the federal government.

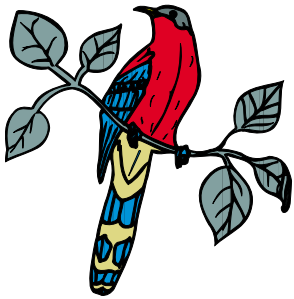
Please send all material for the newsletter to the editor, Steve Reuys, at the A.L.R.I. (E-mail address: [steve@alri.org](mailto:steve@alri.org); regular mail address: see last page of this issue. If sending by regular mail, please include, if possible, a computer disk (Mac or PC) with material saved as a "text only" document.) For more information or for permission to reprint articles, please call Steve at 617-782-8956 x14. Complete issues of this newsletter published since March, 1998, can be found in PDF format in the "Publications" section of our web page at: <http://www.alri.org>. Individual articles published since May, 1996, can also be found there in HTML format.

## Summer Reading

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the often local efforts of people worldwide who work for justice and economic fairness and environmental sanity, but after his torrent of bad news, this effort proves rather unconvincing. Though most of what Galeano says has been said before (in the pages of the *Nation* magazine on an ongoing basis, for example), this book condenses it all into a progressive's guidebook to today's world. It's a goldmine of pithy sayings and amusing though devastating critiques of our culture, our society, our politics, our economy.

—Steve Reuys



### **Slaves in the Family, by Edward Ball (Ballantine Books, 1998)**

*Slaves in the Family* is a sometimes fascinating, sometimes exhausting account of the Ball dynasty of South Carolina. Over the 167 years that this white family was in the slave business, they owned about 4,000 people. This fact,

although remarkable in its own dubious way, is not unprecedented in the history of the South. But what makes this book extraordinary is that it is written by a white descendant of the Ball family who not only asked, "Who were the Balls?" but "Who were the Ball slaves?" Armed with his family's well-documented history (their extensive papers survived the burnings of the Civil War), Edward Ball set out to track down the possible descendants of the people who toiled in the Ball enterprise. In some instances Edward was able to trace the descendants all the way back to the purchase of their African ancestors in the slave port of Charleston, South Carolina. That kind of information has been virtually impossible to find by most of the descendants of African slaves, because often details of their humanity were not recorded. Although many African-American families in the South have a rich connection to their past kin through oral history, there wasn't an Ellis Island that recorded the names and villages of their African ancestors when they were unboarded from the slave ships.

I had started to read this book back in the fall and put it down after a while because it was exhausting to keep track of all the Ball generations. It doesn't help that most of the Ball men were named Elias after the original English peasant who inherited the first plantation in South Carolina. My interest in the book was renewed after the recent newspaper stories about the white descendants of Thomas Jefferson. Their association, Monticello, voted overwhelmingly to deny admission to their black kin, likely fathered by Thomas Jefferson and his slave, Sally Hemings. The white kin of Edward Ball weren't exactly thrilled that he was willing to delve into their "family secrets." Not that their slave-owning

### **No Big Screen But We'll Supply the Popcorn**

The A.L.R.I. library has added some new videos (and a few DVDs) to the collection and invites you to come in and preview and/or borrow them. Videos and DVD's may be borrowed for two weeks.

*Beloved* with Oprah Winfrey  
*Roots* with LeVar Burton (DVD)  
*Glory* with Denzel Washington (DVD)  
*Stand and Deliver* with Edward James Olmos  
*4 Little Girls* directed by Spike Lee  
*Good Will Hunting* with Matt Damon  
*The Old Man and the Sea* with Spencer Tracy  
*The Killing Fields* with Sam Waterston  
*Roger and Me* directed by Michael Moore  
*Twelve Angry Men* with Henry Fonda  
*Harlan County, USA* directed by Barbara Kopple  
*My Family* with Jimmy Smits (an English and a Spanish version)  
*Slam* with Saul Williams  
*The Color Purple* with Whoopie Goldberg (DVD)  
*Night and Fog* directed by Alain Resnais  
*Schindler's List* directed by Steven Spielberg  
*Breakthrough: The Changing Face of Science in America*  
*Silent Epidemic: Teen Suicide*  
*Nova—Life's Greatest Miracle*  
*Mill Times* from the book by David Macauley

roots were that secret, given the enormous volume of family papers, most of which are in state archives. Rather, it was just not something that had been freely talked about in the Ball family for over 100 years.

