

## CHAPTER 16

# *Culture and Human Development: Implications for Parenting, Education, Pediatrics, and Mental Health*

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Culture and child development are inextricably intertwined. From the child's perspective, an important aspect of development is the acquisition of cultural knowledge, Bruner (1990). From the societal perspective, children from birth are exposed to the culture surrounding them. This cultural surround spans everything from sleeping arrangements and feeding practices to the child's eventual value systems, school experiences, and interpersonal interactions. The child's active acquisition of cultural knowledge from the cultural surround constitutes the

relationship between culture and child development that is the focus of this chapter.

In multicultural societies, the cultural surround in which a child develops comprises myriad influences; these can be broadly categorized as *home culture* and *societal culture*. Home culture refers to the values, practices, and cultural background of the child's immediate family. The child interacts in this home culture on a daily basis, absorbing and learning from the implicit values transmitted through interactions with family members. The child is

also exposed to societal culture, or the culture of the society at large. Through interactions with outside sources (schools, peers, media, etc.), the child can also learn the more general cultural values communicated by the dominant society. Children are thus raised in a dual climate of the culture within the home and the culture of the external world.

In some cases, the cultural climate within the home is derivative of the general cultural climate, mirroring the value systems of the surround. In other situations, the cultural climate of the home may differ significantly from the cultural climate of society at large, as is often the case for recently immigrated families from many foreign countries. When home culture and societal culture differ for any particular family, interesting, and at times vexing, situations arise. Children may be faced with conflicting messages from home and from the outside world (particularly from school) as to the proper values, attitudes, and behaviors they should follow. Parents also must reassess their cultural framework in a new setting where many of their own values may be in direct conflict with those of society at large. These parents need to choose which values in what contexts they should use in raising their children.

The difficulty of such choices is all the greater because cultures are "invisible" (Philips, 1972). That is, they are interpretive lenses that are taken for granted by the wearers. Like the air one breathes, under ordinary conditions, these value frameworks do not rise to conscious awareness. This lack of awareness exacerbates the potential for both personal conflict and interpersonal misunderstanding in multicultural environments.

Because they have the task of assessing the behaviors of parents and children who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, counselors, social workers, educators, and health care professionals who work with families must be aware of these intercultural dynamics. Behaviors that may appear strange and perhaps dysfunctional in one cultural context could in fact be seen as normal in others. The professional community that comes into contact with families of differing backgrounds has the challenge of understanding the values and child developmental goals behind cultural differences. Otherwise, they cannot hope to correctly diagnose the source of any problems that arise.

Perhaps even more important, an understanding of diverse cultural values and associated rearing practices reveals the strengths of socialization and child-care practices used in diverse cultural groups. Equally important is the awareness of the losses that come from giving up one's ancestral culture in the process of assimilating to the dominant cultural surround.

In this chapter, behavioral and value differences that exist in different cultures will be discussed from this dual-culture (home and society) perspective. Each home culture and the dominant societal culture has ancestral roots in other countries (Greenfield & Cocking, 1994). For example, the dominant American culture and the home culture of many European Americans stems primarily from northern Europe, whereas the home culture of Chinese Americans stems from China. These cross-cultural roots allow us to relate ethnic diversity within the multicultural societies of North America (and elsewhere) to cross-cultural variability on a global level. Conversely, the understanding of ancestral cultures helps us to understand the cultural frameworks that constitute an ethnically diverse society.

Two alternative cultural frameworks are particularly basic. In one framework or model, the preferred endpoint of development is independence (Greenfield, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The primary goal of socialization in this model is an autonomous, self-fulfilled individual who enters into social relationships and responsibilities by personal choice (Miller, 1994; Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990). In the other model, the preferred endpoint of development is interdependence (Greenfield, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The primary goal of socialization in this model is for the mature person to be embedded in a network of relationships and responsibilities to others; personal achievements are ideally in the service of a collectivity, most often the family.

These models not only generate preferred developmental endpoints and socialization goals, they also function as interpretive frameworks, generating evaluations of others' thinking, feeling, and acting. As interpretive frameworks, the models elucidate the reasons for cultural differences, the values behind cross-cultural variability in behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.

The independence framework is part of a broader philosophical and social model called individualism (Triandis, 1988). The interdependence framework is part of a broader philosophical and social model called collectivism (Triandis, 1988). These cultural models are often taken for granted; yet they generate socialization preferences and developmental goals across a wide variety of behavioral domains. To use Shore's (1996) terminology, they are foundational schemata.

Traditional research in developmental psychology has implicitly assumed the independence model or script. By also acknowledging an alternative course of development—the interdependence script—we have a more universal theory of development.

Because of this generative quality, the cultural models of individualism and collectivism integrate group differences

across different domains and different periods of development. They provide theoretical, cultural, and developmental coherence to what otherwise would be an array of unconnected group differences. Because of this coherence, we have used these alternative cultural models as an organizing framework for four periods and domains of development: infant care, socialization, and development; parent-child relations; peer relations; and home-school relations. These constitute the four major sections of this chapter.

The contrasting cultural models of individualism and collectivism also provide a framework that can account for cultural diversity in a multicultural society such as the United States (Greenfield & Cocking, 1994). Many immigrant and other minority groups have entered the United States, a society built on individualistic principles (Raef, in press), bringing with them a collectivistic value system and frame of reference from their ancestral cultures (Greenfield & Cocking, 1994). This historical situation leads to a dynamic in which the socialization goals of a child's home culture are more collectivistic, while those of the broader society are more individualistic. This state of affairs produces a dialectical process that has important social ramifications. This dialectic will be a focus of our concern as we draw out implications of culture and human development for parents and practitioners.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAPTER

Infant Care, Socialization, and Development; Parent-Child Relations; Peer Relations; and Home-School relations were selected as organizing domains because interaction with parents, peers, and schools constitutes the process by which children are socialized to become human beings and to become members of a particular culture. These social relationships are, moreover, important determinants of children's adjustment and mental health.

The first two major sections of the chapter will focus on variations in existing home cultures during infancy (first section) and later development (second section). The second two major sections focus on extrafamilial sources of cultural knowledge: peers and school. All four sections explore what can occur when home culture differs from societal culture. An introduction to each section follows.

### Infant Care, Socialization, and Development

Infancy is commonly described as the period of life between birth and the emergence of language, when a child is approximately 1½ to 2 years of age (Bornstein & Lamb,

1992). During this time, children are first fully exposed to the cultural place that surrounds them. This "cultural place," or the cultural beliefs, practices, and meanings characteristic of members of the child's community, is perhaps the single most important factor in influencing the future life of the child (Weisner, 1996).

The first section, on infant care and development, will analyze the dominant North American cultural model of development, while presenting important alternatives to it. This is critical for professionals who work directly with infants and their families; they need to know the strengths and weaknesses of each cultural model before prescribing infant care practices and developmental diagnoses based on one rather than another. Although our examples often come from the United States, the contrasting cultural models apply to many other societies, including multicultural societies in which European-based culture is dominant.

Our chapter will profile different cultural models of development, their expressions during infancy, and their diverse patterns of strength and weakness. How cultural models influence infant sleeping arrangements, feeding, attachment, and communication will be our substantive focus.

From a theoretical perspective, infancy is critical because it is when a culture sets the gyroscope of development along a particular pathway. From an applied perspective, this period of development is of immediate importance to pediatricians and other health care workers, because they are the primary professionals who interface with infants and their families.

Although infant care advice is generally put forth by pediatricians in books and in person as scientific and therefore culturally "neutral," cross-national differences and changes over historical time in infant care advice (e.g., Métraux, 1955; Young, 1990) make it clear that these professionals are, in fact, providing culture-specific models of children's care and development (Harkness, Super, Keefer, Raghavan, & Campbell, 1996). Because they are unfamiliar with alternative models, pediatricians and their allied workers may promulgate an implicit individualistic cultural model to their patients without being aware of its cultural specificity.

This lack of awareness of one's own cultural assumptions, combined with a lack of understanding of the other's cultural foundations, can cause problems in communicating with and advising patients who enter the medical encounter with a contrasting set of assumptions regarding child development and socialization. Furthermore, when advice concerning infant care and development based on the dominant North American cultural model is put forth as *the* right way, it can make parents

who have been brought up with other cultural models feel confused, guilty, or inadequate.

Cultural knowledge of infancy is also important for professionals such as educators, who meet families when their children are older. An understanding of the diverse developmental courses that have been set in infancy provides insight into the different behavioral patterns that are seen when children arrive in preschool or elementary school. The bottom line is that implicit learning at home significantly impacts what educators have to begin working with at school.

### Parent-Child Relations

Taking a developmental approach, the second section will focus on older children and how interactions and relations between parents and children may differ in various cultural contexts. Issues such as parent-child communication, parenting styles, and discipline will be addressed. By organizing the first two sections chronologically, the reader will be able to see how the same set of cultural models—specifically models stressing independence or interdependence as developmental goals—show up at earlier and later stages of development. This cultural consistency reinforces and provides continuity for particular paths of development (Greenfield & Childs, 1991).

This section also has practical implications beyond the family. For example, teachers must know the developmental goals that parents are working toward at home, to prevent children from being caught in the middle of home-school value conflict (e.g., Raeff, Greenfield, & Quiroz, in press), the topic of the fourth section.

Similarly, counselors and clinical psychologists must know the developmental goals that parents are working toward at home. Here is an example of the usefulness of such knowledge in a culturally diverse counseling practice:

*When a Korean adolescent of immigrant parents complains that his or her parents are dictating a field of study for the child, a counselor in the United States or Canada may not realize that, in the Korean culture, the goal of education is not to bring out the unique potential of a maximally autonomous individual; rather, education is for the benefit of the whole family, including parents. Within this cultural framework, parents are justifiably concerned that their child find a field that can ensure future economic security for the whole family.*

With an understanding of this kind of alternative developmental model, counselors and clinical psychologists are

less likely to accuse the parents of depriving their child of autonomy or producing an unhealthy guilt trip. They are more likely to correctly diagnose the adolescent as caught between two opposing value frameworks. Equally important, they will be able to explain this value conflict to immigrant parents who are often more strongly identified with the ancestral culture than are their more assimilated children.

### Peer Relations

The third section focuses on implications of contrasting value assumptions for peer relations. When peers from differing cultural backgrounds interact, certain assumptions about communication, allocation of rewards, conflict resolution, and other interpersonal issues may be violated, leading to potential hurt and confusion. The implications of these potential cross-cultural misunderstandings will be discussed for parents, educators, and clinicians.

The direct relevance of cultural variability in peer relations for educational practice is illustrated in the following example (Quiroz & Greenfield, in press):

*A kindergarten teacher and her class are of similar ethnic background; all the families have immigrated from Mexico or Central America. The teacher sets out crayons in cups for the class. Each cup holds multiple crayons of a given color. On a mentoring visit, a supervisor tells the teacher that she should abandon the communal crayons and, instead, give each child his or her individual cup of multicolor crayons. By doing this, the supervisor says, children will not have to use the broken crayons created by other children; they will enjoy the activity more.*

*After following this advice, the teacher discovers that the children, who had been interested in taking care of the "group" crayons, have no interest whatsoever in taking care of their "individual" crayons; if anything, their interest and enjoyment of the coloring activity diminishes.*

In essence, the supervisor is enforcing a cultural model of development that emphasizes the independence of each member of a peer group; the concept of personal property (in this case, applied to crayons) is part of that independence. The teacher and class, in contrast, are actualizing a contrasting model of development that emphasizes interdependence and sharing among peers. This is the model of peer relations that these children have brought with them from home.

Through understanding the two cultural models for peer relations, the supervisor could have discussed the strengths

and weaknesses of the alternative practices with the teacher, so that an informed choice could be made. Instead, the supervisor rather unconsciously created a value conflict between peer relations valued at home and school, a dichotomy that could potentially alienate children (and teachers) from home, school, or from both, while interfering with the joy and process of learning.

On the theoretical level, such conflicts give us a clue concerning contrasting models of human development. On the applied level, it is to the avoidance of such unconscious, yet destructive cross-cultural value conflicts that this chapter is dedicated.

### Home-School Relations

As the preceeding section implies, relations between families and school personnel are crucially important for parents, children, and teachers. The final major section of this chapter will emphasize schools as institutional contexts with a distinct culture and with the potential for inducing value conflicts between school and home.

As an example of such conflict, teachers often complain that Asian American and Mexican American children do not speak up enough or ask questions in class (e.g., Greenfield, Quiroz, & Raeff, in press; Muto, Kubo, & Oshima-Takane, 1980). But do these teachers realize that, in many Mexican families, it is considered disrespectful to express opinions to adults (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994)? Do teachers realize that, for Japanese families, questions to the teacher are considered a challenge to the pedagogical competence of the teacher or an admission of failure to understand on the part of the student (Muto et al., 1980)?

Armed with such knowledge, teachers will at least understand that the quiet child of Mexican or Japanese immigrant parents is not detached or stupid, but merely expressing a different style. This section of the chapter will present home-school value differences. Such differences will be analyzed as part of contrasting cultural models of human development and socialization—models of independence and interdependence as developmental priorities.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

With particular attention to ethnic diversity, our goal in this chapter is to give coherence and meaning to cultural differences. Hence, we concentrate not on the level of discrete behaviors, but on the level of cultural models: deep conceptual frameworks that generate myriad specific cultural practices and provide automatic interpretations of the

cultural practices of others. It is important to note that these "cultural models" are not limited to national or ethnic differences, but can include the influences of socioeconomic class, rural/urban locality, level of education, and many other dimensions as well. Thus, these models are not group labels, but they reveal themselves in the socialization practices and developmental goals that parents and the broader society have for children.

LeVine et al. (1994), based on the work of Geertz (1983), Holland and Quinn (1987), and D'Andrade and Strauss (1992), term the cultural software of parental behavior a "'commonsense' folk model" (p. 248). This model is implicit, rather than explicit. The folk model generates specific behaviors and activities that are conscious, but the underlying model is not. As applied to child rearing, this cultural model is often called a parental ethnotheory (cf., Harkness & Super, 1995) or parental belief system (Sigel, 1985; Sigel, McGillicuddy-DeLisi, & Goodnow, 1992). Although there are individual differences in parental ethnotheories within any cultural group, many of these variations occur around a particular cultural theme.

At the same time, cultural models and developmental goals operate in a context of economic, social, psychological, and physical factors that both influence the goals and provide constraints or facilitating conditions for translating goals into socialization practices. These factors include biology, physical environment, family structure, parental work, intergroup relations, and societal economy. Our chapter considers the role of such factors in the cultural enactment of developmental goals.

In selecting topics for inclusion in this chapter, two criteria were paramount: Would the topic reveal the operation of important, yet culturally variable developmental goals? Would the topic be useful for professionals who deal with children and their families? Because of this intended audience, we have evaluated research and selected what seemed useful both theoretically and practically for parents, educators, and health-care professionals. It is our hope that these criteria have been successfully implemented.

