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all write news

## VIDEOFEST HELPS COMMUNITY EXPLORE TOUGH ISSUES

by Deborah Schwartz and Maurice Penn

[This past year, the A.L.R.I. funded four mini-grant projects. Grants went to: the Archdale Community Center, for its Videofest project; Dimock Community Health Center, to develop ABE curriculum units dealing with health-related topics, such as asthma and diabetes; East Boston Harborside Community Center, for its Computer Recipe Box project; and the Morningstar Baptist Church for its project on using drama in helping students prepare for the GED. The following article on Archdale's interesting and innovative project is adapted from their final report.--Ed.]

Last fall, staff at the Archdale Community Center in Roslindale proposed holding a video festival for their teen and adult participants. The videofest would be a collaborative effort involving the two of us—Deborah Schwartz, Coordinator of Archdale's Family Literacy Project, and Maurice (Mo) Penn, Athletic Director at the Community Center. We felt that, by showing both popular and non-mainstream videos that asked hard questions, provoked thought and discussion, and were personally relevant and dealt with our participants' own issues, we could use those videos as a tool for learning. It would also allow us to expand our definition of "family literacy," since we were hoping our audience would include various adult and teen-aged family members.

At the time we were watching our community mourn the senseless death of yet another of its young men. It was months after Marco Charles, age sixteen, was stabbed, and we were still grabbing at straws. Not only did the neighborhood teens feel more isolated, alone and angry than ever, but there didn't seem to be any on-going attempt at reconciliation and healing, let alone a commitment to decreasing, if not ending the violence. We felt the need for some kind of literacy event that would bring adults, young adults,

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## PRACTITIONERS AS THINKERS: IS IT POSSIBLE?

by Alice Levine

I've been working in the field of adult education for close to twenty years and for much of that time I felt fortunate to be one of those few lucky people who had work that I loved. When I was teaching, I felt totally involved; as I planned for classes I felt creative; and when I talked with friends about what I did, I felt proud. But somehow, as I stayed in the field, and as I took jobs with more and more responsibilities beyond my own classroom, I began to get burned out. Although I still had moments of feeling real joy in my work, too many of my hours were eaten up by paperwork and the pressure to ensure continued funding.

In particular, I began to feel a great craving for real intellectual stimulation. Although I certainly used my head in my job (it often ached by the end of the work day), the kind of thinking I did usually felt like a knee-jerk reaction to an immediate demand: "Quick, Alice, what can you do with the class that starts in ten minutes! Quick, Alice, produce a curriculum that will look good for this funding proposal that's due tomorrow!"

I always felt that I had twelve times more to do than I could possibly

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Sept./Oct. 1998

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Please share this newsletter  
with others at your program.  
The deadline for submitting  
material for the next issue is:  
October 15.

## Videofest Helps Community Explore Tough Issues *continued from page 1*

and children together in a venue that would allow them to relax, open up, and learn about and from each other. We knew instinctively that the bringing together of people to share ideas and passions would be part of the healing process, and we hoped the more we knew about one another—really knew—the kinder and more compassionate we would become.

The process started with a discussion of what type of movie to watch and talk about. We wanted to come up with videos that would draw out a particular issue, mood or piece of contemporary history, and we wanted to choose movies that the community members could relate to and that would develop their critical thinking skills. Our preliminary discussions about which movies would meet these criteria were filled with debate. Even though we “knew” each other, shared many similar political values and outlooks on the world, and certainly respected one another’s methods of teaching, still we argued. Maurice, determined to choose movies and activities that would engage the participants and ask them to relate to and question the characters’ motives, held fast to the notion that we had to show popular movies and focus on dramatic, personal questions. Deborah, on the other hand, as literacy teacher/artist/feminist, was invested in low-budget movies, movies about young women and girls, movies that weren’t made for popular consumption.

We wound up choosing seven films to show between December, 1997, and March, 1998. They were: *La Vida Loca*, which explores the lives of young Latina gang members in Los Angeles as they learn how to remain friends despite the obstacles of poverty, family obligations, and betrayal by their boyfriends; *The Road to Brown*, about the life of lawyer and educator Charles Hamilton Houston, who paved the road for the landmark desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of Education*; *Do the Right Thing*, Spike Lee’s powerful film, set in the steamy Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, which deals with issues of racial conflict; *Selena*, the fictionalized life story of the popular Chicana singer/song writer who was murdered by the president of her fan club; *Girls Town*, an off-the-beaten-track movie of four teenaged women who, in their senior year of high school, confront the reality of date rape and domestic violence; *Air Force One*, a high-action movie about the hijacking of the President’s plane by

terrorists; and *Get on the Bus*, another Spike Lee film about a group of African-American men on their way from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., for the Million Man March.