Edward Ball does not spend too much time on his present day white kin, but devotes most of the book to the slave owning generations. It is in their personal diaries and plantation account books that Edward finds references to the human chattel they possessed. He follows those references doggedly, reporter that he is, finding several present-day descendants of the slaves who toiled in the Ball plantations. The reunions between the descendant of the slave owner and those of the former slaves are poignant, sometimes tense, but always remarkable in that they happened at all. Early in his search, Edward realized that in each instance, he would have to "earn the privilege" of being in the company of the kin of those his family oppressed. He befriends these families and learns about their present lives, which he shares in his book. The most remarkable, of course, are those of the elders who still remember the stories about slavery told to them by their grandparents who had been slaves. Ball was privileged to hear their testimony before at least two of the elders died.

*Slaves in the Family* could have used some more editing. There are a few extensive descriptions of dwellings and

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## Summer Reading

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locales, for instance, that don't lead anywhere. It's a journalistic style where "moods" are set and extraneous information is shared almost as a filler. It does make for easier reading than the usual dense historical prose, however, which is probably why the book became a bestseller and the winner of the National Book Award in 1998. —*María E. González*



**El Bronx Remembered, by Nicholasa Mohr (Arte Publico Press, 1986; reprinted by HarperCollins, 1993)**

When I was in sixth grade, I remember sitting down to read Peri Thomas' *Down These Mean Streets* and getting through it, cover to cover, in one reading. In part because

the story was hot: the narrator, a young Puerto Rican man in the South Bronx defies teachers and school, has sex with young girls and other boys on the subway, and if I remember correctly, just to round off the stereotype, sells drugs to be able to buy what he wants for himself and to help his mother and sister out in their hard times. But it was also an attractive product because it was banned from the New Haven Public Libraries and Public Schools. In fact, the censorship factor gave the text groupie status around the neighborhood, and Beth Teitelman, who was waiting for me to finish the copy we had brought together in a bookstore downtown, would, later in the playground during recess, talk about the characters, their motives and their lives, what seemed real and what seemed over the top, exploring without knowing it character development, plot, the author's style and the narrative voice in my first ever informal book reading group. Luckily it wasn't my last.

Almost two decades later, I found myself in the middle of pursuing my own writing degree and at the same time teaching literature and writing to a group of young men at City Year's GED program. My closest friend in the world, a teacher herself, one Saturday night, while exchanging syllabi, since that is what young literature teachers did with their Saturday nights, asked me why, in my reading list, there were no Puerto Rican, or in particular Nuyorican writers. "Not to say that your syllabus isn't almost diverse," she exclaimed half-jokingly, half as serious as the dead. I admitted to her that my knowledge was bleak on the subject, all but that crazy author Peri Thomas and his cruising book that I zipped through when I was twelve and the world really did move that fast. To which she replied that she wouldn't touch his work, one big stereotype that was, even if it promised to save her from death or forcing children around the world to eat lima beans.

The night ended well, though. For she promised to do

a unit of Nuyorican literature with my GED class in exchange for me talking a bit to her class about Jewish-American authors. The deal was cut. And we were both to learn at least as much as our students did from the interchange. Among the stories and excerpts that my friend brought to the City Year class was one gem that I read over and over again, *El Bronx Remembered*. I find that, because Nicholasa Mohr's stories are not in any way simple nor overdetermined and her characters are at least three dimensional and embody the quirky contradictions that we all embody, coupled with a writing style that is simple and direct, adult students respond strongly to her stories.

*El Bronx Remembered* is built around a novella entitled "Herman and Alice," which explores the obstacles to self-realization for a young woman who finds herself pregnant, living in her mother's house in the South Bronx and not yet done with high school. The story, in addition to exploring the trapped and helpless situation of the narrator, also throws the fairy-tale prince myth into a tail-spin, when the refined and respected Herman, for all intents and purposes the fairy-tale prince who marries Alice to bring her respect and admiration from the community, turns out to be a closeted gay man who is doing his best to also survive the cultural forces that isolate him and leave him hopeless and identity-less.