### INFANT CARE, SOCIALIZATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

A recent article in *Mothering*, a magazine for mothers of young infants in the United States, contained an article on infant sleeping arrangements called "Tossing and Turning over 'Crying It Out,'" by Carol Smaldino (1995). Smaldino's article begins with a description from *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?* by Martin Waddell and Barbara Firth

(1995) and a discussion of her own confusion and concern about infants' sleeping arrangements, an issue of great concern among many new parents:

Little Bear can't sleep because he is afraid of the dark. Big Bear, while busy reading a book, checks on him intermittently, bringing bigger and better lanterns each time. Finally, Big Bear takes Little Bear in his arms and goes outside to show him the moon and stars. By the time they step into the night air, Little Bear is already asleep, safely cradled in the warmth of Big Bear's arms. Big Bear has fallen on success shamelessly. Obviously, he has read few bear-rearing books warning him about the hazards of too much comforting.

In my first days of mothering, putting Paul to sleep was about the only thing that came easily. The evening events would exhaust him, then nursing would rescue him from the stresses of the day. During our peaceful ritual of bedtime nursing, he drifted into a sleep that told me first that he was all right, and second that by nursing him to sleep I had contributed to his well-being. I felt like a good mother.

Then the bad news broke. Parenting advice from well-respected professionals came pouring in. *Beware of putting your child to sleep, for you risk encouraging a lifetime of dependency and impairing the development of your child's own resources.* The prediction of future sorrows and regrets struck an immediate chord. How could I possibly ignore advice that promised to avert years of suffering? Pangs of guilt rose up in the night. (Smaldino, 1995, p. 33)

As explicit in this example, culture inundates us with information on what constitutes "appropriate" infant rearing, which can lead to feelings of confusion and guilt. Although considerable diversity exists even within middle-class American methods of infant rearing, when we look cross-culturally, we see an even greater variance in child-rearing practices. What may seem risky to child care experts in the United States may be normative in other cultures. Within the United States, mothers from divergent cultural, economic, or educational backgrounds can have very different behavioral practices and goals for their young infants.

### What Are Parental Goals for Infants and Children?

In general, parental goals for their children include some combination of the following: infant survival and health, the acquisition of economic capabilities, and the attainment of culturally appropriate values (LeVine, 1988). These values will vary from culture to culture and yield culturally variable child development goals. Culturally defined parental goals are crucial in parental behavior toward the child and in the child's eventual socialization

process. Normative parental goals both reflect and affect the structure and functioning of society as a whole.

In the United States, parents have many goals for their children, but one of the most basic and general is the desire to have children grow up to be independent and individualized adults. Guiding children to learn to make their own decisions and establish their separate individual existences was found to be one of the most important parental goals mentioned by mothers in Boston, Massachusetts (Richman, Miller, & Johnson Solomon, 1988). This is the developmental goal underlying the "professional" advice reported by Carol Smaldino concerning putting a baby to sleep alone. Similarly, Hess, Kashiwagi, Azuma, Price, and Dickson (1980) found that U.S. mothers tended to value skills in their children's behaviors that related to matters of individual action, such as self-assertion and standing up for one's rights (Hess et al., 1980). These goals are associated with the cultural model of individualism.

Such goals socialize children to operate effectively in an individualistic society such as the United States. "So basic is the concept of individualism to American society," it has been said, "that every major issue which faces us as a nation invariably poses itself in these terms" (Gross & Osterman, 1971, p. xi).

In contrast, parents in Japan show a different trend in parental goals. Rather than focusing on independence, in Japan, parents "want their children to develop a sense of what can be loosely translated as dependence from the very beginning" (Nugent, 1994, p. 6). In the study of maternal values conducted by Hess et al. (1980), Japanese mothers contrasted with U.S. mothers in their greater concern about issues of self-control, compliance to adult authority, and social interaction in child development.

Japanese mothers are more likely to perceive themselves as being "one" with their infants. In a paper presented in Tokyo in 1987, Kawakami claimed, "An American mother-infant relationship consists of two individuals . . . on the other hand a Japanese mother-infant relationship consists of only one individual; i.e., mother and infant are not divided" (p. 5) (in Morelli, Rogoff, Oppenheim, & Goldsmith, 1992). This value of extreme closeness between mother and infant is another indication of the interdependent goals of Japanese parenting and is manifested in patterns of interaction, such as in *amae* behavior (variously translated as dependence or interdependence) that children express toward their mothers (Lebra, 1994, Shwalb & Shwalb, 1996).

Just as the United States is a society that both values and institutionalizes individualism, Japan is a society in which collectivism—an emphasis on strong, cohesive in-groups

(Hofstede, 1991)—is both valued and institutionalized. Considering these issues, how might Japanese mothers react to Big Bear's method for getting Little Bear to sleep in the opening example?

Perhaps Japanese parents, who put their babies to sleep by nursing and holding them would agree with the U.S. experts that this practice encourages dependence. However, the Japanese interpretation of dependence would be quite different. Certainly, the Japanese would be in profound disagreement with the experts' negative evaluation of dependence as a risk factor that could impair a child's development. This notion of developmental risk is clearly culture-bound (Nugent, 1994).

### How Are Sleeping and Feeding Arrangements Affected by Parental Goals?

Smaldino (1995) continues her article in *Mothering*:

When Paul turned 10 months old, my husband Lino and I became so concerned about wakeful episodes a few times each night that we scheduled an appointment with our pediatrician. He informed us, almost jovially, that the definitive cure would be to let Paul "cry it out." My insides rebelled. I felt an anticipatory wave of depression at the thought of abandoning him. (pp. 33-34)

Although behaviors toward infants vary by culture, one readily observable behavior in all cultures is the organization of infant sleeping arrangements. Infant sleep is a particularly important issue to many U.S. mothers. In the United States, the leading complaint heard by pediatricians is from parents struggling to get infants to sleep alone through the night at as early an age as possible (Lozoff, Wolf, & Davis, 1984). There are also widespread cross-cultural differences in infant sleeping arrangements, and it can be argued that cultural views of infancy, manifest in parental goals, can play a part in determining infant sleeping arrangements.

### Where Do Infants Sleep Worldwide?

In the United States, most infants sleep alone in a separate crib, most often in a separate room from their parents (Morelli et al., 1992). In many cultures around the world (particularly non-Western cultures), however, cosleeping is the predominant sleeping arrangement (Konner & Worthman, 1980). In fact, in a survey taken of sleeping practices around the world, it was found that mothers in approximately two thirds of the cultures slept with their infants in their beds, and this portion was much higher if mothers

sleeping with their babies in the same room were included (Barry & Paxson, 1971; Burton & Whiting, 1961). Examples of cosleeping cultures include Japan, where children typically sleep with their parents until five or six years of age (Caudill & Plath, 1966). This cosleeping is often referred to as *kawa*, or "river," in which the parents form the symbolic riverbanks for the children sleeping in their own futons between them (Brazelton, 1990). People from many other cultures have similar cosleeping arrangements with their children.

Although the dominant culture in the United States adheres to separate sleeping practices, many minority and immigrant groups still hold on to cosleeping practices from their ancestral cultures. Many people in the United States have immigrated from countries in which infant-mother cosleeping is customary. For example, Schachter, Fuchs, Bijur, and Stone (1989) found that 20% of Hispanic American families in Harlem slept with their children at least three times a week. This was in contrast to the 6% of European American families that did so. Lozoff et al. (1984) found a similar pattern, with more African American than European American infants and toddlers regularly cosleeping with their parent or parents.

### What Preferences and Constraints Do Sleeping Arrangements Reflect in the Dominant U.S. Culture?

In the dominant culture of the United States, there is a distinct pressure on parents to push their infants to sleep alone (Brazelton, 1990). In fact, middle-class families who practice cosleeping realize they are going against cultural norms (Hanks & Rebelsky, 1977). According to Morelli et al. (1992), since the early 1900s, American folk wisdom has considered early nighttime separation to be crucial for healthy infant development.

A stress on independence training is an important factor connected to separate sleeping among middle-class parents in the United States (Munroe, Munroe, & Whiting, 1981). Parents have goals of training infants to be independent and self-reliant from the first few months of life, before an undesirable habit of cosleeping may be established that can be difficult to break (Morelli et al., 1992).

Another side of the coin may be parents' need for independence. Adults from the dominant U.S. culture constitute the developmental endpoint of independence training. A dependent infant threatens their own autonomy; therefore, an important motive for separate sleeping arrangements in infancy must be the parents' need to maintain their own independence. Research on the interrelations between parents' goals for themselves and for their children is very much needed.

Loss of privacy associated with parental intimacy is another reason for the disapproval of cosleeping (Shweder, Jensen, & Goldstein, 1995). The privileging of marital ties is typical of cultures that stress autonomy or independence as a developmental goal. In contrast, the privileging of intergenerational ties, such as that between mother and child, is typical of cultures that stress interdependence as a developmental goal (Lebra, 1994; Shweder et al., 1995).

Survival as a reason for separate sleeping arrangements has also been cited by U.S. parents. This includes reducing risks such as smothering or catching a contagious illness (Bundesen, 1944; Holt, 1957; Morelli et al., 1992). Other reasons include psychoanalytic oedipal issues and fear of incestual sexual abuse (Brazelton, 1990; Shweder et al., 1995). These rationales have led many middle-class European American women (and others who are part of the dominant culture) to adhere to sleeping separately from their infants.

Pediatricians, and even the federal government, reinforce this practice. Lozoff et al. (1984) cite sources, from pediatric advice books to government publications, that advise parents not to take their children into their bed for any reason (e.g., Spock, 1976). When parents read such advice, however, the authors are viewed as "well-respected professionals" (Smaldino, 1995), rather than bearers of folk wisdom or carriers of culture-specific ethnotheories of development.

#### *What Preferences and Constraints Does Cosleeping Reflect?*

In many cultures, however, cosleeping is considered a desirable practice. In fact, separate infant sleeping arrangements are often met with shock. For example, Brahmans in India believe that it is wrong to let young children sleep alone in a separate room in case the child awakens in the middle of the night. They believe that it is the parents' obligation to protect their children from fear and distress at night (Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1990). Mayan Indians and Japanese also express shock and pity when first learning of the American practice of having infants sleep apart from parents (Brazelton, 1990; Morelli et al., 1992). On learning that American infants sleep in a separate room from their parents, one shocked Mayan mother remarked, "But there's someone else with them there, isn't there?" (Morelli et al., 1992, p. 608).

Case studies of infant sleeping arrangements done by UCLA undergraduates of diverse cultural origin indicate that deviations from the U.S. norm of separate beds and separate rooms for mother and baby are often motivated by this value of interpersonal closeness. The infant sleeping

arrangements of many immigrants to the United States reflect a compromise between the infant-parent separation that is normative here and the infant-parent closeness that is normative in their ancestral cultures of Asia, Mexico, Central America, and the Middle East.

It has been suggested that resource constraints such as lack of space may also be a factor in cosleeping (Brazelton, 1990; Shweder et al., 1995). In many cultures homes have fewer beds or fewer rooms allotted for sleeping purposes. Resource constraints, however, may play a relatively small role. For example, the shock and sadness that Mayan mothers express when learning of the North American practice of separate sleeping arrangements is an indication that cosleeping is not merely a practical concern. Rather, it constitutes a commitment to a particular kind of relationship with the infant (Morelli et al., 1992).

Indeed, in their study of cultural variability within the United States, Lozoff et al. (1984) found that there was no significant relationship between space constraints (number of sleeping rooms available, household size, or the ratio of household size to sleeping rooms) and sleeping arrangements during infancy and toddlerhood. Instead of resource constraints (Shweder et al., 1995), there seem to be reasons related to cultural values and goals that affect even the seemingly simplest of practices, such as infant sleeping arrangements.

Other kinds of ecological factors, however, can play a role in moderating the enactment of a culturally specified developmental goal such as independence. In Lozoff et al.'s (1984) study, there was evidence that European American babies were accepted in their parents' bed under constraining conditions, such as when there was familial stress (such as a move or marital tension) or infant illness, or when the baby was old enough to get out of bed by him- or herself and walk into the parents' bedroom or bed.

The changing ecology of parenting in the United States also provides a moderating influence on the early push toward independence. Brazelton (1990) notes several groups of parents who often sleep with their infants and small children; these include: "(1) single parents, whose needs for company at night may dominate the decision: (2) working parents, who feel torn away during the day and want to reconstitute closeness with their babies at night" (p. 1). In these cases, an ecological factor pushes against the dominant norm in the United States, moving practices in the direction of the norms in most of the rest of the world.

Perhaps working outside the home has rendered nighttime closeness desirable for working mothers, single or married. Another constraining factor might be that working mothers cannot afford the lost sleep engendered by



having to get up and feed their waking infants sleeping in another room, or even in another bed.

### *The Relationship of Sleep to Feeding, Holding, Carrying, and Nursing*

Like Big Bear, parents in Asia, Africa, and indigenous America do put their babies to sleep by nursing and holding (e.g., LeVine et al., 1994; Miyake, Chen, & Campos, 1985; Morelli et al., 1992; Super & Harkness, 1982). This practice is part of a pattern of almost continual holding, carrying, and nursing (e.g., Brazelton, Robey, & Collier, 1969; Konner, 1977; Miyake et al., 1985; Super & Harkness, 1982). This pattern may work because of a better fit with the physiology of the young infant. Klein (1995), drawing on Konner (1982), summarizes the research of Blurton-Jones (1972) on this matter:

There are two types of mammals; those that "nest" their young and those that remain in continuous proximity to their young. Mammals that raise their young in nests produce milk with a high protein and fat content, and feed their offspring at widely spaced intervals. Mammals that carry their young produce milk with a low protein and fat content, and feed their young more or less continuously. Humans, like all higher primates, have the milk composition and suckling characteristics of "carrier" species. Kung mothers, in keeping with this biological reality, nurse their infants about four times an hour. (p. 308)

The Zinacantecans, a Mayan group in Chiapas, Mexico, also nurse, carry, and hold their infants very frequently (Brazelton et al., 1969).

From a neurological perspective, Restak's (1979) research shows that "physical holding and carrying of the infant turns out to be the most important factor responsible for the infant's normal mental and social development" (p. 122). Hence, we must strongly consider the possibility, suggested by Konner (1982), that sleep problems are a major cultural problem in infant care in the United States precisely because professional advice and the culturally dominant practice are fighting the biology of the human infant that has evolved over hundreds of thousands of years.

What would drive a culture to ignore the physiological imperatives of the infancy period? The words of the professionals hold a clue: "*Beware of putting your child to sleep, for you risk encouraging a lifetime of dependency and impairing the development of your child's own resources*" (Smaldino, 1995, p. 33). Could this fear of dependency hinder parents from utilizing broader resources and ideas for child-rearing practices used in other cultures?

### **What Can We Learn from a Cross-Cultural Perspective on Infant Care Practices? Implications for Parents, Pediatricians, and Other Practitioners**

Cultural views and goals may often make it difficult for people to realize and incorporate different modes of behavior, but much can be gained by observing and understanding the practices of other cultures.

