

The Latinx Child: Laughter, Learning, and Literatura

Guest Editors:

Jesse Gainer, Ph.D., Texas State University

Carmen Tafolla, Ph.D., The University of Texas at San Antonio





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Words from the Editors

Jesse S. Gainer and Carmen Tafolla

Language is political and literacy has always been a political act. The presence and absence of certain voices, from certain communities, in published texts speaks volumes about the ideologies and power structures of a society. When young people do not see themselves or their communities, their languages, their experiences, their realities and their dreams reflected in the texts they read, it is a damaging thing. It is not only damaging for those young people, it is damaging for a whole society. A healthy pluralistic society, based in democratic principles, must strive to confirm and valorize the multiple identities of the people who represent “El Pueblo”. This sort of inclusiveness relates necessarily to equity and equality and provides a rich fabric woven from diverse experiences from which we can develop a more just society for all. We write these opening remarks in a complicated time where we are confronted daily with the politics of exclusion and attacks on the critical multicultural perspectives we hold dear to our hearts. The publication of texts for young people that are by and about people of color is dismally inadequate and does not come close to an equitable distribution based on demographic realities. Like Rudine Sims Bishop (1990), we strive for literature that serves as mirrors, windows, and doors. We believe this goal is possible and it will be at the service of a strong and healthy democracy for all people.

Given the present context and our quest for social equity and critical multicultural literature, we present this special topic of *Revista Bilingüe/Bilingual Review*, *The Latinx Child: Laughter, Learning y la Literatura*. The articles that make up this issue contribute to the growing body of scholarship that positions the importance

Palabras de los editores

Jesse S. Gainer and Carmen Tafolla

El lenguaje es político y la alfabetización ha sido siempre un acto político. La presencia y ausencia de ciertas voces provenientes de algunas comunidades en los textos publicados, dice mucho sobre las ideologías y estructuras de poder de una sociedad. Es muy dañino cuando los jóvenes no se ven ellos mismos, su comunidad, lenguajes, experiencias, realidades y sueños reflejados en los textos que leen. No es sólo dañino para los jóvenes; sino es dañino para la sociedad en su conjunto. Una sociedad sanamente plural y sustentada en principios democráticos, debe pugnar por confirmar y valorar las múltiples identidades de la gente que representa el pueblo. Este tipo de inclusión se relaciona necesariamente a la equidad e igualdad y proporciona un rico tejido entrelazado con diversas experiencias de las cuales podemos desarrollar una sociedad más justa para todos.

Escribimos estos comentarios introductorios en un momento complicado en el que nos enfrentamos a diario con políticas de exclusión y ataques a las perspectivas multiculturales críticas que apreciamos en nuestros corazones. La publicación de textos dirigidos a jóvenes, escritos por y sobre gente de color, es sumamente inadecuada y no se aproxima a una distribución equitativa basada en las realidades demográficas. Al igual que Rudine Sims Bishop (1990), pugnamos por una literatura que sirva como espejos, ventanas y puertas. Creemos que este objetivo es posible y estará al servicio de una democracia fuerte y sana para todas las personas. Dado el contexto actual y nuestra búsqueda de equidad social y literatura multicultural crítica, presentamos este tema especial de la *Revista Bilingüe/Bilingual Review*, *The Latinx Child: Laughter, Learning y la*

of culturally specific literature for young people. We believe these articles collectively serve to guide educators, parents, and all of us, on the significance of Latinx literature for the establishment of healthy identities and strong communities. In a time when politicians offer walls that divide, we hope to build bridges that unite people. We hope that you enjoy this collection of articles relating to Latinx children's and young adult literature, and that you find within the pages of this issue, tools for the building healthy identities in our young, strong communities of critical thinkers, and the seeds for an equitable democracy.

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Bishop, R.S. (1990). Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors. *Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom*. 6 (3), ix-xi.

Literatura. Los artículos que componen esta edición contribuyen al cuerpo creciente de erudición que resalta la importancia de la literatura culturalmente específica para jóvenes. Creemos que estos artículos sirven en su conjunto como guía a educadores, padres y a todos nosotros, en la importancia de la literatura *Latinx* para el establecimiento de identidades saludables y comunidades fuertes. En tiempos en que los políticos ofrecen muros que dividen, esperamos construir puentes que unan a la gente. Esperamos que disfrute de esta colección de artículos relacionados con la literatura de adultos jóvenes y niños *Latinx* y que encuentre en las páginas de este número herramientas para construir identidades saludables en nuestras jóvenes y comunidades fuertes de pensadores críticos así como semillas para una democracia equitativa.

Referencias Bibliográficas:

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