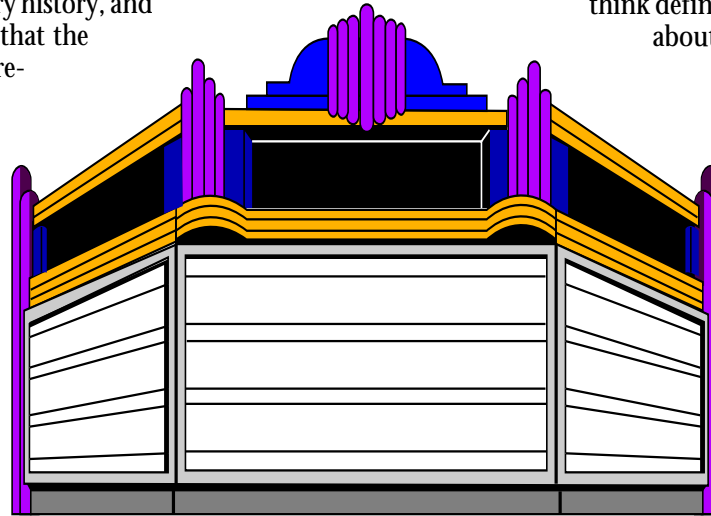
We previewed each movie, in order to analyze the film and hash out our own reflections on it. After viewing the film and discussing it ourselves, we generated two or three focus questions to help frame the discussions we hoped would follow the viewing of each film. We drafted the questions so that the participants could get at what they were seeing in the movie, their likes and dislikes of character, and an honest assessment of how the film related to their lives. For example, with *The Road to Brown* video, one of our questions was, “We’ve prepared a list of qualities that we think defines Charles Houston. Now write about one of these character traits which you believe you have.

Tell a story that demonstrates how you possess any of these qualities.” For *Do the Right Thing*, one of the questions was, “Have you ever had a conflict or argument with a person of another race or ethnicity? Write about it, in detail, from your perspective.” The goal was for us to help participants identify their feelings in order to understand their emotions. We wanted them to further

develop their critical thinking based on facts, not opinions. Finally, we, as facilitators of the project, wanted to participate in the viewing of the movies, to engage in the conversation, so that we could both learn from and lead the youth and adults with whom we work daily.

During the course of the videofest, different groups of people attended each film, participated in the discussions and activities, and wrote about their reactions to the films. We learned a lot during this process. We learned that conversations about power, about race, gender, class, and difference, about resolving conflict when all parties involved are invested in winning and are well-armed, are not only difficult, but that the words themselves are still, mostly, unformed. More than anything this videofest provided a forum in which to begin that ongoing conversation. It taught us that the important work of bringing this community together to discuss thoughts and feelings about racism, power differences and money is a mandatory part of our jobs as community activists and teachers. We learned, again, how these forums need to be ongoing and accessible to participants. And we count our successes by the quality and the passion of some of those conversations, one of which we were able to document on videotape, thanks to Martha Merson,

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## Videofest Helps Community Explore Tough Issues *continued from previous page*

ABE Specialist at the A.L.R.I.

We believe that the atmosphere was conducive to learning because a traditional classroom structure, rigidity and expectations were non-existent. Although we did lay down ground rules in order to produce an environment of respect, we ultimately created an informal and relaxed atmosphere where learning happened naturally. Also, we relied on our own and the participants' personal connections to the material. We asked ourselves and the participants to bring their experiences and their stories to the conversations. In fact, the learning that happened was driven by our sometimes varying, but always powerful, life experiences.