#### *Sleep*

Many have claimed that in North America, sleep disturbance is one of the most common concerns among parents of young infants today (Brazelton, 1990; Dawes, 1989; Nugent, 1994), as it was for Carol Smaldino. Yet sleep problems are less common or even nonexistent in a number of other cultures. For example, Nugent (1994) reports that "sleep problems or night waking are less commonly reported as clinical concerns in Japanese settings" (p. 6). Similarly, Super and Harkness (1982) noted that sleep problems were nonexistent among the Kipsigis in Kenya.

Why is infant sleep a large problem in the United States, but not in Japan or Kenya? Why are the United States and Western Europe unique in having to call on pediatricians (Spock & Rothenberg, 1985), psychotherapists (Dawes, 1990), and neurologists (Ferber, 1985, 1990) to solve infant sleep problems? Can cross-cultural research be used to address infant sleep problems in North America? Can it help us to evaluate the method used by Big Bear versus that advocated by Smaldino's "well-respected professionals?"

**Cross-Cultural Exchange.** Much can be learned from infant-rearing techniques practiced in different cultures. Being open to various modes of behavior can often be helpful in introducing new ideas and modes of thought. Parents and pediatricians in North America may benefit from being more accepting of cosleeping practices, since cosleeping has been found to have a number of advantages, such as easier nighttime feeding. For example, Mayan mothers "reported that they generally did not notice having to feed their babies in the night. Mothers said that they did not have to waken, just to turn and make the breast accessible" (Morelli et al., 1992, pp. 606-607). In contrast to these Mayan mothers, night-feeding for middle-class European American mothers is often a laborious task (Morelli et al., 1992), requiring mothers to lose many precious hours of sleep because of having to get up to feed.

It is not that Mayan or Kipsigis babies sleep longer than U.S. babies; rather, the ecology and values are such that the same behavior (night waking) is not viewed as problematic because of the convenience associated with cosleeping

arrangements. Indeed, because of the absence of cultural pressure on babies to sleep through the night or to have regular bedtimes, babies in fact wake more often and sleep for shorter periods than in the United States. Super and Harkness (1982) found that Kipsigis babies in Kenya had an average sleep period of only 3 hours from 1 to 8 months of age.

In terms of the superordinate goal of infant survival, cosleeping may play a part in fostering the development of optimal sleeping patterns in infants (McKenna et al., 1993). This may be because cosleeping permits the sleeping infant to take tactile and rhythmic cues from his or her parent, and these cues help regulate an immature breathing system. This interactive process, in turn, may decrease the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) (McKenna, 1986). In many countries worldwide, cosleeping is associated with low rates of SIDS (McKenna & Mosko, 1994).

McKenna and Mosko's (1994) recent research indicates that infants arouse more frequently and their sleep stages are altered when they cosleep. This finding is important because past studies have found that near-miss SIDS infants have less frequent spontaneous awakenings (e.g., Coons & Guillemineault, 1985; Kahn, Picard, & Blum, 1986) and that siblings of SIDS victims have relatively longer periods of uninterrupted sleep. These findings suggest a difficulty in switching from sleep to wakefulness as a factor in SIDS (Harper et al., 1981; Hoppenbrouwers, Hodgman, Arakawa, & Serman, 1989).

**Conclusion.** Many issues surround infant care practices such as sleeping arrangements. Of import for the consideration of parents and pediatricians alike are the child's physical well-being (e.g., reducing the risk of SIDS), emotional well-being (e.g., night-time comforting), parental sleep patterns (e.g., parental privacy, night-time feeding issues), practical constraints (e.g., housing situation), family ecology (e.g., single parenthood vs. married parents), adult needs (e.g., for autonomy) and cultural goals (e.g., independence vs. interdependence).

Sleeping arrangements are an integral part of whole systems of cultural meaning and ecological constraints. On the one hand, a cross-cultural look at these practices opens up new options for potential cross-cultural exchange. However, to borrow one part of a cultural system and insert it into a totally different system often brings on problems in itself. For example, Brazelton (1990) warns of parents from the dominant U.S. culture who "sleep with a small infant and a toddler but then become desperate to assign the child to a separate room and bed—and may desert the child by letting him or her "scream it out" (p. 7). Perhaps this outcome stems from a mismatch between the

child's socialized dependence on cosleeping and the parents' own culturally shaped needs for independence. But, whatever the reason, Brazelton notes, "This anger and desertion are not deserved, and leaving the child to cry it out only blames the victim (p. 5). Hence, the long-term and systemic implications of cross-cultural borrowing must always be taken into account.

Nonetheless, Brazelton (1990, p. 7) asks an important question of practitioners: "Should we reevaluate our stance toward children's sleep?" Pediatricians have traditionally concluded that infant-parent cosleeping was a risk factor for healthy development. However, have they considered infant sleeping arrangements from all of the relevant angles: physiological, psychological, and cultural? As Nugent (1994) points out, cross-cultural studies demonstrate that the notion of risk is a cultural construction. Pediatricians must be cautious before imposing their own cultural construction on members of ethnic or social groups with whom they do not share a common culture or common ecological niche for infant development.

### *Carrying*

Given the cross-cultural variability of infant carrying, it is interesting to explore the developmental implications of this practice. Anisfeld, Casper, Nozyce, and Cunningham (1990) experimentally tested whether increased carrying of infants, using a device adapted from African baby carriers, affected security of attachment, as measured by the Ainsworth Strange Situation (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). In their research design, mothers of newborns were randomly assigned to receive either a Snuggli® baby carrier (which permits the mother to carry a baby against the front of her body) or an infant seat (which permits the baby to sit in physical independence of the mother); the overall sample was selected so that attitudes toward the two devices were the same in all subjects. The mothers were recruited from a low-income clinic population. After using the infant carrier an average of 8.5 months, the experimental group showed a much higher rate of secure infant attachment in the Ainsworth Strange Situation at 13 months: 83% of the infants whose mothers had received the baby carriers were rated as securely attached; only 38% of the babies whose mothers had used infant seats were securely attached.

This study is a model of research that experimentally tests the value of cross-cultural exchange in child-rearing practices. More experimental research such as this is greatly needed.

At the same time, we need to keep in mind that we have new immigrants who are bringing practices such as infant carrying into the United States and other industrial countries

on a constant basis. Many immigrants from Mexico and Central America come from cultures in which carrying infants is standard practice. What the research of Anisfeld et al. (1990) shows is that we can learn from these mothers. On a substantive level, the research of Anisfeld and colleagues indicates that our ultimate developmental goal of independence may often be applied too early, at the cost of secure attachment.

### *Differences, Not Deficits*

For many ethnic and immigrant groups in the United States (and other industrial nations), cosleeping, holding, and carrying are part of their ancestral heritage of infant care practices. Being aware and accepting of these cultural differences is, in itself, important and beneficial. Because multicultural societies such as the United States contain many ethnic groups and family contexts with varied sleeping practices, parents deviating from the dominant norm should not be made to feel they are doing something harmful to their child.

Understanding that sleeping alone and cosleeping are two different cultural modes, each with its own set of risks and benefits, will lead to pride in rather than shame for diverse cultural heritages. For members of the dominant majority, such understanding leads to respect for rather than denigration of nonstandard practices such as cosleeping. Similarly, understanding the reasons behind alternative practices can also help immigrants understand the cultural norms in their new cultural surround. The dissemination of information on such practices among pediatricians and parents can help in developing this kind of mutual respect.

### *The Issues of Security and Independence*

Ferber recommends that if the child climbs out of bed and tries to enter the parents' bedroom, they are to hold the door closed (Smaldino, 1995): "Remember your goal is to help your child learn to sleep alone. You are using the door as a controlled way of enforcing this, not to scare him. So reassure him by talking through the door" (Ferber, 1985, p. 75). Given the strength of infants' evolved mechanisms for keeping the caregiver close, research is needed to assess the extent to which such a regime leads to independence, as well as the extent to which it leads to sleep, separation, or attachment problems later on in life.

As Carol Smaldino found out, dominant U.S. culture also has specific advice for nighttime infant crying: Let the child "cry it out." Ferber reassures parents, "Allowing some crying while you help your child to improve his sleep will never lead to psychological harm" (p. 75). Yet this assurance goes against the classical finding of Ainsworth (1985)

that rapid response to crying is associated with more secure attachments. If this is so, then the failure to respond to crying could lead to insecure attachment, which could, in turn, be manifested as a separation issue.

Bowlby (1969) pointed out that crying is one of the evolutionarily important mechanisms whose function is to keep the caregiver close. In the words of Lee Salk, crying is the baby's resource (Smaldino, 1995). In letting the baby cry it out, parents are using a behavioristic method to extinguish the baby's first and only means of communicating with his social world. This method seems to go against the nature of adults as well; Bowlby noted that the caregiver's response to crying—acting to stop the crying by reestablishing proximity and satisfying other needs—is also part of the human evolutionary heritage. This is why letting the baby cry is so painful for parents like Carol Smaldino.

The cross-cultural evidence indicates that, even if independence is the ultimate goal for raising children, the complex of constant contact, continuous feeding, and cosleeping may be most effective. As Klein (1995) points out, "Kung babies grow up to be even more independent than children living in the United States despite initial cosleeping and nurturant behaviors (Konner, 1982, p. 313). The implication is that children can still be raised to be independent adults, despite behaving in ways that may be categorized as "dependent" when they are young.

### *How Are Attachment Behaviors Affected by Parental Goals?*

Although the role of cultural goals is readily observed in infant sleeping practices, cross-cultural differences in parental goals are also manifest in attachment behaviors. Harwood, Miller, and Lucca Irizarry (1995) begin their book, *Culture and Attachment*, with Bowlby's (1969) classic definition of "attachment as 'the bond that ties' the child to his or her primary caretaker" (p. 4) and attachment behaviors as "those behaviors that allow the infant to seek and maintain proximity to his primary attachment figure" (p. 4). These views of attachment have been ingrained in developmental psychological literature, leading to major research paradigms, including the classic Strange Situation presented by Ainsworth and Wittig in 1969.

### *Infant Responses to the Strange Situation*

In the Strange Situation paradigm, "securely" attached children are differentiated from "insecurely" attached children through the usage of a laboratory test involving leaving an infant alone with various combinations of mother, stranger, both, or neither. From observations of infant behavior in these situations, infants can be assigned into the categories

of avoidant attachment (Group A), secure attachment (Group B), and resistant attachment (Group C). The Group B behavior pattern in the Strange Situation has long been seen as an indicator of such things as healthy mother-infant interaction and emotional growth (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978).

The role of the mother, particularly maternal sensitivity, is also seen as important in infant attachment. For example, it has been proposed that mothers of future "A" babies express anger and rejection of their babies and mothers of "C" babies are insensitive and inept, whereas mothers of "B" babies are more affectionate and effective in soothing their babies (Ainsworth, 1979; Campos, Barrett, Lamb, Goldsmith, & Stenberg, 1983; Main & Weston, 1982).

These generalizations, however, do not take into consideration the cultural reasons for an infant's behavior and for a mother's interpretation of that behavior. Because mothers are the carriers of culture to the next generation, especially during their child's infancy, it is important to consider cultural reasons for the mother's behavior as well.

In Japan, compared with the United States, there are more "C" or "resistant" babies. In contrast, "A" or avoidant babies are common in the United States, but rare or absent in Japan (Miyake et al., 1985; Takahashi, 1990; van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988). Why this difference in the way cultures deviate from the "norm"? Cultural differences in parental goals may be the reason. Japanese mothers, with parental goals such as having the parent and child "become one" (Kawakami, 1987), rarely leave their babies in the care of strangers such as babysitters. Thus, the separations that take place in the Strange Situation paradigm cause extreme and unusual stress to the infants (Miyake et al., 1985; Takahashi, 1990). Confirming this point, studies in the United States by Lamb and colleagues (Lamb & Sternberg, 1990; Roopnarine & Lamb, 1978, 1980) show that unaccustomed separations from the mother, as when a baby begins day care, can raise anxiety about separation that is revealed in Strange Situation behavior, but that habituation to temporary separations removes the behavioral manifestations of this anxiety.

Supporting this hypothesis, a study of working Japanese mothers found the same distribution of attachment patterns as in the United States (Durrett, Otaki, & Richards, 1984); there were avoidant, as well as resistant and secure attachments. Such babies would have had experience with temporary separations from their mothers.

As Takahashi (1990) had proposed, the separation history of the child affects responses to the Strange Situation; this separation history is conditioned both by cross-cultural variability in value orientations and by ecological

factors within a culture, such as day care. The higher proportion of resistant babies found in Japan could therefore be due to different modal patterns of separation that take place in the daily interactions of Japanese and U.S. mother-child dyads.

In another study, German babies were found to be more likely to be categorized as "A" group, or avoidant, and less likely to be labeled as "C" group, or resistant, when compared with children in both Japan and the United States (Grossmann, Grossmann, Spangler, Suess, & Unzner, 1985; van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988). Like the Japanese and U.S. patterns, this pattern can also be attributed to culture-specific parental goals for children. In Germany, parents desire their children to be nonclingy and independent (Grossmann et al., 1985). Therefore, the greater proportion of "A" infants in Germany may be a culturally desired outcome of German parental goals and strategies (Campos et al., 1983).

In Japan, on the other hand, parental goals include, as mentioned earlier, intense mother-child closeness, in which the mother is said to view her child as "an extension of herself" (Caudill, 1972, p. 195). In this context, the interdependence of mother and child is highly valued. This mother-child closeness could in turn lead to more shock and more resistance when infants are separated from their mothers.

The United States is between Japan and Germany in the frequency of both avoidant, independent (Type A) and dependent, resistant (Type C) babies (van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988). If we think of the independence value as having originated in Germany and other parts of northern Europe, then this pattern makes sense. The value would have attenuated in its travels to the United States, where it came into contact with people from all over the world, including indigenous Americans, most of whom valued interdependence in their ancestral cultures (Greenfield & Cocking, 1994). In line with this explanation, Grossman et al. (1985) observe that in Germany:

As soon as infants become mobile, most mothers feel that they should now be weaned from close bodily contact. To carry a baby who can move on its own or to respond to its every cry by picking it up would be considered as spoiling. (p. 253)

LeVine (1994) notes that German infants not only sleep alone; they are also left alone in the morning for an hour after waking up. In addition, mothers leave babies alone to shop, and German babies are left alone in the evening after one year of age. These methods of fostering independence

seem more extreme than those used by mothers in the United States. Hence, it is logical for the United States to be between Germany and Japan in both avoidant, independent "A" type babies and resistant, dependent "C" type ones.

Within the United States, however, it has been suggested that day care is also associated with more avoidant attachments (Belsky, 1989). This is an ecological factor that could push the value of independence farther than would otherwise be the case. Clarke-Stewart (1989) has suggested, "although children who are accustomed to brief separations by virtue of repeated day care experiences may behave 'avoidantly,' their behavior might actually reflect a developmentally precocious pattern of independence and confidence rather than insecurity" (Lamb & Sternberg, 1990, p. 360).

Note that "B," or securely attached babies are predominant in all three cultures (Takahashi, 1986; van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988). A possible conclusion is that the "B" pattern represents the human species norm for a mother-infant system, whereas variations around this norm reflect cultural variations in developmental goals and socialization practices.