I won't share the wonders and mistakes of our first naïve Nuyorican Literature workshop at City Year. Suffice it say that the students immediately picked up the cues about Herman's sexuality and we were all sent spinning into the important and difficult role of discovering and trying to correct our own homophobia and stereotyping. But since then, we have both revised our approach to the novella, and in sharing it I hope that it will encourage you to seek out the book (that sits somewhat unhappily on our library shelf at the A.L.R.I., call number PS 3563.036E4).

Now, yet another decade and half has gone by and my close friend is a student writing a dissertation on Puerto Rican Literature and Ethnography. Needless to say, she now knows much more about Mohr than either of us would have ever

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## Staff Development Activity Suggestion Box

In planning staff and program development activities for the coming year, the A.L.R.I. would welcome requests and suggestions from the field. If you have an idea for a mini-course, workshop, sharing group, or other activity on a particular topic that you would like to see us offer here in the Boston region, please call me (617-782-8956 x14) or e-mail me ([steve@alri.org](mailto:steve@alri.org)) with your idea. Thanks! —*Steve Reuys*

## Summer Reading

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dreamed. “You know, her work was meant to be a replication of you know whose,” she tells me the other night from her cell phone. I know she’s driving, too, because I hear a big truck go by.

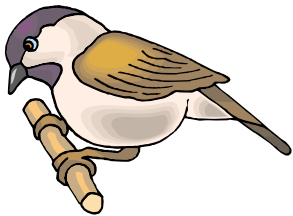
“Aha, I knew Peri Thomas had value...,” I start to respond.

But she doesn’t miss a beat, “*Hija*, the operative word is *meant*,” she reminds me and I can see her eyes rolling on the other end of the telephone. “The publishers thought they could market a female version,” she continues, “a girls in the hood kind of thing and then Mohr came back with these nuanced stories of women and girls around breakfast tables who are forced to kill the rooster for food when really it’s become a pet, even more than a pet, a family member if you will, young women and girls who liked and did fine in school as long as they didn’t get pregnant. The presses didn’t know what to do with her work and after the first run it went out of print.”

“Wouldn’t it be interesting to read these stories alongside Peri Thomas? You know, to capture both extremes, to talk about marketing and all kinds of stereotypes.”

“Maybe. But do it in your class,” and then she has to change gear and needs both hands and someone behind her is beeping.

—Deborah Schwartz



### ***A Free Man of Color*, by Barbara Hambly (Bantam, 1998)**

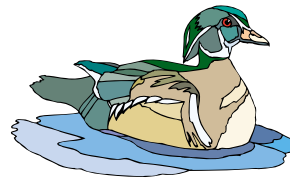
For those of us who enjoy mystery novels and especially the ones that take us into worlds that we are never likely, by virtue of time or space, to visit

ourselves, I can certainly recommend this book as a great piece of summer reading. I encountered the book by pure chance. After my colleague Maria González and I had finished presenting a workshop on using the PBS video series *Jazz* a few months ago, Maria said that, since so much of the history of jazz deals with race and with the city of New Orleans, she wanted to mention a book, a mystery novel actually, that was set in New Orleans in the 1830’s and that had as its protagonist a free man of color. So I borrowed it and read it and found it quite fascinating in its evocation of that place and time and what life was like for the various cultures—white, slave, free people of color—that populated that world.

Benjamin January is of mixed African and European ancestry, trained as a doctor in France, returned to New Orleans and making a living as a piano player and teacher, who gets involved through his music in the murder of a young woman. Partly out of concern for one of the possible suspects and partly because he becomes a suspect himself, he winds up traveling the streets of New Orleans and the bayous

of Louisiana in an effort to discover the real killer. Though the climax is a bit clichéd and the resolution of the mystery contains echoes of *Chinatown* and *The Crying Game*, the real strength of the book lies in its depiction of pre-Civil War New Orleans and its exploration of the racial parameters of that society. Barbara Hambly has followed this book with a whole series of other Benjamin January novels, which I also look forward to reading some day, but for now I can at least recommend this one.