We learned some practical things along the way. We learned through experience that showing a complete two-and-a-half-hour movie, then expecting the participants to be involved in a group activity and a writing exercise was too much. Next time, we will divide the movie into parts, screening segments of it at a time. Or, if we want to preserve the integrity of the experience of viewing a whole movie, we could format the activities differently. For instance, we could view the whole movie in one sitting, asking the participants a question about the work before the movie begins. That would allow the participants to focus on some particular aspect of the movie as they watched. Another way to structure the videofest, one that we talked about, but didn't experiment with, would be to show the movie in one sitting, but save the formal writing and discussion activities for a later time. If we structured the events in that way, we would probably start the activity session with a powerful or important scene from the movie so as to jar the participants' memory.

The videofest was a learning experience for the group participants as well as the facilitators. The community has become used to having videos, not just to watch, but to discuss. Now when a teen requests a video for the center, we hear his or her peers ask, "Why that video?" Which then turns into a conversation about the merits or lack thereof of the recommended video. These conversations prove that the Archdale Community Center's members are reflecting on the content and substance of what they're watching. The sharing of opinion, thought and personal narrative, expressed in so many kinds of discourse, affect and tone, conversations that happen with and without teachers, conversations that get documented and ones that we let go of or lose, ones we are privy to, hear about later, or are excluded from entirely, all of these modes of expression and connection, just by simply happening, work to produce literacy and learning. We hope we have the energy, time and support to bring continuous video literacy programming to the Archdale.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Deborah Schwartz is Family Literacy Project Coordinator and Maurice Penn is Athletic Director at the Archdale Community Center in Roslindale.*

## NEWS FROM THE A.L.R.I.

### Computer Help Just a Phone Call Away!

Recognizing the growing emphasis being placed on ABE programs' use of computers for a wide range of purposes and recognizing the multitude of difficulties that program staff encounter in doing so, the state Department of Education, Adult and Community Learning Services, is providing funding this year to each SABES region to hire a full-time Computer Field Technologist to work with programs on using computers effectively. The CFT will be available to help programs with their computer operating systems, applications, local area networks, Internet connections, DOE data reporting system, and use of educational software.

To fill this position for the Boston region, the A.L.R.I. has hired Akira Kamiya, whom many of you already know from the work he's done over the past year with a number of programs in our area. Although Akira will probably be presenting some of our region-wide staff development activities related to using computers, his major responsibility will be to work individually with specific ABE programs to help them build their capacity to meet their particular needs and solve their particular problems. Consequently, we expect he will be spending most of his time out in the field, working on-site at programs and assisting staff by phone.

To enable programs to reach the Computer Field Technologist easily and obtain help quickly, Akira has been provided with a mobile phone. Please make a note of his cellular phone number: 617-962-8055. Staff at programs located within the greater Boston SABES region (i.e., the communities of Boston, Belmont, Brookline, Cambridge, Somerville, and Watertown) are encouraged to call him at this number for help with any issues or problems related to computer use at their programs.

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The *All Write News* is published every two months. Please send all material for the newsletter to the editor, Steve Reuys, at the A.L.R.I. (see address on back). Our phone number is 617-782-8956; our fax number is 617-782-9011. All signed articles represent the opinions of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the A.L.R.I. or its staff. For permission to reprint articles, please contact the editor.

The A.L.R.I./SABES Greater Boston Regional Support Center is primarily funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Boston BRA/EDIC/Jobs and Community Services Department, and the Massachusetts Higher Education Coordinating Council. The material in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Massachusetts Department of Education or the federal government.

## Practitioners As Thinkers: Is It Possible?

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accomplish. So when opportunities came up (to go to a staff development event, to serve on an advisory board, to be a proposal reader, or to learn how to use the Internet), my first reaction was always, No, I can't and don't want to do anything more. On my worst days I began to wonder: Have I lost my love for teaching adults? Do I need to find another line of work? Fortunately, things happened that gave me a glimpse of another way of being involved in this field.

I was asked by my agency to attend meetings of the Read Boston coalition since the city-wide initiative was relevant to my work with immigrant and refugee parents. Through my participation in these meetings, I got involved in a task force on family literacy led primarily by professors at Boston University. The group was asked to put together a document to guide the Read Boston staff in understanding family literacy and what role it might play in improving the literacy skills of young children. Suddenly, I found myself talking about IDEAS with others who had a real interest in the field of family literacy. What did I really think? What were the qualities and standards of good, effective programs? What did I know and believe based on the rich experience I had had in the field? I shared my thoughts and listened to the ideas of others. I felt both stimulated and appreciated. For the first time in a long time I felt like an EDUCATOR, an educator with many years of experience who had important ideas to contribute to the field. I wanted more.