### *Adult Interpretations of the Strange Situation*

Parental interpretations of children going through the Strange Situation paradigm are also quite indicative of the cultural structuring of parental goals (Harwood et al., 1995). In an anecdotal account of a Strange Situation observation, Weisner (1996) spoke with a woman whose child had acted in a way that would, in the standard system, be classified as avoidant attachment. The woman, on seeing her child act in an avoidant manner, demonstrated strong approval of her child's behavior. She mentioned that she was proud of how independent her child was in playing by himself. The woman, in fact, was a single mother by choice, and one of her parental goals was to have the child be independent enough to be alone at day care while she was out working. Having the child behave in a nonchalant manner on separation and reunion, therefore, was desirable to this mother, given her goals for her child. This mother shows how a particular family factor—being a single, working parent—might strengthen the independence/autonomy goal even within a culture that already values these qualities.

Cultural variation in parents' perceptions of attachment behavior was also studied by Harwood (1992). She compared European American and Puerto Rican parental reactions to separation situations and their relationship to parental goals for their children. Once again, European

American mothers focused on issues of individual autonomy for their children in the context of their attachment behaviors; they wanted a balance between autonomy and relatedness (Harwood et al., 1995). Puerto Rican mothers, on the other hand, placed a greater emphasis on their child's ability to maintain a "proper demeanor" in a social context, even when the child is separated from the parent; they wanted a balance between respect and caring. Both groups of mothers found the desired qualities in "B" type behavior, but the culturally normative interpretations of the same behavior were different.

### *Implications for Practice of Cross-Cultural Differences in Attachment*

What, in a multicultural society, is the adaptive significance of minority interpretations of attachment that differ from those of the majority? This is an important question for practice that has not been explored in research. Are minority infants at risk for later maladaptation to the majority culture because their mothers have a different interpretation of the attachment relationship? For example, what happens to Puerto Ricans who bring their interpretations of secure attachment behavior with them to the mainland United States? Psychologists and practitioners concerned with attachment should keep this issue in mind; for clinical purposes, it may be necessary to go beyond attachment behaviors to understand the culture-specific meaning of those behaviors for the mother-child dyad.

Mother-infant behaviors are deeply rooted in a cultural value system. Therefore, one must not be too quick to judge attachment behaviors that may seem insecure to us:

In Japan a greater valuing of emotional interdependence is associated with limited separation experiences, therefore heightening the distress experienced by many Japanese infants in the Strange Situation. However, because the family environment of those infants is in accord with the values and expectations of the larger sociocultural setting, the mental health implications of their heightened distress is not the same as it would be in the dominant U.S. culture, which values the cultivation of independence. (Harwood et al., 1995, pp. 14–15)

When attempting to interpret attachment behaviors in mother-child dyads from diverse cultural backgrounds, clinicians must understand the system of cultural meanings and practices of which they are a part. Although there may be cross-cultural agreement on normative attachment behavior, deviations from this norm may have diametrically

opposed implications for social pathology, depending on the cultural value context in which they occur.

Finally, the stress level engendered by the Strange Situation in Japan raises the question as to whether the measuring instrument itself is too culture-specific for cross-cultural research. Because it is based on reactions to separation from mother and reactions to strangers, is it a valid measure of attachment in cultures characterized by almost continuous mother-infant contact and the absence of contact with strangers?

### How Are Communication Behaviors Affected by Parental Goals of Cognitive and Social Development?

Parental goals for child development are also realized through communication strategies used by parents toward their infants. Mundy-Castle (1974) conceptualizes the European-based (Western) way of socializing children as geared to the goal of technological intelligence, and the African way as geared to the goal of social intelligence. The early socialization of technological intelligence involves a focus on objects and their manipulation. In addition, technological intelligence involves an emphasis on cognitive development in isolation from social development. In contrast, the early socialization of social intelligence involves a focus on interpersonal relationships. These emphases are expressed in the communication patterns used in parent-infant interaction.

The African emphasis on social intelligence is seen in Bakeman, Adamson, Konner, and Barr's (1990) research among the !Kung, African hunter-gatherers in Botswana. In !Kung society, no toys are made for infants. Instead, natural objects, such as twigs, grass, stones, and nutshells, are always available, along with cooking implements. However, adults do not encourage babies to play with these objects. In fact, adults are unlikely to interact with infants while they are exploring objects independently. Thus, technological intelligence for its own sake is not actively encouraged.

It is only when a baby offers an object to another person that adults become highly responsive, encouraging and vocalizing much more than at other times. For example, when babies are between 6 and 12 months, !Kung grandmothers start to train babies in the importance of giving to others by guiding them to hand beads to relatives. Thus, the !Kung cultural emphasis on the interpersonal rather than physical aspects of existence is reflected in how adults communicate the importance of objects as social mediators in their interactions with the very youngest members of their community (Bakeman et al., 1990).

In line with the !Kung's emphasis on social rather than technological intelligence, the communication of West

Africans in Africa and West African immigrants in Paris focuses on integrating the infant into a social group (Rabain, 1979; Rabain-Jamain, 1994; Zempleni-Rabain, 1973). African mothers manifest this emphasis by using verbalizations that relate their infant to a third party, either real (e.g., telling the baby to share some food with brothers or sisters) or imaginary (e.g., "Grandma told you," said by the mother of a family that has immigrated to France, leaving the grandmother in Africa). They also respond more frequently to child-initiated social activity than French mothers do.

French mothers, in contrast, focus on the child-centered mother-child dyad and on their infants' technological competence, i.e., object manipulation (Rabain, 1979; Rabain-Jamain, 1994; Zempleni-Rabain, 1973). Compared with the African mothers, they manifest this focus by more frequent reference to the child's speech (e.g., "What are you saying to your mommy?"; "Is that all you've got to say?"), by less frequently relating the child to a third party, and by responding more frequently to child-initiated object manipulation. In this way, the French mothers display a heavier emphasis on technological than on social intelligence.

This emphasis on technological intelligence can also be seen in the actual utterances used by parents toward their infants. For example, in a study of mother-infant dyads playing with toys, American mothers tended to focus on calling attention to the object names of the toys (Fernald & Morikawa, 1993). An example of a typical American interaction was, "That's a car. See the car? You like it? It's got wheels" (p. 653). Many U.S. mothers explained that their goals in the interaction were to attract their child's attention and to teach them new words. Here, a distinct value is placed on cognitive development.

In contrast, Japanese mothers explained that their goals were to talk gently and to use sounds that the infant could easily imitate. The Japanese concern for explicit teaching of cultural norms for politeness in speech was also expressed (Clancy, 1986; Fernald & Morikawa, 1993). Thus, Japanese mothers were less interested in object labeling, but, instead, focused more attention on acting out polite verbal exchanges. An example of such an interaction is translated as, "Here! It's a vroom vroom. I give it to you. Now give it to me. Give me. Yes! Thank you" (p. 653). Japanese mothers were also more likely to engage in routines that arouse empathy with the object, encouraging positive feelings toward the toy by saying things like, "Here! It's a doggy. Give it love. Love love love." (p. 653), while patting the toy. As in Africa, social intelligence seems to have priority as a developmental goal in the Japanese mothers' communication pattern. In this way, parental values are reflected in the communication patterns of parents toward their infants.

One conclusion is that there may be a connection between an independent orientation and technological intelligence. An absence of emphasis on social relations in individualistic societies seems correlated with the presence of an emphasis on the physical world. Although our earlier discussion of sleeping arrangements focused on whether an infant was alone or with a parent, there is another aspect of this difference: When European American infants are left alone in a crib or playpen, they are usually given toys (e.g., mobiles, rattles) to amuse themselves with. Because toys provide early cognitive socialization for technological intelligence, there is a connection between the socialization of independence and the socialization of technological intelligence. The child left alone with toys is both learning to be alone and learning to interact with the physical world of objects. In contrast, interpersonal relations are more important than the object world in the development of an interdependent orientation or social intelligence for the African mothers; this expresses a collectivistic orientation.

#### *Implications for Parents, Teachers, and Child Care Workers*

In communication, as in other areas, we see that different culturally based developmental goals lead to different child-rearing practices. In the United States, where the learning of object names is culturally important, mothers spend a good deal of time labeling objects in their communicative interactions with their children. Although this tendency seems perfectly reasonable in this cultural context, it would be important to understand that other parents may have other cultural goals for their children. Teachers and child care workers who interact with infants on a daily basis should be sensitive to the alternative of using communication to actualize children's social intelligence, not merely their knowledge of the physical world, and to actualize social skills in dealing with groups rather than only dyads. Again, through cross-cultural exchange, both styles of communication could be used to socialize children for both technological and social intelligence.

#### **Cultural Models**

##### *Cultural Coherence and Individual Differences*

The different customs and practices of infant care that we have described are not random. They are motivated by underlying cultural models with overarching socialization goals that provide continuity from one developmental domain to another. Cross-domain continuity emerges when we take a comparative look at Japan, the United States, and Germany, in the areas of infant care practices, parental ethnotheories, and experimentally assessed attachment

behaviors. In Germany, infants are left alone as much as possible, in line with a developmental ethnotheory that stresses independence (LeVine, 1994). German infants also develop the most independent behavior in the Strange Situation (van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988).

In contrast, Japanese babies sleep with and are given virtually continual access to their mothers. This fits with the Japanese developmental goal of empathy and interdependence. It also fits with the fact that, in the Strange Situation, Japanese babies become extremely upset after a separation from their mother, something that rarely happens in their everyday life.

European American babies fall in between German and Japanese ones on these dimensions. Although the majority of parents sleep apart from their infants, some cosleeping does take place under certain circumstances (Lozoff et al., 1984; Morelli et al., 1992). This pattern is consistent with their ethnotheory of secure attachment, where parents want a balance between independence and relatedness in their infants (Harwood et al., 1995). Also consistent with this pattern, the proportion of independent (Type C) and dependent (Type A) attached infants is midway between Japan and Germany.

This in-between position of the United States could stem from the multicultural influences on the dominant model in a country composed of people with ancestral roots in Europe, Asia, Africa, and indigenous America. The balance between independence and relatedness favored by mothers for their infants then becomes a balance that is favored by psychologists for mature adults (Guisinger & Blatt, 1994).

Cultural continuity provides developmental continuity as well. For example, Gusii and Zinacantecan babies who are spoken to with imperatives as toddlers become obedient, nonquestioning children (Greenfield, Brazelton, & Childs, 1989; LeVine et al., 1994). In contrast, U.S. babies who are spoken to with interrogatives as toddlers often become questioning, self-assertive children (LeVine et al., 1994).

Each culture also has its own view of the socialization process. Often cultures oriented toward interdependence see the infant as an asocial being who must be socialized. In contrast, cultures with an independence-oriented developmental script often see the baby as starting out as a dependent being who must learn independence. Thus, the developmental progression is seen as from independent to interdependent in one group of cultures, while a reverse progression is the model in the other.

But, although, they differ, each cultural model has its own form of developmental change and continuity built in. The way that infants are viewed, the developmental goals of



the parents for the child, and parental behavior toward the child are all inextricably intertwined with the cultural background of the parents and the child. The coherence, on a cultural level, of developmental goals, socialization practices, child outcomes, and adult interpretations is illustrated in Table 16.1, which summarizes this section.

### *Philosophical Differences in Child Rearing between Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures*

The two models presented in Table 16.1 must be taken as two idealized systems of cultural norms. Within each ideal type, different societies and cultures will exemplify varieties of both individualism and collectivism (Kim & Choi, 1994).

Because individual differences are central to our culture and to psychology as a discipline, it is important to point out that, within every culture, there will always be important individual variation around each cultural norm. Cultural typologies do not eradicate or minimize individual differences; they simply point to the norms around which those differences range.

In addition, situations of culture contact or culture change will cause conflict and compromise between the two idealized models presented in Table 16.1. Culture contact is particularly important in multicultural societies. Culture change is particularly important in societies undergoing technological development.

### *Cultural Frameworks and Ethnocentrism*

Through the lens of one cultural model, it is an all-too-natural response to criticize the attitudes and practices generated by a different cultural model, with no understanding

of the model behind the overt behaviors. LeVine et al. (1994) provide a wonderful example of ethnocentric criticism in their comparative look at the Gusii in Kenya and the middle class in the United States. According to LeVine et al. (1994):

The Gusii would be shocked at the slow or casual responsiveness of American mothers to the crying of young infants. . . . This signals incompetent caregiving from their perspective. They would be similarly appalled by the practice of putting babies to sleep in separate beds or rooms, where they cannot be closely monitored at night, rather than with the mother. (pp. 255-256)

According to LeVine et al. (1994), the Gusii would think American toddlers unruly and disobedient as well, largely due to excessive praise and maternal solicitations of their preferences as toddlers.

Likewise, LeVine et al. (1994) believe that Americans would also find problems with the way that the Gusii choose to raise their infants. For example, leaving an infant under the supervision of a 5- or 6-year-old child, a common practice among the Gusii, would be viewed as neglect in the United States. LeVine et al. (1994) also believe:

They [Americans] would be appalled that Gusii mothers often do not look at their babies when breastfeeding them . . . and that praise is more or less prohibited in the Gusii script of maternal response. . . . They would see the Gusii mothers as unacceptably authoritarian and punitive with children. (pp. 255-256)

In this way, infant care practices that are viewed as moral and pragmatic in one cultural context can be viewed as "misguided, ineffective, and even immoral" (LeVine et al., 1994, p. 256) in others.

In a multicultural society, ethnocentric criticism has disastrous practical and social consequences, as seen in the United States and other multicultural societies with varied cultural models. It is necessary to understand how each model has made sense in its historical context. This means that assessments of pathology or deviance by parents, pediatricians, teachers, and clinicians must always be based on an understanding of the cultural meaning that particular behaviors have for the participants in a social system.

For example, Schroen (1995) explores how a lack of cultural understanding can lead to misinterpretations by social workers. She documents how negative judgments by social workers of cultural practices they do not understand, using criteria from their own culture, can lead to

**Table 16.1 Contrasting Cultural Models of Infant Development and Socialization**

	Developmental Goals	
	Independence	Interdependence
Valued intelligence	Technological	Social
Socialization practices	Infant sleeps alone; more use of devices (baby seats, strollers, cribs, playpens) that allow separation of awake infant; objects to explore and amuse	Parent-child cosleeping; more holding and carrying; objects to mediate social relationships
Parental interpretation of secure attachment	Balance of autonomy and relatedness	Balance of respect and caring
Attachment behaviors	More avoidant attachments	More resistant attachments



tragedy. For instance, social workers can misinterpret sibling care (a practice utilized in many cultures worldwide) as child neglect, leading to children being taken away from loving parents who may have been following a different cultural model of competent parenting and child development. One can imagine other situations in which cultural practices may be misinterpreted as abuse. Cosleeping or cobathing practices (acceptable in many cultures, such as in Japan) may be misinterpreted as sexual in nature. Social workers, like other clinicians, must therefore be trained to recognize differences between cultural variations in practice and truly abusive situations.