—Steve Reuys

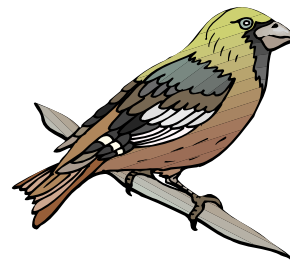


### ***Lessons in Space*, by Cathleen Calbert (University Press of Florida, 1997)**

“Once again, a bad year for the skies/Ice on wings. Terrorist activities,” begins the title

poem from Cathleen Calbert’s collection, *Lessons in Space*. Ominous, yet embracing uncertainty, the imagery within this poem takes fate full circle, connecting national tragedy with personal loss, as she later confides, “I’m tanked on coffee, in a restaurant talking/to yet another friend who is losing his mother.” Calbert’s dependency upon connections, between things large and small, becomes one focus of the collection, with the theme of transition as the other. What Calbert provides in her poetry are brief moments of time, spanning the innocence of childhood, the turbulence of adolescence, to finally the fear of adult responsibility. In a collection where a poem like “Junior High” with the lines “In diary/my white lips/breathed, ‘Jay is so cool’” is juxtaposed with “Having given the ledger lady/two hundred in twenties, he has only/a thin receipt left in the wallet of his jeans./But it’s lousy he should think such things,” from the poem “Young Man at the Family Planning Circle,” Calbert’s strength comes from the accessibility of the roles she creates. *Lessons in Space* roots its own voice in the collection of many voices, proving Calbert to be a worthy spokesperson.

—Julie Bures



### **Book Discussion Groups**

This spring the A.L.R.I. sponsored a reading group on Rachel Martin’s book, *Listening Up*. (We hope to schedule another book discussion group in the fall or winter and would welcome suggestions of book titles from teachers interested in being participants. Email

<sandra@alri.org> or <steve@alri.org> with your suggestion.) Programs or teachers interested in organizing their own student, faculty or friends book group may find helpful the following resources from the SABES/ALRI Library.

Bealor, Shirley E. and Susan Hepler. *Teachers as Readers: Starting a Book Discussion Group*. IRA. nd. Book discussion *continued on next page*

## Summer Reading

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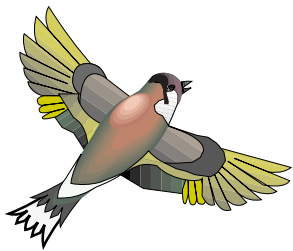
sion groups are their own reward for reading and learning about new books but are also a way to share professional literature and model reading enjoyment to students. This video and companion guide includes practical information on organizing meetings, choosing books, and promoting discussion.

Greenwood, Monique, Lynda Johnson and Tracy Mitchell-Brown. *The Go On Girl! Book Club Guide for Reading Groups*. Hyperion. 1999. The Go On Girl! is the nation's largest Black women's reading group. The different genres of African-American literature, reading lists, author Q & A, and excerpts from recommended books are included in this book, as well as ways to make the meetings memorable and stimulating.

Oakley, Nancy. *Book Discussion Clubs for Adult New Readers*. New Readers Press. 1988. Project LEARN, an adult literacy program in Ohio, has used book discussion groups to encourage students to read a wider range of materials, to improve their fluency and to learn to view themselves as readers.

Quindlen, Anna. *How Reading Changed My Life*. (Library of Contemporary Thought) Ballantine Publishing. 1998. "In books I have traveled, not only to other worlds, but into my own. I have learned who I was and who I wanted to be, what I might aspire to and what I might dare to dream about my world and myself." (AQ)

—*Sandra Darling*



### ***The Children Are Watching: How the Media Teach About Diversity*, by Carlos E. Cortés (Teachers College Press, 2000)**