Based on a series of experiences like this one, I made a decision a year ago last spring to leave my full time position as coordinator of a local program and (as I told anyone who was interested) "jump into the abyss." I've made significant sacrifices in terms of income and stability (neither of which are ever very good in our field) and I know I'm lucky that I was able to manage without a full-time income for awhile. I took on a variety of small consulting jobs (which I've taken to calling my "gigs") that brought in a little income, helped me to make contacts, and kept convincing me that my decision had been right because I was suddenly loving adult education again.

One of the first things I did was to become part of the state-wide working group that was developing Curriculum

Frameworks for adult ESOL. We got together and talked about IDEAS! I, who'd had no time (and no patience) for learning to use the Internet in the past, was now regularly working with my colleagues on "Metanet," hashing out our thoughts about Guiding Principles and Learning Standards. It was so exciting and stimulating. This time I wasn't producing ideas in order to secure funding; I was thoughtfully considering what I really believed effective teaching and learning was all about.

Also during the past year, I led a number of staff development activities for the A.L.R.I. A highlight of this work was planning and leading a three-session mini-course at SCALE on "Teaching Reading to ESOL Students."

Although I'd taught reading for many years and had lots of ideas about what seemed most effective, not being a reading expert (and knowing that many SCALE staff are themselves very experienced teachers), I felt that I needed to review the literature to make sure that what I was presenting was accepted as best practice by others in the field. So, I began reading research and theory on the teaching of reading to non-native English speakers. As with my experience working with Read Boston and with the Curriculum Frameworks group, I found myself experiencing a kind of joy and excitement about learning that I had almost forgotten about. After years of vacations where I wanted to

take a full break from thoughts of work, during my family's vacation this past February, I looked forward to evenings spent reviewing research about the teaching of reading. And when I presented the workshops to SCALE staff, I found that many of these teachers were as excited as I was by having the chance to look at and grapple with both the research and their own practice.

Right before my February vacation, I also took on a new job working in one of the Boston Public Schools, doing family literacy with both Spanish-speaking and native-English-speaking parents. I love the job and love being back in the field again, being able to use my creativity to work directly with adult students. However, I purposely accepted the job only four days a week so that I'd still have time to stay involved in other interesting projects—projects that would stimulate me and that I could make a contribution to.

In April I took on a new mini-position: as Practitioner Leader in Massachusetts, working with the Practitioner

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## Practitioners As Thinkers: Is It Possible?

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Dissemination and Research Network (PDRN) associated with the National Center for Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL). For those of you who don't know, NCSALL is a research center housed at Harvard University and run jointly by Harvard and World Education. One of NCSALL's strong commitments is to ensure that the research they do has strong connections to the field—that is, to us as practitioners. Those of us who are Practitioner Leaders have the job of finding ways to help connect practitioners to research and researchers to practice.

So, now I have a clear reason for making sure that I read each issue of *Bright Ideas* and *Focus on Basics* that I receive. I'm reading regularly, thinking about ideas, and talking to others about the work that we do. I'm excited to know what the researchers are doing and what they're beginning to find. I want to be part of that—to learn from it and to give my input. And I want more of us in the field to be involved.

Based on my own experience, I know it can be difficult for adult education practitioners to find the time and space to become engaged in the world of ideas. I would like to work with you to find ways to make this more possible. Over the next year, I will be doing a variety of things to try to connect practitioners with the NCSALL research. In October, we will have a table at Network 98 where you can get more information about NCSALL. At Network, I will also be co-leading two workshops with NCSALL researchers; the purpose of these is to engage practitioners and researchers in dialogue about the methodology and initial results of the studies. One of the workshops will be about a study being done on motivation and retention, while the other will focus on a study of the economic impact of the GED. I hope many of you will join me at these workshops and become part of the dialogue between practitioners and academic researchers.

If you have questions or suggestions about how the Practitioner Dissemination and Research Network (PDRN) might help connect you and your colleagues to the world of research and ideas about adult education, please contact me. I can be reached at home at 617/524-2632 or by e-mail at AliceLevine.Yahoo.com. I look forward to talking to you and seeing you at Network!