Teachers and day-care workers must also be made aware of these differences in infant-rearing practices. For example, the crying (or lack thereof) of children when they are dropped off at school in the morning may be partially attributable to cultural differences in the "strangeness" of separation. Through a better understanding of these differences, infant care professionals can become more understanding and helpful to the child's transition between home and day care.

Each cultural model has its own set of benefits and costs (LeVine et al., 1994). These can still be seen in adulthood, the endpoint of development. For example, the mother-child bond remains strong throughout life in Japan, but the husband-wife tie is of a less romantic and close nature than in the United States (Lebra, 1994).

The costs and benefits of each cultural model are perceived by the participants and can also be perceived by a culturally sensitive outside observer. Although European American mothers generally subscribe to the benefits of autonomy as a developmental goal, its cost to them could be seen as the "empty nest" syndrome. In this culture, adult children are often "gone" physically, as well as emotionally.

Differing patterns of costs and benefits provide opportunities for useful cross-cultural exchange. From the perspective of both insider and outsider, each cultural model has its strengths and weaknesses, its costs and benefits, and its pathological extremes. For this reason, cross-cultural exchange of values and practices can sometimes serve as a corrective force to counteract the weaknesses, costs, and pathologies of any given cultural system. For example, McKenna and Mosko's (1994) current experimental research documents the potential physiological benefits of cosleeping for infants in a society (the United States) with a relatively high rate of sudden infant death syndrome. Cosleeping is a practice which many of their subjects have brought with them from Mexico and Central America. The findings have direct relevance to pediatric advice on sleeping arrangements.

As a related example, falling asleep with an infant, the practice criticized by Dr. Spock but practiced in many cultures, also reduces thumbsucking (Wolf & Lozoff, 1989), often considered a problem in the United States. Again, pediatricians could utilize this information in advising parents on how to avoid or stop thumbsucking in their children.

However, recommendations for cross-cultural exchange of infant care practices must be tempered by the finding of Weisner, Bausano, and Kornfein's (1983) that there are strong ecological and cultural constraints on cross-cultural exchange in this domain. An example of such a constraint is that parent-infant cosleeping, while decreasing the risk of SIDS, also decreases husband-wife intimacy, so valued in the United States. Consequently, ecologically valid research on the benefits and costs of adapting infant care practices from other cultures is needed.

Parents, pediatricians, clinicians, and day-care workers are often not fully aware of the options available for infant caregiving practices. Many infant-care practices (as well as behavior in general) utilized in other cultures may seem impractical and even strange from a different cultural perspective. To truly understand why these differences exist, it is necessary to carefully examine the core cultural values behind the behaviors. By being open to learning about different cultural values and behavioral options, a new appreciation, and perhaps even successful implementation, of a broader range of practices may be attained.

## PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS

Parent-child relations are an important aspect of both child development and child socialization; parents embody and represent the broader cultural context as children learn to become members of their culture. Parents and children become a sort of family microculture with specific norms, customs, and values that reflect cultural and ethnic norms. From the parents' perspective, we examine cross-cultural variation in parents' behavior and attitudes toward their progeny beyond infancy, the topic of the preceding section. From the child's perspective, children's treatment of their parents is explored as an important (although understudied) aspect of their social development. Drawing on the material available, we discuss both facets of parent-child relations in this section.

To begin, consider the following scenario:

*A week ago, you had gone shopping with your mother, and at the register, she had realized that she was short \$10. You*

*lent her the money, and after a week, she gives no indication of remembering the loan. What would you do? Why?*

How would children and adolescents choose to behave in such a situation? Would there be any cross-cultural or ethnic variation in children's tendency to self-sacrifice for their parents?

This scenario was used in a study by Suzuki and Greenfield (1997) to determine whether there are ethnic differences in older adolescents' tendency to choose to sacrifice self for their parents or to preserve their personal goals. The following is a reply given by an undergraduate student:

I would tell my mom nicely she owes me \$10 and ask her when I might receive it. Because I'm sure she'd have forgotten and not try to "screw me over."

In contrast, the following is a reply given by a different undergraduate student:

I would not ask her about the money at all. Because she's my mother. She has been sacrificing all her life to raise me, giving me everything I need, providing me education, love, shelter, food, etc. She's giving me more than I could ever ask for. I'd be happy to lend her the money without asking it back—that's the least I could do to thank her for everything.

The first reply was given by a European American student, and the second was given by an Asian American student. Are these solutions indicative simply of individual differences, or are there broader cultural differences between European Americans and Asians or Asian Americans in general in attitudes and behavior toward parents? Does each response also signify a cultural difference in parents' attitudes and behaviors toward their children? These are some of the issues that we address in this section of the chapter.

### Children's Behavior toward Parents

In response to scenarios like the one described here, Suzuki and Greenfield (1997) found an interesting effect. Asian American students, particularly those closer to Asian culture in their acculturative levels and activity preferences, were significantly more likely than European American students to sacrifice certain personal goals for their parents. This finding seems to reflect the collectivistic emphasis on filial piety and respect for parents found in the Confucian worldview of East Asia.

The Confucian value of filial piety deeply influences the desired behavior of children toward their parents. According

to Tseng (1973), "[Confucius] viewed the parent-child relationship as the foundation from which interpersonal love and trust would grow, and thus interpreted filial piety as the virtue for every person to follow" (p. 199). Some of the tenets of filial piety are "obeying and honoring one's parents, providing for the material and mental well-being of one's aged parents, performing the ceremonial duties of ancestral worship, taking care to avoid harm to one's body, ensuring the continuity of the family line, and in general conducting oneself so as to bring honor and not disgrace to the family name" (Ho, 1994, p. 287). This multidimensional concept of filial piety is believed to be a virtue that everyone must practice, since "the love and affection of a child for his parents, particularly the mother, is the prototype of goodness in interpersonal relationships" (Tseng, 1973, p. 195). From a very young age, children are introduced to these concepts and ideals, and by the time that they are teenagers, the extent of filial piety felt among Asians is such that it is not uncommon for Chinese teenagers to hand over entire paychecks to their parents for family use (Sung, 1985).

On the other hand, the European American response seemed to reflect the importance of individual goals and personal property prominent in the dominant North American worldview. Implicit in the response is a certain personal distance between parent and child; this is consonant with a view of human development that emphasizes the achievement of autonomy by late adolescence. It is also consonant with the Judeo-Christian religious background of the West. This background contrasts with Confucianism in that a person's relationship with God is individual and direct, rather than mediated by interpersonal relations. Contrasting responses to the scenario manifest and highlight differing models of children's relationships with their parents that have deep cultural roots. Given that assimilation to U.S. culture reduced self-sacrifice in Asian Americans in Suzuki and Greenfield's study, we would expect an even stronger pattern of difference when comparing Asians in Asia with European Americans in the United States.

Other Asian countries have similar emphases on children's lifelong duties toward their parents. Some parallel differences emerged when Miller and Bersoff (1995) gave subjects in India and the United States the following scenario:

*Because of his job, a married son had to live in a city that was a 4-hour drive from his parents' home. The son made a point of keeping in touch with his parents by either visiting, calling, or writing them on a regular basis. (p. 274)*

The authors note that a typical subject in the United States evaluated "the son's behavior as satisfying in that it enabled

him to enhance his relationship with his parents, while still retaining a sense of individual autonomy" (p. 30). A typical Indian subject, in contrast, "focused on the satisfaction associated with fulfilling the obligations of care towards one's parents and of knowing that their welfare needs are being met" (p. 275).

In both scenarios, the contrast is between a response that values children's obligations to their parents versus one that emphasizes children's autonomy and personal choices concerning their relationship to their parents. In both cases, the dominant cultural response in the United States is toward autonomy and choice. In contrast to that response, less acculturated Asian Americans emphasized self-sacrifice for parents, whereas Indians in India emphasized children's obligations to their parents as a positive value.

## Parents' Behavior toward Children

### Styles of Parenting

Baumrind's (1967, 1971) classical formulation of three parenting styles—authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive—defines core relationships between parents and children. The children that have been studied range from preschool (Baumrind, 1967) to high school age (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh (1987). The *authoritative* parent is controlling, demanding, warm, rational, and receptive to the child's communication. The *authoritarian* parent is detached and controlling without exhibiting warmth. The *permissive* parent is noncontrolling, nondemanding, and relatively warm (Baumrind, 1983).

**How Does Parenting Style Relate to European American Parents' Goals for Their Children?** Although not generally acknowledged in the developmental literature, Baumrind's typology is closely tied to the normative goals for child development in North America. Authoritative parenting is considered to be the most adaptive style because it is associated with children who are "self-reliant, self-controlled, explorative, and content" (Baumrind, 1983, p. 121). These are the qualities of the independent individual so valued in the cultural model of individualism in countries such as the United States.

**Cross-Cultural Variability in Styles of Parenting.** Authoritative parenting, however, is not the norm in every group. Different ethnic groups within the United States and many Eastern and developing countries have been found to utilize an authoritarian parenting style to a greater degree than do middle-class European American parents in the

United States. Authoritarian parenting is common in East Asia (Ho, 1994; Kim & Choi, 1994), Africa (LeVine et al., 1994; Nsamenang & Lamb, 1994), and Mexico (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994), as well as in ethnic groups derived from these ancestral cultures: Asian Americans (Chao, 1994), African Americans (Baumrind, 1972), and Mexican Americans (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995). (Baumrind's third style, permissive parenting, has not been found to be normative in any identifiable cultural group.)

### How Does Cross-Cultural Variability in Parenting Style Relate to Child Behavior and Parental Goals?

Most important in considering cross-cultural variation in parenting styles is that different parental goals can give different meanings and a different emotional context to the same behaviors. Notably, the social and emotional accompaniments of classical "authoritarian" parenting behavior such as the usage of imperatives may be quite different where the culture has an interdependence-oriented developmental script (Greenfield, 1994). Chao (1994) points out the inadequacy of the notion of authoritarian parenting to describe the Chinese ethnotheory of child socialization. She invokes indigenous Chinese child-rearing ideologies reflected in the concepts of *chiao shun* (training children in the appropriate or expected behaviors) and *guan* (to govern).

For the European American mothers in this study, the word *training* often evoked associations such as "militaristic," "regimented," or "strict" that were interpreted as being very negative aspects of authoritarian parenting. However, whereas authoritarian parenting was associated with negative effects and images in the United States, the Chinese versions of authoritarianism, *chiao shun* (training) and *guan* (governing), were perceived in a more positive light from within the culture, emphasizing harmonious relations and parental concern (Chao, 1994). Chinese *chiao shun* and *guan* were seen not as punitive or emotionally unsupportive, but as associated with rigorous and responsible teaching, high involvement, and physical closeness (Chao, 1994).

Although *chiao shun* and *guan* may be interpreted as authoritarian parenting, the roots behind this type of parenting are very different from that in the United States. According to Chao (1994), Baumrind's (1971) original conceptions of authoritarian parenting emphasized "a set standard of conduct, usually an absolute standard without explaining, listening, or providing emotional support" (p. 1113). In the United States, this style of parenting has been linked to an evangelical "religious fervor" that stresses the "domination" and "breaking of the child's

will" and is associated with hostility, rejection, and uninvolved parental behaviors (Chao, 1994; Smuts & Hagan, 1985). Chao (1994) points out that although the negative connotations of authoritarian were derived from a specific historical and sociocultural context, they "have been applied to describe the parenting styles of individuals who in no way share this same historical and sociocultural context" (p. 1117). Authoritarian parenting received its negative connotations from, *The Authoritarian Personality*, by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950). Written after World War II, it attempted to use a culturally reinforced personality syndrome to explain the racist slaughter that occurred in Nazi Germany.

The roots behind *chiao shun* and *guan*, on the other hand, evolved from the Confucian emphasis on hierarchical relationships and social order (Chao, 1994). In Confucianism, the standards that may be viewed as authoritarian are used, not to dominate the child, but rather to preserve the integrity of the family unit and to assure harmonious relationships with others (Chao, 1994; Lau & Cheung, 1987). The Chinese version also emphasizes high concern and care for the children (Chao, 1994). The goals and behaviors behind this form of authoritarian parenting are thus quite different from those originally posed by Baumrind (1971).

Authoritarian parenting from China (Ho, 1994) persists in the practices of Chinese immigrants to the United States (Chao, 1994). Chao demonstrates that middle-class immigrant Chinese parents in Los Angeles subscribe to child-rearing ideologies related to *chiao shun* and *guan* more than do their European American counterparts, even after statistically equating scores on measures of authoritarian parenting, parental control, and authoritative parenting. That is, the Chinese child-rearing concepts could not be reduced to the U.S. concepts originated by Baumrind.

Another interesting finding indicative of qualitatively different cultural patterning was that, while Chinese American parents were higher on authoritarian parenting than European American parents, they did not differ on the measure of authoritative parenting. In other words, Chinese parents more often subscribed to authoritarian items (sample authoritarian item: "I do not allow my child to question my decisions"). However, there was no difference between the groups in subscribing to authoritative items (sample authoritative item: "I talk it over and reason with my child when he misbehaves"). In this group, authoritarianism and aspects of authoritativeness such as affection and rational guidance (illustrated in the example) were complementary, not contradictory.

Besides Chinese Americans, there are other groups in the United States for whom authoritarian parenting is not always associated with the negative child development

outcomes (e.g., discontent, withdrawal, distrust, lack of instrumental competence) it has for European American children. Baumrind (1972) found that, in lower-middle-class African American families, authoritarian parenting was more frequent and seemed to produce different effects on child development than in European American families. Rather than resulting in negative outcomes, authoritarian parenting by African Americans was associated with self-assertive, independent behavior in preschool girls. (Baumrind did not have enough information to carry out the same kind of analysis with African American preschool boys.)

One possibility is that this difference in the frequency and effects of authoritarian parenting may be related to different ecological demands of the African American environment. African Americans have traditionally been on the bottom of society's power, and economic hierarchy may have led them to develop obedience in their children through authoritarian directives.

Another possibility is that African Americans have some different goals for child development. According to Sudarkasa (1988), "research has documented the persistence of some African cultural patterns among contemporary African American families" (Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, & Buriel, 1990, p. 354). One relevant pattern would be the emphasis on obedience and respect as the most important goal in African child development (LeVine et al., 1994; Nsamenang & Lamb, 1994). On the side of socialization, this pattern is achieved by strictness (Nsamenang & Lamb, 1994) and the use of parental commands as a communication strategy (LeVine et al., 1994). Such a socialization pattern would fit into the rubric of Baumrind's authoritarian parenting.

An important hypothesis is that, like African parents, African American parents use so-called authoritarian means because, through the retention of some African values at an implicit level, they are more interested in instilling respect and obedience than are parents in the dominant North American culture. Similarly, poor immigrant Latino families bring from Mexico and Central America the developmental goal of respect and the socialization mode of authoritarian parenting to achieve parental respect (Reese et al., 1995).

### Parent-Child Communication

Another important aspect of parent-child relations include the styles and modes that parents employ in communicating with their children. Although parents everywhere utilize an array of styles and modes, the emphasis is quite different from culture to culture. In this section, we take up several dimensions of this variability, relating each style to parental goals and cultural models of human development.