Carlos Cortés, a professor of history at University of California, Riverside, has written a primer on understanding the

media as an educational force, specifically focusing on the media's role in teaching about diversity. He analyzes the "mass media as multicultural curriculum," examining media creators as multicultural curriculum developers, the various media products (books, movies, TV shows, etc.) as multicultural textbooks, and the types of multicultural learning that occurs as kids consume these various media products. He presents his own "multicultural media journal" (a one-month diary of his own experiences with various media products which shows just how pervasive the multicultural media curriculum is) and analyzes the characteristics (themes, patterns, perspectives, etc.) of the media multicultural curriculum. A chapter on stereotypes provides an especially helpful way of looking at this tricky issue, showing how stereotypes are not synonymous with generalizations, labels, or depictions and why it's important to search

for patterns of presentation in any assessment of possible stereotyping.

Many books have provided analyses of the media, have explored cultural issues of diversity, or have presented the case for multicultural education, but this book draws together all three themes in a format that is easily accessible to parents, teachers, and students and that provides them with a useful introduction and guide to how the media teach about diversity. Cortés manages to combine a very logical, analytical approach to exploring how the media teach about diversity with a highly personal, almost informal style that makes the book engaging and informative at the same time. (It's also relatively short, which probably would help to make it appealing to parents, teachers, and others outside the academic world.) And though focused on the effects of the media on children, the book should also be of great use to adult educators and others seeking to understand how the media teach about diversity.

—*Steve Reuys*

*Julie Bures, Sandra Darling, Maria E. González, Steve Reuys, and Deborah Schwartz are all staff at the A.L.R.I.*

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### Using the PBS "Jazz" Series in an ESOL Classroom

Earlier this year the A.L.R.I. presented a Video in the Classroom workshop focusing on the PBS *Jazz* series by Ken Burns. We encouraged participants to consider using these videos in their classes and to let us know how things went if they did. One of the teachers at the workshop took us up on both counts. Robert Hibbard teaches ESOL at El Centro del Cardenal in Boston. He developed a series of lessons to go with the *Jazz* series and is continuing to work further on this curriculum. A little while ago he sent us a copy of what he has put together so far, and copies of these materials can be found in our library and are available to other teachers. Robert says that "the students responded enthusiastically to the material. They engaged the central themes presented, critically, and were able to draw parallels with their own experiences in this country. And while few said they now like jazz music, I think most respect it as an important component fo American culture and history." Our thanks to Robert for sharing this material with us, and we encourage others to come in to the library to borrow the *Jazz* series, along with the curriculum materials he developed.

### Local Newspapers Available Free to Programs

The *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Metro* are both available free to adult education programs. To receive the *Globe* contact Annemarie Stenstrom at 617-929-2640 or e-mail <astenstrom@globe.com>. To receive the *Metro* (minimum order 50 copies) contact Todd Rich at 617-338-7963 or e-mail <trich@metro-boston.com>.

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Northeast SABES presents...

## THE 2002 MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

**WHEN:** Wednesday, July 24, 2002; 9:00am–4:00pm.

**WHERE:** Northern Essex Community College, 45 Franklin St., Lawrence, MA.

**PRE-REGISTRATION:** Required by July 10. Call or e-mail Sharon at 978-738-7302 or <klufts@aol.com>. Each person registering must indicate her choice of two workshop sessions (see below), since space is limited.

**DESCRIPTION:** This institute will provide opportunities for in-depth exploration of the emerging state Performance Accountability System and its implications for ABE programs. *The Opening Event* will be an Overview and Background of the Performance Accountability System. This will be followed by your choice of two of the following information and discussion sessions:

- *Specific Assessment Requirements and their Implications for Programs:* Implications of assessment requirements on staffing, program design and program systems; information on using the TABE, BEST, and REEP.
- *Connections to the Curriculum Frameworks:* Continuing use of your in-house assessments; updates on the Curriculum Frameworks and new standards in some Curriculum Frameworks.
- *Student Goals and Countable Outcomes:* Honoring student purposes for coming to programs; the goal-setting process; documentation, including data matching. Some sessions will run concurrently, so it is strongly advised to have a team of staff from each program so that all sessions can be covered. There will also be structured opportunities for program sharing around particular issues during lunch. (A continental breakfast and nice lunch will be served.)

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