\* \* \* \* \*

*Alice Levine is the Family Literacy Coordinator for Boston Children's Services Project Excel at the David Ellis School. She is also the Massachusetts Practitioner Leader for NCSALL and has been working at the A.L.R.I. as the Family Literacy Liaison.*



## News from the A.L.R.I.

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### New ESOL Specialist

As many of you know, our position of ESOL Specialist has, for a variety of reasons, been vacant since Lenore Balliro left last summer. We are now very pleased to announce that this month Diane Paxton is starting in the semi-new half-time position of ESOL Specialist/Special Projects Coordinator here at the A.L.R.I. Though the exact contours of this job may change during the year, starting now Diane will definitely be available to work with programs on issues, problems, and training needs related to ESOL. So if you're working at an ESOL program in the Boston region and you find yourself with questions about ESOL teaching, curriculum, materials, assessment, etc., please give Diane a call here at 782-8956.

### Remember the A.L.R.I. Job Bank

People seeking jobs in the adult basic education field are urged to come in to look at our Job Listings Book to see what jobs are out there at programs in our region. You are also urged to bring or send in a copy of your resumé for us to put into our Resumé Book, which programs with job openings will often look at, particularly if they're trying to hire someone quickly.

Adult basic education programs, especially those in the Boston area, are reminded to send or fax us copies of job announcements anytime you have openings, so that we can put them into our Job Listings Book. People seeking jobs in our field are constantly coming in to look at the Job Book, so if you have a job opening, please be sure it gets included in our book. You may also, particularly if you're in a hurry, want to look at our Resumé Book to see who is out there looking for a job in this field. (We also urge you to post your announcements with the Career Centers Job Bank. You can phone, fax, or mail job announcements to either: Deborah Briggs, The WorkPlace, 101 Federal St., Boston MA 02110, phone 737-0093 x115, fax 428-0380; or Employer Services, Boston Career Link, 281 Huntington Ave., Boston MA 02115, phone 536-1888, fax 536-1987.)

### Write for the Newsletter!

The *All Write News* is published by the A.L.R.I., but it is meant to be *your* newsletter. Its purpose is to present news and information dealing with adult basic education and especially to provide an open forum for materials written by and for ABE practitioners in the Boston area. We encourage you to see the newsletter as a means for communicating with others in the field and as a vehicle for sharing your experiences, ideas, and concerns with your colleagues, and we'd like to urge you to consider writing something for the newsletter. Call Steve Reuys at 782-8956, ext. 14, to ask questions, discuss an idea for an article, or get further encouragement. And send all material to Steve at the A.L.R.I., 989 Commonwealth Ave., Boston MA 02215. Thanks!

## GROWING UP IN DORCHESTER

A Review of: *Seth and Samona*, by Joanne Hyppolite (Delacorte Press, 1995)

by Martha Merson

**P**ricilla Howell, formerly at the Dudley Literacy Center, recently recommended an excellent book to me. *Seth and Samona*, a young adult novel by Joanne Hyppolite, is a find. For one thing, books that describe the Haitian-American experience are few and far between. Beautifully written as Edwidge Danticat's prose is, *Breath, Eyes, Memory* and *Krik Krak* would present a challenge to most literacy students. While these books have teachable passages, one can imagine a student reading *Seth and Samona* independently. The novel has a very conversational style. It reminds me of books that elementary school teachers read to my generation after recess. In her penchant for descriptions of mischief, Hyppolite reminds me of Beverly Cleary and those memorable characters Henry Huggins, Beezus, and Ramona.

The narrator, Seth, is from a tight-knit Haitian family living here in Dorchester. In his view, Samona is a crazy girl with a weird family. Being from an African-American family, Samona thinks Seth's family is funny "cause we kiss each other on the cheek all the time instead of saying hello and we pray in French before we eat" (p. 5). Samona is responsible for embarrassing Seth publicly and getting him into trouble with his family. But of course he can't stay away from her. Much of the plot revolves around their exploits together or Seth's commentary on Samona's adventures.