**Nonverbal Communication or Verbalization? The Cultural Role of Empathy, Observation, and Participation.** Azuma (1994) notes that Japanese mothers (and nursery school teachers) rely more on empathy and nonverbal communication, whereas mothers in the United States rely more on verbal communication with their children. He sees a connection between the physical closeness of the Japanese mother-child pair (discussed in the infancy section of this chapter) and the development of empathy as a mode of communication.

He points out that verbalization is necessary when there is greater physical and psychological distance between parent and child. The development of empathy paves the way for learning by osmosis, in which the mother does not need to teach directly; she simply prepares a learning environment and makes suggestions. In turn, the child's empathy for the mother motivates learning; this tradition survives in the families of third-generation Japanese American immigrants (Schneider, Hieshima, Lee, & Plank, 1994).

Closely related to empathy and learning by osmosis are the use of observation and participation as forms of parent-child communication and socialization. Whereas verbal instruction is particularly important in school-based learning, observation and coparticipation of learner and teacher are central to the apprentice-style learning common in many cultures (Rogoff, 1990). Often master and apprentice are parent and child, as in Childs and Greenfield's (1980) study of informal learning of weaving in a Mayan community of highland Chiapas, Mexico.

Both learning by observation and coparticipation with a parent imply a kind of closeness and empathy between parent and child. For example, in Zinacantan weaving apprenticeship, the teacher would sometimes sit behind the learner, positioned so that two bodies, the learner's and the teacher's, were functioning as one at the loom (Maynard, Greenfield, & Childs, in press). Verbal communication and instruction, in contrast, imply using words to bridge the distance through explicitness, thus reducing the need for empathetic communication.

A discourse study by Choi (1992) reveals a similar pattern of differences between Korean and Canadian mothers interacting with their young children. Comparing middle-class mothers in Korea and Canada, Choi found that Korean mothers and their children manifest a communicative pattern that is relationally attuned to one another in a "fused" state (Choi, 1992), "where the mothers freely enter their children's reality and speak for them, 'merging themselves with the children'" (Kagitçibasi, 1996, p. 69). Canadian mothers, in contrast, "withdraw themselves from the children's reality, so that the child's reality can remain autonomous" (Choi, 1992, pp. 119-120).

**Development of Comprehension versus Self-Expression.** Authoritarian parenting brings with it an associated style of parent-to-child communication: frequent use of directives and imperatives, with encouragement of obedience and respect (Greenfield et al., 1989; Harkness, 1988; Kagitçibasi, 1996). This style is used where the primary goal of child communication development is comprehension rather than speaking (e.g., Harkness & Super, 1982). A basic aspect of the imperative style is that it elicits action, rather than verbalization from the child. This style is found in cultures such as that in Africa (Harkness & Super, 1982) and Mexico (Tapia Uribe, LeVine, & LeVine, 1994), and in Latino populations in the United States (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994).

The comprehension skill developed in children by an imperative style on the part of parents is particularly functional in agrarian societies in which the obedient learning of chores and household skills is an important socializing experience (e.g., Childs & Greenfield, 1980), with the ultimate goal of developing obedient, respectful, and socially responsible children (Harkness & Super, 1982; Kagitçibasi, 1996; LeVine et al., 1994). This style of interaction is also useful for apprenticeship learning of manual skills, but it is not so functional for school, where verbal expression is much more important than nonverbal action.

On the other hand, more democratic parenting brings with it a communication style that encourages self-expression and autonomy in the child. This parenting style often features a high rate of questions from the parent, particularly "test questions," in which the answer is already known to the parent (Duranti & Ochs, 1986), as well as parent-child negotiation (cf., Delgado-Gaitan, 1994). Child-initiated questions are also encouraged and accepted. This style is intrinsic to the process of formal education in which the teacher, paradigmatically, asks questions to which he or she already knows the answer and tests children on their verbal expression. An important aspect of the interrogative style is that it elicits verbalization from the child. Such verbal expression is an important part of becoming a formally educated person and is particularly functional and common in commercial and technological societies where academic achievement, autonomy, and creativity are important child development goals. This style is the cultural norm in North America and northern Europe.

**Teaching and Learning: The Role of Reinforcement.** In societies that put an emphasis on commands in parental communication, there also tends to be little praise used in parent-child communication (e.g., Childs & Greenfield, 1980). Where schooling comes into play, praise and positive reinforcement take on importance. Duranti and Ochs

(1986) make the following observation of Samoan children who go to school:

In their primary socialization [home], they learn not to expect praises and compliments for carrying out directed tasks. Children are expected to carry out these tasks for their elders and family. In their secondary socialization [school], they learn to expect recognition and positive assessments, given successful accomplishment of a task. In their primary socialization, Samoan children learn to consider tasks as cooperatively accomplished, as social products. In their secondary socialization, they learn to consider tasks as an individual's work and accomplishment. (p. 229)

Thus, there is a connection between more individualistic child development goals and the use of praise and other positive reinforcers.

Correlatively, there is a connection between a tighter primary in-group and the absence of praise and compliments. Where role-appropriate behavior is expected rather than chosen, positive reinforcement does not make sense. J. G. Miller (1995) has described how people do not say "thank you" in India; once you are part of the group, you are completely accepted and expected to fulfill your social roles and obligations. B. Whiting and J. Whiting (1975) noted the lesser need for positive reinforcement where the intrinsic worth of the work is evident, as it is in household tasks and chores.

### *Parents Helping Children*

Miller, Bersoff, and Harwood (1990) have explored cross-cultural variability in helping behaviors, another aspect of parent-child relations. Using two samples coming from New Haven, Connecticut, and Mysore, India, Miller et al. used scenarios to elicit responses that would reflect how subjects felt about a wide range of helping situations involving different potential help recipients.

What they found was the following: When children are in life-threatening need, college students in both India and the United States are in agreement that parents should help their children. Subjects in both countries see this as a moral matter; that is, the response to a child's life-threatening need is understood similarly by everyone. In India, however, a lesser degree of need did not affect the responses; Indian subjects thought it was a moral matter of social obligation for parents to help their children, even if their need for assistance was less acute.

In the United States, the findings were very different: Responses showed a gradient from situations of extreme need (e.g., the need for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation) to

moderate need (e.g., the need for psychological support before surgery) to minor need (e.g., the need for directions to a store). At each level of need, fewer U.S. subjects saw the help from parent to child as a moral matter and more saw it as a matter of personal choice. Under conditions of a child's minor need, most U.S. subjects saw the helping behavior as a matter of personal choice for the parents. In contrast, the Indian sample still interpreted the situation as a moral matter, a context in which society had the right to regulate behavior.

From a developmental perspective, the basic patterns in both India and the United States are established as early as in the second grade. However, there is a developmental shift in the United States from a less to a more restricted view of the social obligation to help a child. For example, for children ranging from the second grade to sixth grade to college, there was a linear drop in the proportion of U. S. subjects who thought parents had a moral obligation to help a child in minor need. In contrast, Indian subjects believed that parents should always help children in minor need.

### **Cultural Models of Parent-Child Relations: Developmental Goals over the Life Span**

There are basically two cultural models describing parent-child relations over the life span. These models are the underlying frameworks that generate many of the specific cross-cultural differences discussed up to now in this chapter. Each model has its cross-cultural variants. Furthermore, sometimes the models come into contact and influence each other. Without considering both models, however, we cannot adequately encompass cross-cultural variability in child development, parental behavior, and parent-child relations.

In the individualistic model, children are viewed as starting life as dependent on their parents and as achieving increasing independence from their parents as they grow older (Greenfield, 1994). In the collectivistic model, children are viewed as starting life as asocial creatures and as achieving an increasing concept and practice of social responsibility and interdependence as they grow older (e.g., Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). Under this model, infants are often indulged, whereas older children are socialized to comprehend, follow, and internalize directives from elders, particularly parents. The developmental outcome of the first model is the independent, individuated self; the developmental outcome of the second model is the interdependent self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Kagitçibasi (1996) refers to these two models as the family models of interdependence and independence. She describes these two models on the basis of extensive cross-cultural research in many societies all over the world. In the interdependent family model, socialization stresses family loyalties, control, dependence, and obedience of children.

When socialized this way, children grow up to be "loyal" adult offspring who uphold family needs and invest in their (elderly) parents, whereas "independent" children are more likely to look after their own individual interests. . . .

The intergenerational dependencies shift direction during the family life cycle in the model of interdependence. First, the child is dependent on the parent. This dependence is later reversed when the elderly parent becomes dependent on the grown-up offspring. The resultant familial and interpersonal relations in the family model of interdependence are characterized by interdependence along both emotional and material dimensions. (Kagitçibasi, 1996, p. 82)

Given this framework, the results found in the example of self-sacrifice toward parents (Suzuki & Greenfield, 1997) at the beginning of this section are not surprising. Asians as well as Asian Americans often abide by values of the interdependent model of family relations, in which family and group needs are placed before individual needs. Therefore, sacrificing money for one's mother is seen as a matter of course. In the interdependent model found in Japan, the mother-child relationship lasts a lifetime and is seen as the model for all human relationships throughout life (Lebra, 1994). The importance of continued respect up the generational ladder is seen in other cultures that subscribe to this model, such as Mexican, Mexican American (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994), and Korean (Kim, seminar given in Psychology Department at UCLA, April, 1996).

In contrast, the independent model of family relations is distinguished by the "separateness of the generations and both emotional and material investments channeled toward the child, rather than to the older generation" (Kagitçibasi, 1996, p. 84). As Lebra (1994) points out, in this model, characteristic of the United States, the paradigmatic model of parent-child relations is the rebellious adolescent son, who is breaking away from his family of origin. Under this model, it would be more appropriate for a child to exert his rights and ask for a loan to be returned from one's parents.

Currently, there are many immigrants who have brought a family model of interdependence into a society in which intrafamily independence is the norm. The following is an

excerpt from a family analysis done by a student from a Persian Jewish family in Los Angeles:

Being a first generation immigrant I have had to deal with . . . adjusting a collectivistic upbringing to an environment of individualism. In my home my parents and family coming from a country and culture . . . [with] beliefs of family as the central and dominant unit in life, endeavored to instill in us a sense of family in the collectivistic sense.

We were brought up in a home where the "we" consciousness was stressed, rather than the "I" consciousness. We were taught that our behavior not only had implications for . . . ourselves but also for the rest of the family. For example, if I stayed out late at night, not only would I be taking the chance of getting robbed, raped, and/or murdered (implications of that experience for me), but also my younger brother and sister who looked up to me would also learn to go out late at night and their lives would also be jeopardized (implications of my actions for others) . . . .

We were also taught to be responsible not only for ourselves, but also responsible for every other family member; thereby sharing the responsibility for both good and bad outcomes and playing a major part in each other's lives. For example, if my brother did bad in school, I was also responsible because as his older sister I was responsible to help him and take care of him and teach him right from wrong. I was, to an extent, as responsible for his actions as he, and my parents were. (Yafai, 1992, p. 3)

To be socialized with this moral sense of family interdependence within a society that stresses the independence of each person often presents itself as a conflict for the immigrant or minority child. What happens when the values that a child learns at home conflict with the values learned at school and in the larger society? We shall return to this example and issue in the last section, on home-school relations.

### *Ecological Factors*

The interdependence model is particularly adaptive in poor rural/agrarian societies, where it utilizes a "functionally extended family" to carry out subsistence tasks, including child care (Kagitçibasi, 1996). Due to the high poverty levels and agricultural lifestyles, such shared work is highly adaptive for survival (Kagitçibasi, 1996). The interdependence between generations, with the younger ultimately responsible for the old-age security of the older, is particularly adaptive in societies lacking old-age pensions and Social Security systems (Kagitçibasi, 1996).

Conversely, the independence model of family relations is particularly adaptive in industrial, technological



societies, where the unit of economic employment is the individual, not the family. Furthermore, independence and self-reliance are valued in a sociocultural-economic context where intergenerational material dependencies are minimal, and children's loyalty to their elderly parents is not required to support parents in their old age (Kagitçibasi, 1996). With increasing affluence and education, the interdependence model tends to wane, as the independence model waxes (Kagitçibasi, 1996).

### Implications for Practice

#### *What Can We Learn from a Cross-Cultural Perspective on Parenting Styles?*

In this section, we will draw out implications of the previous section for the practice of developmental researchers, parents, educators, social workers, and clinicians. We emphasize the implications for practice in a multicultural society, and note particularly the opportunities for interethnic exchange concerning parenting and parent-child relations.

**For Researchers: You Can't Take It with You.** There is an important methodological lesson here: It is not always valid to take the same measuring instrument from one culture to another, with the goal of making a direct cross-cultural comparison. The same behavior may have a different meaning and therefore a different outcome in other cultures (Greenfield, in press). This is true when looking at the styles of parental interaction and discipline used by diverse cultural groups. For example, taking a measure of authoritarian parenting developed in the United States and using it to study parenting styles in China would provide an inaccurate and incomplete perspective on parenting practices there (Chao, 1994). It would therefore be important to explore different methods of research that utilize the ideas and opinions of people native to the society under study.

One way to do this would be to encourage the usage of the indigenous psychology approach when studying culture. Kim and Berry (1993) define this approach as "the scientific study of human behavior (or the mind) that is native, that is not transported from other regions, and that is designed for its people" (p. 2). Instead of taking concepts, methods, and measures from one culture and forcing them into the framework of another, it may be more appropriate and more fruitful to work from within the culture to form concepts, methods, and measures designed for that environment. If this is done, indigenous concepts (e.g., *chiao shun*

and *guan*) can be discovered and investigated from a more culturally-salient perspective.

**For Parents, Educators, Social Workers, and Other Clinicians: Differences, Not Deficits.** Each style of parenting will be perceived to have its own strengths and weaknesses *within its own cultural sphere*. Note that each culture has different goals, so that weaknesses from the perspective of one culture may be strengths from the perspective of another. For example, a strength of authoritative parenting is the encouragement of independence in the child (Baumrind, 1983); but this quality is seen as a weakness in some cultures, such as in Mexico (Raeff, Greenfield, & Quiroz, in press) and Japan (Nugent, 1994), where independent children are not the cultural ideal.

Each pattern of child development that results from each cultural style of parenting is different; one is not inferior to another. Each is adaptive in different contexts; each has its own pattern of strengths and weaknesses. What is important is to understand the meanings and the cultural child development goals behind each pattern.

Multicultural understanding has direct implications for clinical work with families. Consider the following case (Carolyn McCarty, personal communication, June 1996): A child in an African American family is punished when a younger sibling, under her care, falls off the bed. The older child feels as though the punishment is unfair and complains of holding too much responsibility in the family. The family seeks family therapy for these issues. In this case, armed with unconscious cultural assumptions about the developmental goal and value of independence, the first reaction of the therapist is to blame the parents for "parentifying" the older child; in this framework parentification is considered pathological. Parentification of a child compromises the autonomy and opportunities for self-actualization that are implicit developmental goals in psychotherapy, itself an outgrowth of an individualistic framework.

However, after some training concerning the two cultural models described earlier, the clinician understood another possibility: that the parents could be developing familial responsibility in the older child by having her take care of the younger child. In accordance with this value system, the older child's punishment makes sense; it helps socialize the child to carry out the familial responsibility associated with child care. Having understood this perspective, the clinician is in a position to explore the issue of culture conflict. Is this situation, in fact, simply a conflict between an older child who has internalized the individualistic notion of fairness and responsibility for self and parents who hold dear



the value of familial responsibility? If so, the clinician can now mediate between the two cultures represented by the two generations within the family.

In such cases, therapists and counselors may help minority and immigrant parents reach a better understanding of the behavior of their children. They can do this by guiding parents to view their children as behaving in ways that are in accord with the majority culture, rather than in ways that are in direct conflict with the parent's own values. Children, particularly those with immigrant parents, could also be counseled on how their clashes with their parents could be due to differences in cultural perspective, rather than to parental stubbornness or insensitivity, and children can be encouraged to better understand their parents' perspective.

#### ***Parent-Child Relations: Differential Acculturation of Parents and Children***

Because parents often acculturate more slowly to a host culture (Kim & Choi, 1994), there is a great potential for parent-child conflict when parents immigrate from a collectivistic to an individualistic society. Parents may expect respect; but their children have been taught to argue and negotiate (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994). Parents may see strictness as a sign of caring; adolescents may see it as robbing them of autonomy and self-direction (Rohner & Pettengill, 1985).

An example of the plight of the immigrant parent is provided by a parent who had immigrated from Peru. She told her American-born college-age daughter that when she was young in Peru, she had to defer to the older generation. She expected that someday she would be older and her children would defer to her. But as an adult she immigrated to the United States where the older generation defers to the younger. She felt cheated: Because the cultural rules changed, she had ended up on the bottom all her life (Elsie Beach, personal communication, 1994, Winter).

Sometimes immigrant parents bring their children, particularly teenagers, to mental health clinics for problem behaviors, such as rebelliousness, that are considered normal for adolescents in the dominant U.S. society (V. Chavira, personal communication, June 1996). When this happens, a clinician may easily assume the perspective of the dominant culture and simply take the side of the child. However, this approach denigrates the parents without understanding the value perspective that has generated their attitudes and behavior. It should be much more helpful if the clinician could accurately diagnose the parent-child problem as a problem of cross-cultural value conflict and differential acculturation. In this way, the perspectives of both parent

and child would be validated and understood, and a way opened for compromise and mutual understanding.

**Parental Goals and Practices: Implications for Educational and Clinical Practice.** An implication of the preceding is that professionals (e.g., social workers, counselors, clinical psychologists, pediatricians, and educators) who advise parents on discipline and other parenting practices need to bear in mind that any advice must be relative to a particular set of child development goals. Often they may not realize that particular goals are implicit in a piece of advice on an issue such as discipline. Insofar as members of many ethnic groups in a multicultural society will not share the socially dominant developmental model with the clinician or teacher, practitioners may need to think twice about whether it is appropriate either to ignore or to change parents' developmental goals for their children.

An example would be an adolescent who feels her immigrant parents are being too restrictive. Should the therapist take the side of the American-born child and urge the parents to provide more autonomy to the adolescent? In so doing, she will make the child happy, but the parents' cultural expectations of respect and interdependence will be thwarted. In addition, because of the reliance on social controls in an interdependence-oriented culture, parents may not have instilled the internal controls in the child that are so necessary for constructive autonomy. Consequently, it would seem more fruitful for the therapist to begin with an understanding that normal behavior for the American-born child is not normal child behavior for the foreign-born parents. Similarly, normal parental behavior for the American-born child is not normal for the foreign-born parents. With these understandings in place, the therapist, rather than pathologizing the parents' behavior from the therapist's implicit cultural perspective, will recognize the "normality" of both sides' behavior within two different cultural frameworks.

#### ***Implications of Cross-Cultural Differences in Parenting Style: Cross-Ethnic Exchange***

Within the United States, cultural diversity is such that parent-child relations are not limited to one culturally dominant model. Because the weaknesses of one model are the strengths of another, there is a possibility that cross-ethnic exchange can solve some common child-rearing problems in our multicultural society.

For example, impulsiveness is a common behavior problem in the dominant U.S. milieu (Maccoby, 1980). Maccoby notes that adolescent impulsiveness is associated with a parenting style in which parents have not assigned tasks

or chores. However, systematic task assignment is a component of a more authoritarian parent-child relationship featuring parental directives and child obedience. The possibility therefore arises that one causal factor in developing impulsiveness may be an excess of family democracy in which all chores and tasks are either a matter of discussion and negotiation between parent and child or are simply left up to the child.

Thus, task and chore assignment, underplayed in the dominant U.S. style of parenting (Whiting & Whiting, 1994/1973), could perhaps be a helpful clinical tool in combating impulse control problems. There are already groups in the United States, such as Latino immigrants from Mexico and Central America, that expect children to help with chores (Raef et al., in press). Clinicians could make parents aware of household chores as a potential strategy to prevent child and adolescent problems in this area. Clinicians from ethnic groups in which this strategy is already used can lead the way.

On the other hand, the inability to ask questions and assert opinions verbally is a detriment for the school achievement of certain ethnic groups in the United States, such as Latino immigrant children (Greenfield et al., 1995). The soliciting of children's views, a component of the authoritative parenting style favored in the dominant U.S. culture, can encourage such behavior, thus enhancing school adaptation (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994). By confining such routines to school-related activities such as reading, Delgado-Gaitan shows how immigrant Latino families can strike a bicultural pose that enhances children's school achievement, while maintaining the value of respect in other family situations.

Another opportunity for cross-cultural exchange lies in the relative importance assigned to verbal and nonverbal communication in the socialization process. It is well documented in the socialization literature that when there is a conflict between parental word and deed, "actions speak louder than words." Actions can socialize in two ways: by providing models, and through coparticipation in an activity. Where a particular skill is pretty much universal within a culture, we may speak of no-failure learning. For example, weaving is a no-failure learning activity for Zinacantan girls; driving is a no-failure learning activity for adolescents in the United States. If we look at the characteristics of no-failure learning around the world, such learning always seems rich in the availability of models and/or coparticipants. No-failure learning privileges action rather than verbal modes of teaching. This is a characteristic of the apprenticeship model of learning that is so important in many other cultures.

The apprenticeship model may also be useful in solving problems of noncompliance, a frequent issue in child behavior in the United States. High rates of noncompliance are not surprising, because, as our analysis has shown, authoritarian parenting, which would foster compliance or obedience, is a culturally disfavored style of parenting in the United States. The dominant culture, both professional and lay, both denigrates obedient children and abhors non-compliant ones. That would seem a paradox, if not an out-and-out contradiction.

Nonetheless, noncompliance problems could perhaps be ameliorated if parents were to rely more on modeling and participating in the desired child behaviors. This conclusion is suggested by our interpretation of the findings of Vaughn, Kopp, and Krakow (1984). These researchers tested compliance in young children between the ages of 18 and 30 months in the following situation: A female experimenter comes in with a basket of toys and dumps them on the floor next to the child. Then the mother tells the child to pick up the toys. Very few young children complied with this request, or, to put it another way, followed the mother's directive.

In this situation, however, the mother neither models nor helps (participates with) the child with the desired task. Quite the contrary, an adult functions as an antisocial model in this situation by dumping the toys out and making a mess. Our hypothesis is that, holding child age constant, if the mother picked up the toys with the child, thus serving as both a model and a participant, compliance rates would have been much higher.

If so, then cultures in which the scaffolding techniques of modeling and coparticipation are a stronger tradition than they are in European American culture can teach us something about parenting; they may provide a technique that could be used to avoid the excesses of our own preferred cultural mode—verbalization—of parent-child socialization and communication. Influenced by models of apprenticeship around the world (Lave & Wenger, 1991), formal education is now trying to incorporate apprenticeship models into more effective formal education (Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989). They may be equally effective as clinical interventions into parental teaching style (cf., Rogoff, 1990).

### Summary

Again, we find evidence of cultural coherence. This coherence has developmental continuity as well. The two cultural models of infant development and socialization, independence and interdependence (Table 16.1) continue

**Table 16.2** Contrasting Cultural Models of Parent-Child Relations

	Developmental Goals	
	Independence	Interdependence
Developmental trajectory	From dependent to independent self	From asocial to socially responsible self
Children's relations to parents	Personal choice concerning relationship to parents	Obligations to parents
Communication	Verbal emphasis	Nonverbal emphasis (empathy, observation, participation)
	Autonomous self-expression by child	Child comprehension, mother speaks for child
	Frequent parental questions to child	Frequent parental directives to child
	Frequent praise	Infrequent praise
Parenting style	Child negotiation	Harmony, respect, obedience
	Authoritative: controlling, demanding, warm, rational	Rigorous and responsible teaching, high involvement, physical closeness
Parents helping children	A matter of personal choice except under extreme need	A moral obligation under all circumstances

to be expressed in the parent-child relations of children (Table 16.2).

There is a paucity of information in the developmental research literature on parent-child relations. Totally absent is information about children's attitudes and behavior toward their parents. Instead, there is a tremendous amount of work on the effects of parent behavior on their children. Our hypothesis is that this paucity is the unwitting result of an individualistic cultural lens that is centered on the child as separate being, rather than on a two-way relationship between parent and child, a focus of the interdependence model of family functioning.

## PEER RELATIONS

Although the home environment is crucial in the socialization of a child, childhood peer relations are also important and cannot be ignored in the study of development. Children often approach peer relations by acting in terms of the

invisible cultures of their homes. Where that culture differs from the invisible culture of peers, cross-cultural conflict in peer relations may arise. Peer relations are the child's first opportunity to take the cultural values and practices learned at home and go forth into a wider world of people who may or may not share these values and practices.

Clashes in cultural understanding can occur even in the most seemingly mundane of actions between peers and friends. Peer interactions that are taken for granted as being "normal" in one cultural context can, in fact, seem strange and even unacceptable in others. Such reactions can then be experienced as prejudice and discrimination, although that may not be the motive.

Take the following situation described by Markus and Kitayama (1991):

Imagine that one has a friend over for lunch and has decided to make a sandwich for him. The conversation might be: "Hey, Tom, what do you want in your sandwich? I have turkey, salami, and cheese." Tom responds, "Oh, I like turkey." (p. 229)

According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), this scene would be completely natural between friends who share an independent view of the self, in which people are perceived to have a right to express their preferences and desires. With such a perspective, offering guests a choice of food would be seen as the courteous thing to do. The friend is given a choice and is in the position of actively voicing a preference in creating the meal. Similar situations occur frequently in the daily interaction of peers in cultures such as in the United States.

Between people with an interdependent view of the self, however, such a situation would be met with bewilderment and confusion, for it would ordinarily be assumed that the host has the responsibility of understanding the desires of his or her friends without their asking. In Japan, people often feel uncomfortable in expressing their desires through choices, and hosts must interpret their guests' wants without directly questioning them (Wierzbicka, 1991). Instead, the following scenario would be more likely to take place between people with an interdependent view of the self:

"Hey, Tomio, I made you a turkey sandwich because I remember that last week you said you like turkey more than beef." And Tomio would respond, "Oh, thank you, I really like turkey." (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 229)

This is an example of how cultural differences can make an impact on interactions among one's peers and friends.

On the surface, the interaction that takes place in this second scenario may appear to be only subtly different from the first scenario, but is in fact indicative of a different set of assumptions between the peers involved.

Each scenario indicates a different developmental endpoint concerning the guiding assumptions in peer relations. In the first scenario, friendship is based partly on respect for each other's autonomy; as a consequence, one friend offers another free choice. In the second scenario, friendship is based partly on empathy for the other person; as a consequence, one friend offers the other understanding of the other's wishes. In the latter case, it is appropriate to inhibit the "I" perspective in an attempt to read the guest's viewpoint by taking the "thou" perspective (Hsu, 1981; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

As Markus and Kitayama (1991) point out, the former scenario would be part of the development of an independent self, while the latter would be part of the development of an interdependent self. The themes of the preceding two sections apply to cross-cultural variability in peer relations: In cultures where parents foster interdependence and empathy with others, we would expect Tomio's style of peer interaction. In cultures where parents foster independence and autonomy, we would expect Tom's style.

Tom is a European American and Tomio is Japanese. Imagine what would happen if Tom and Tomio were friends in a multicultural society such as the United States. As the two scenarios show, "proper" peer interaction differs greatly, depending on one's values and beliefs. In the same situation, two people with different cultural perspectives can interpret a situation and act in ways that are completely foreign to each other. Tom might feel upset if Tomio did not give him a choice of menu; or Tomio might feel uncomfortable if Tom did not anticipate his desires. When this type of subtle misunderstanding occurs, it is hard enough for adults to realize that a cross-cultural value conflict may be taking place; among children, this realization would be rarer still.

This section will start with an overview of different cultural elements that can come into play during peer interaction. As with the sandwich example, our general strategy will be to make inferences from cross-cultural variability in peer behavior when peers belong to the same cultural group to potential intergroup conflict when interacting peers belong to different cultural groups. We will analyze cultural differences and intergroup peer conflict in a number of different behavioral areas: communication, self-presentation, helping behaviors, competition/cooperation, reward allocation, and conflict resolution.

In several cases, we will use adult social-psychological literature to establish developmental endpoints for peer

behavior in different cultures and developmental literature (where available) to see how peer relations develop across cultures. A cross-cultural perspective on adult behavior is important because adults provide the goals for child socialization. As a consequence, child behavior grows toward the developmental endpoints expressed in adult behavior.

### Communication

Communication requires shared knowledge (Krauss & Fussell, 1991) or common ground in the areas of information, beliefs, attitudes (Clark, 1985), and practices. Culturally distinctive beliefs and the practices they generate are important sources of common ground. Communication in each of the sandwich scenarios presupposes this sort of cultural common ground.

In Japan, the common ground would be an understanding of the importance of anticipating others' needs and wants in order to spare them the necessity of voicing their own needs. This common ground leads to communication that is implicit rather than explicit: The guest has communicated what he wants without saying anything on this occasion, and the host has communicated that he has understood the guest's desires. Recall that the use of empathy, rather than explicit communication, begins in infancy in Japanese mother-child communication, contrasting from the beginning with the emphasis on verbalization in European American mother-child communication (Azuma, 1994). Schneider et al. (1994) demonstrate how the implicit verbal style continues into maternal communications to school-age children, even among Japanese Americans who have lived in the United States for several generations.

Among European Americans in North America, the common ground would be an understanding of the importance of recognizing others as autonomous individuals by allowing them to make conscious choices. This common ground leads to communication that is explicit rather than implicit. Even if the host remembers the turkey sandwich from last week, it is considerate to give the guest an opportunity to express a new choice today. Thus, the host explicitly asks what the guest wants; he does not utilize the implicit information from the previous week.

When a Japanese and a European American come together, this example suggests that the common ground on which good communication is based may be lacking. Each party may make assumptions about desirable behavior and communication styles not shared by the other. This situation can lead to unrecognized misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication.