Samona Gemini and her whole family are lively characters. When Samona's sister, for example, found out her boyfriend was cheating on her, she "invited him over and made him an Alpo meat loaf since he was acting like such a dog" (p. 5). You have to love Mrs. Gemini, too. She is a poet and journalist who goes undercover. She plays the lottery, insisting that she was born lucky. "If I just focus my entire spiritual and mental being toward it—it will happen." (p. 51). She calls Seth "Young King" because she says he always looks like he has the burden of a kingdom on his shoulders. (p. 50). Although Seth repeatedly states that Samona is crazy, what really comes through is that she is her own person and she is loud about it. When Samona does show some interest in normal girl things, like entering the Little Miss Dorchester contest, she throws Seth off balance yet again, causing him to wonder if "normal" isn't boring.

Hyppolite is generous in her descriptions of Seth's family life. Seth's parents and grandparents use Creole expressions and Seth refers to his relatives with their Creole

titles, like Monnonk Roddie (for Uncle Roddie) and Manmi (for mother). Seth's grandmother is a presence, too, adding to the religious feeling in Seth's household. When a death in the family occurs, readers get a close-up view of how this Haitian family copes. Hyppolite describes traditional foods, the wake, and the family gathering. Here is Seth's perspective on the events:

Our apartment was so crowded that Jean-Claude and I had to sleep on the floor in the living room. And it gets very tiring having to kiss a whole roomful of relatives good morning and good night and hello all the time.

What's really tiring, though, was all the noise. They spent all day arguing politics about Haiti and nobody agreed about anything except that Haiti is in bad shape and something has to be done about it. (p. 43-44)

Although Seth's sister Chantal and his brother Jean-Claude both play important roles in the plot, they are flat characters. Jean-Claude is a street hero, committed to non-violence. Seth and the reader can count on him to say the political thing.

Half the time I have to tune Jean-Claude out when he's talking about how black people gotta unify and be strong and going on and on about what black person invented this and that. Sometimes it feels like I'm in school with him talking and talking. But today I understood what he was trying to do. He was trying to make sure I grew up proud. He was trying to teach me everything they didn't teach at school and not to believe everything you see on television and movies that doesn't show the good side of being black. (p. 82)

Chantal meanwhile sits at the center of conflicts in Seth's house. She is dating Jerome behind her parents' backs. She and Jean-Claude fight about this. The fact that Chantal lies to her parents is just one part of Jean-Claude's dislike for Jerome. Since Chantal sees Jerome on the sly, he doesn't appear in the book. Yet we learn that Jerome is African-American, that he grew up with his mom, and that he quit school last year and works full-time at the 7-Eleven near the highway. Foreshadowing the difficulties ahead, Seth reports:

I don't know exactly what to make of

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## Growing Up in Dorchester

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Jerome. The first time he came over to the house he had to wait for Chantal to finish washing the tub, so he started asking me all sorts of funny questions. Do I ever clean the tub? Does Chantal get good grades? Does she do all the housework? Does she get to stay out late like Jean-Claude? What does she want to be when she grows up?... I couldn't answer half the questions....

Jerome didn't seem to like any of my answers. He didn't ask me any more questions but I heard him whisper "typical Caribbean" and something about sexism under his breath and I started to get mad." (p. 23)

Responsible as Seth seems to be in the book, set-ups like this and his attitude toward Samona make me question his reliability as a narrator.

I keep wondering if Hyppolite made the right decision in choosing Seth's perspective. Given that so many of the characters have energy and some depth, I might have liked the book even more if one of them had provided the narrative lens. On the other hand, Samona wouldn't work because then we'd have to learn about her self-doubts. She couldn't surprise us as readily. None of the adults would work because they would have their own concerns and a much more limited window into the kids' world. Only a peer of Samona's situated in a Haitian family could give us such a broad view.

Only a boy could raise questions for himself and for readers that bring up issues like gender equality without becoming preachy.

A strong point of the book is its range of interesting issues that lend themselves to a class discussion or book group. Besides the issue of gender equality, the novel creates opportunities for discussion of dating and greeting customs, the choice to conform or not, conflict resolution, and to some extent the tensions between and different values found in the African-American and

Haitian communities. Although I feel vaguely dissatisfied by the book, I think its good points outweigh my qualms. I like Hyppolite's style and I'll be looking for her next book. She's young, born in Haiti in 1969, so I'll be curious to see whether she'll stick with young adult fiction or move on to a different genre. I wonder who her next narrative voice will be. I hope she'll set another book in Dorchester.

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*Martha Merson is the ABE/Literacy Specialist at the A.L.R.I.*

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### ABE Gets Budget Increase, Governor's Veto

On the last day of this year's legislative session, Acting Governor Paul Cellucci vetoed half of the increase that the legislature had included in its FY99 budget for adult basic education services in Massachusetts. Since the legislature did not act to override this veto, ABE programs will be getting an additional \$7 million next year (rather than the additional \$14 million approved by the legislature), bringing the line item total for ABE services to roughly \$26.5 million. Though disappointed that the Acting Governor chose to veto half of the proposed increase, ABE programs can still take satisfaction in having received a significant increase in state funding for the fourth year in a row. The MCAE (Mass. Coalition for Adult Education) Public Policy Committee is urging programs to thank their legislators for this year's increase and to continue to impress upon them the importance of increased funding for ABE services.

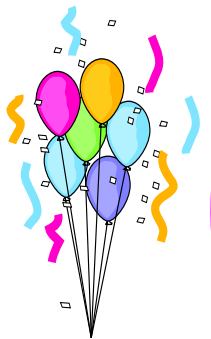
### BALF Seeks Community Council Members

The Boston Adult Literacy Fund is currently recruiting additional members for its Community Advisory Council. The Council, which is made up of literacy practitioners and former students, is a diverse group of people who share a strong commitment to strengthening community-based, participatory adult literacy programs. The Council meets once a month, September through June, to make funding decisions regarding BALF grants to ABE programs in the Boston region. Through this process, Council members have the opportunity to learn about proposal-writing, grant-making, and fundraising, as well as to learn more about ABE and ESOL issues as they discuss BALF's philosophy and build relationships with one another. BALF is committed to a Council that represents the diversity of the literacy field. Teachers and other staff at community-based ABE or ESOL programs, as well as former students, may apply to be members of the Council. Since BALF now serves all the communities within the SABES greater Boston region, they are particularly interested in candidates representing programs in Belmont, Brookline, Cambridge, Somerville, and Watertown, but will also welcome candidates from Boston-based programs. To receive more information and an application for membership on BALF's Community Advisory Council, please call 720-0181.

### Laubach To Award Book Grants

Laubach Literacy is seeking grant applications for its 1998 National Book Scholarship Fund, which distributes books and other educational materials to qualified adult literacy and education programs nationwide. NBSF grants are designed to help local educational groups expand their work or to begin new programs among under-served populations. First priority is given to family literacy programs that

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## For Your Information

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work to improve the literacy skills of parents and their children. Grants are also awarded to programs that work with special groups, such as the homeless, refugees, ESOL students, and adults with learning disabilities. Last year, the NBSF gave \$251,709 worth of in-kind grants to 126 programs. For more information or to apply for an NBSF grant, contact Mara Roberts, project administrator, The National Book Scholarship Fund, Laubach Literacy, P.O. Box 131, 1320 Jamesville Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210; phone 315-422-9121; e-mail [mroberts@laubach.org](mailto:mroberts@laubach.org). Grant applications will be accepted until December 15, 1998.

### A Reminder About Our Library Hours

The A.L.R.I. library is normally open :

Tuesday, 12:00-6:00

Wednesday, 10:00-12:00 and 1:00-4:30

Friday, 1:00-4:30.

Additional hours can be arranged by calling the librarian, Sandra Darling, at 782-8956, ext. 19.

## New Web Resource on Attending College

The Education Resources Institute (TERI), which operates the Higher Education Information Center, has opened a new database on the World Wide Web called HEAR—Higher Education Access Resources. This database provides information on more than 200 resources that promote college attendance among first generation and low income students. It lists higher education access programs along with publications, videos, software packages, and other resource materials. The address for this web page is: <http://www.teri.org/hearidx.htm>.

## Allan Quigley To Speak at Harvard

NCSALL, the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, has announced that Allan Quigley, author of the recent book *Rethinking Literacy Education*, will be speaking at the Harvard Graduate School of Education on Tuesday, October 6, 1998, in the late afternoon. The event will be open to literacy practitioners. The exact time and place are yet to be announced; you can watch the NCSALL website for more information (<http://hugse1.harvard.edu/~ncsall>) or contact John Comings at 496-0516, e-mail [john\\_comings@harvard.edu](mailto:john_comings@harvard.edu).

## Adult Literacy Resource Institute

989 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215

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