When communicating with others, emotions that are indigenous to one culture but not another may come into play,

adding subtlety and complexity to the communicative interaction. For example, the Japanese feeling of restraint, or *enryo*, may lead guests to refrain from expressing their true desires (e.g., "I would like turkey in my sandwich"), in an attempt to be polite. Japanese communicative style, therefore utilizes indirectness in speech and continual awareness of others as a form of culturally valued courtesy (Miyamoto, 1986-1987). Although *enryo*, or restraint, may be seen as a form of politeness in Japan, it is ironic to think that this culturally bound form of courtesy in Japan may not be perceived as courteous at all in other cultures. Behaving in a way that shows *enryo* may be confusing and frustrating to people who are accustomed to more direct and inquisitive modes of communication.

Value conflicts such as these can lead to conflicts in peer interactions. One can imagine the misunderstandings that can take place between a Japanese child and an American child. The Japanese child might constantly refrain from voicing her true opinions in an effort to be polite, whereas the American child, taking this at face value, would be frustrated in her wishy-washy and ambivalent style of communication. In turn, the Japanese child would be constantly taken aback by the American child's forthrightness in expressing his desires and frustrated at his lack of intuition in realizing her unspoken desires.

Similar misunderstandings might occur between Japanese American and European American children because of their contrasting ancestral value systems. This is just one example of countless ways in which discrepant developmental goals produce conflicting communicative styles that lead to misunderstandings and frustrations in peer interactions.

### Self-Presentation

In many individualistic societies, people like to perceive themselves as the origin of good effects but not of bad effects (Greenwald, 1980), and the confident attribution of successes to personal ability is commonly practiced (e.g., Miller & Ross, 1975; Mullen & Riordan, 1988). Consequently, self-esteem is a highly desirable quality in these societies. For example, in the United States, people who scored highest on self-esteem tests (by saying nice things about themselves) also tended to say nice things about themselves when explaining their successes and failures (LeVine & Uleman, 1979). It appears that self-esteem is somehow correlated to a positive representation of the self.

In collectivistic societies, this tendency to present oneself in a positive light is not as highly valued. Markus and Kitayama (1991) note a striking example of this difference with anecdotes from an article in the *New York*

*Times*. In this article, company policies to boost productivity were described. Employees of a small Texas corporation were instructed to look into a mirror and say, "I am beautiful" 100 times before coming to work. In contrast, employees of a Japanese supermarket opening in New Jersey were encouraged to hold hands and tell each other that "he" or "she is beautiful" before work each day ("A Japanese Supermarket," 1989, in Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Further research has shown that Americans tend to self-enhancement, whereas Japanese tend to self-deprecation (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997). The effect of culture in molding self-presentation, and therefore peer relations, is indeed far-reaching.

This cultural difference in peer relations begins in childhood. In a study conducted on the opinions of second, third, and fifth graders in Japan, students were asked to evaluate a hypothetical peer who was either modest and self-restrained or self-enhancing in commenting on his or her athletic performance (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Yoshida, Kojo, & Kaku, 1982). Yoshida et al. (1982) found that the personality of the person giving the modest comment was perceived much more positively than that of the person giving the self-enhancing comment at all ages. A developmental trend was also found: second graders believed the self-enhancing comment of the hypothetical peer to be true, whereas fifth graders did not. In other words, whereas second graders believed that the self-enhancing peer was truly superb in athletics, fifth graders believed that the modest peer was more competent. Therefore, although the cultural value of restraint and modesty was understood as early as second grade, this value expanded with age to incorporate positive attributes of ability and competence (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

This tendency to value modesty of self-presentation is also reflected in Hong Kong, where people giving humble or self-effacing attributions following successes were more positively perceived than people giving a self-enhancing attribution (Bond, Leung, & Wan, 1982; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Indeed, behaviors such as the verbal devaluation of oneself and even of one's family members is a norm in many East Asian cultures (Toupin, 1980).

In collectivistic cultures such as Japan, group harmony is highly valued, whereas in individualistic cultures such as the United States, individuality is crucial. This dichotomy in desired interactive styles is underscored in Lebra's (1976) observation that the Japanese nightmare is exclusion and failure to connect with others whereas the American nightmare is the failure to separate from others, ending up in being unnoticed and undifferentiated from others. The modest, self-restrained, interactive style of the Japanese people is just one way of preserving group harmony,

while the more self-confident style of the dominant American culture complements its cultural goals of individuality and assertiveness.

### *Implications for Intergroup Peer Relations*

Both modes of self-presentation conform perfectly with their respective cultural goals, but one can see how people from one culture can misinterpret and even decry the preferred self-presentation styles of other cultures. For example, in college interview situations, Asian American students can be viewed as uninteresting applicants because of their modesty and desire to fit in rather than stand out.

Two more examples come from a multiethnic high school sports team (B. Quiroz, unpublished data, January 1996):

*After a winning game, the European American coach picks out the scorers for recognition and praise but he never mentions the supporting players. One of the two immigrant Latinas on the team later bursts into tears because no credit is given for supporting positions, which she and the other Latina member play.*

The European American coach gives selective recognition to the stars, individuals who are perceived to stand out from the team. This individualistic interpretation of who has contributed to the team's success then offends the Latina players, who play supporting positions, but are not given credit for their considerate and skillful effort to support the scorers. Standing out versus contributing to the unit is the issue but these modes are not of equal power; the coach as authority figure represents and promotes the individualistic value of standing out.

In the next example, a parallel value conflict between self-promotion and modesty is at play (B. Quiroz, unpublished data, January 1996):

*A team vote for most improved player takes place. Each European American girl nominates herself. Although they recognize that they are most improved, the two Latina girls do not feel comfortable nominating themselves, so they do not vote. According to the coaches, one of the Latina girls was actually most improved. However, since she received no votes, the prize was not awarded. The "most improved" player is then upset when she does not receive recognition as such.*

Whereas self-aggrandizement is considered a positive aspect of self-esteem in the individualistic framework, it is negatively considered in the collectivistic model of human

behavior (Kitayama, Markus, & Lieberman, in press; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Whereas individual achievement is applauded and idealized from the European American perspective, acknowledgment of others, conversely, is more valued in the more collectivistic view held by the immigrant Latinas. Not only must the Latina players accommodate to a conflicting value system, but also no social structures are in place to allow expression of their own value system.

These two examples show how differences in the valued mode of self-presentation can lead to problems in peer relations in a multicultural situation. Each of these occurrences is a manifestation of negative interpersonal processes that occur when youth from differing home cultures come together in a joint activity. The misunderstandings are subtle, but very real and painful. Note that none is manifest as an overt conflict; yet each involves a negative interpersonal experience with members of a different ethnic group.

Note also that the protagonists were not aware of the reasons behind the problems. They were not aware that they have two contrasting sets of presuppositions about what is desirable in human development and behavior. The two contrasting cultural value systems were invisible to all concerned. Each party in each conflict took her own perspective for granted and was therefore unaware of how the other group might be interpreting her actions. Each party was completely ignorant of cultural models that differed from her own.

### **Helping Behavior**

The desirability of helping behaviors is almost universal, valued in most cultures around the world. People's perceptions of helping behaviors and when they are appropriate, however, can vary drastically from culture to culture. Although some societies view helping as a personal choice, others view this as a moral obligation. It has been shown that American children believe that only justice obligations, and not helping behavior, should be governed by others (Miller & Bersoff, 1992; Smetana, Killen, & Turiel, 1991). More specifically, they feel that it is a matter of personal choice, not moral responsibility, to help a friend in moderate or minor need (Miller et al., 1990), but it is a matter of moral responsibility to help a friend in extreme need or to uphold justice. An example of fulfilling a justice obligation is refusing a request to destroy someone else's garden—(Miller et al., 1990). Caring and interpersonal responsiveness are seen as a matter of personal choice (Higgins, Power, & Kohlberg, 1984; Miller &

Bersoff, 1992; Nunner-Winkler, 1984). This value of personal choice is highlighted in individualistic societies, such as the United States, where Miller et al. (1990) found virtually the same pattern of results from second grade to college age.

In collectivistic societies that value group harmony and cooperation, however, helping behaviors can be perceived at a different level of urgency and obligation. This is particularly true in India, where helping is seen not as a personal choice, but rather as a moral necessity (Miller, 1994; Miller & Bersoff, 1992; Miller et al., 1990). Virtually all Indians from second grade to college age felt it was legitimate to punish a person who failed to help a friend, even in minor need.

In another study (Miller, 1995), it was found that most U.S. college students would not inconvenience themselves to help their best friend if she had not helped them or others in the past. Although Indian college students agreed with U.S. college students that not helping in the past was undesirable behavior, this history would not deter them from helping their best friend.

Choosing not to help others may be met with harsh disapproval in cultures that value the preservation of group interests. In Cameroon, asserting individual rights and interests over those of the community would cause the Cameroonian to be acting "at the expense of his or her peace of mind and at great risk of losing the psychological comfort of a feeling of belonging" (Nsamenang, 1987, p. 279). Such a person would be considered deviant under traditional African thinking (Nsamenang, 1987). Given this difference, one can imagine how an Indian or Nigerian child might be confused and even shocked when a child from another culture chooses not to help a group member in a time of need.

### *Ecological Factors*

Whiting and Whiting (1994/1973) put forth the hypothesis that complex societies must suppress altruistic or helping behavior to friends (as well as to family) to maintain the economic order, "a system of open and achievable occupational statuses" (p. 279). A complex technological society requires the egoistic behaviors of self-development; the essence of obtaining a position in the economic system is individual merit, not social or family connections. Based partly on their cross-cultural child observation data, Whiting and Whiting view the United States, a complex technological society, as occupying an extreme position on the egoistic side of the egoism/altruism dimension.

They further hypothesize that, when a society takes an extreme view on any value, as our society has done with

respect to egoism/altruism, there is a psychic cost to its members; this cost must be mitigated by some sort of social defense mechanism. Whiting and Whiting (1994/1973) continue:

The traditional defense of complex societies against too great an emphasis on egoistic behavior is what might be called *displaced altruism*. Taught as children that they should outdo their parents and compete with their siblings, friends, and neighbors, men and women feel guilty and isolated, and find solace in helping the poor, the ignorant, and the "culturally deprived." Missionary work has long characterized the more complex societies. . . . The concern of the middle class with the poor and the culturally deprived in our own culture, as expressed by the civil rights movement and Vista, as well as the concern of the psychically normal with the mentally retarded and psychotic, are further examples of displacing altruism from friends and relatives to strangers. The culturally approved defense of displaced altruism apparently permits some members of our society to live at relative peace with strong competitive egoistic demands and permits them to continue to teach their children that to do well in school and to get the best jobs are the most important of values. (p. 280)

In essence, the Whitings are saying that self-development and achievement are required in complex, technological societies such as the United States, whereas helping behaviors or altruism are optional, a matter of choice. The importance of helping strangers through "displaced altruism" fits with this analysis, for in the United States, helping strangers is perceived as more a matter of choice than is helping a child or a friend by subjects at all age levels: second grade, sixth grade, and college (Miller et al., 1990).

### **Play: Cooperation, Competition, and Reward Allocation**

Peer games can bring up important cross-cultural differences in the tendency to emphasize cooperation versus competition and in the ways rewards are allocated. These differences can then create difficulties in peer relations in a culturally diverse society. Interestingly, the classic research in this area was done in the 1960s and 1970s. The topic has received little research attention since.

### *Competition versus Cooperation*

In Western societies, both cooperation and competition are valued, and children often learn to interact with one another utilizing both concepts. However, children in the United States are often placed in situations where competition is more likely to be utilized and even encouraged.



School is an environment where this tendency takes place. According to Aronson and Bridgeman (1979):

In the typical American classroom, children are almost never engaged in the pursuit of common goals. During the past several years, we and our colleagues have systematically observed scores of elementary school classrooms and found that, in the vast majority of these cases, the process of education is highly competitive. Children vie with one another for good grades, the respect of the teacher, etc. (p. 340)

In a society where children are constantly evaluated and rewarded based on individual achievement, a tendency toward competitiveness is to be expected.

In the United States, this tendency to be competitive with one another increases with age (Kagan & Madsen, 1972). This developmental trend was depicted in a study by Madsen (1971) that utilized an interpersonal game in which children could either cooperate with one another (and be more likely to receive a prize) or compete with one another (and be less likely to receive a prize). The result showed a striking effect. In the United States, it was found that younger children (4–5) were more successful than older children (7–8, 10–11) in cooperating in order to receive a prize. In older children, the motivation to compete was so strong that it overcame the tendency to act for mutual self-interest (Madsen, 1971). In contrast, Mexican children from a small agricultural community behaved cooperatively at the older ages. Small community size may be important because of its role in leading to within-group cohesion.

However, in-group cooperation is often associated with out-group competition. This was the case for highly cooperative kibbutz children from Israel (Shapira & Madsen, 1969). Israeli kibbutzim are small, collectivistic, agricultural communities with strong in-group ties. Using a game to examine cooperation and competition in peer relations, Shapira and Madsen (1969) found that kibbutz children's tendency to cooperate in a game overshadowed their competitive tendencies under various reward conditions. In contrast, city children would cooperate when there was a group reward, but as soon as rewards were distributed on an individual basis, competition took over.

In kibbutzim, children are prepared from an early age to cooperate and work as a group, and competition is not seen as a socially desirable norm (Shapira & Madsen, 1969). At the time this study was done, kibbutz teachers reported that anticompetitive attitudes were so strong that children sometimes felt ashamed for being consistently at the top of their class (Shapira & Madsen, 1969). Under such cultural norms, it is not surprising that children in

kibbutz communities were much more likely to cooperate rather than compete with one another in gaming situations. A high-level of within-group cooperation was associated with a desire to do better than other groups who had played the game before.

Insofar as an emphasis on cooperation is part of a collectivistic value orientation, it may be that greater differentiation of relations between in-group and out-group members may characterize collectivistic cultures, in comparison with individualistic ones. (An in-group is one to which you belong; an out-group is one to which you do not.) Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, and Lucca (1988) have data confirming this idea. In a study comparing Japanese and American students in conflict situations against differing opponents, they found that the Japanese subjects showed a greater behavioral difference between their interactions with in-group members and their interactions with out-group members.

It is too simplistic to say that children from collectivistic cultures are, on the average, more cooperative than children from individualistic cultures. Instead, children from more collectivistic cultures are more cooperative with in-groups and more competitive with out-groups. Second, the cross-cultural mean differences are far from absolute. For example, children from more individualistic environments will cooperate when competition is dysfunctional and there are strong cues for cooperating, such as group reward (Shapira & Madsen, 1969). In addition, differences in cultural values concerning cooperation and competition often reflect ecological conditions.

*Ecological factors.* As with helping behavior, cooperative behavior appears to be more functional and encouraged in small, simple, nontechnological groups with low levels of formal education and to be less functional in large, complex, technological groups with high levels of formal education (Graves & Graves, 1978). Therefore, when members of a small, simple, nontechnological group come into contact with members of a large, complex, technological group, competitiveness in peer relations increases, as Madsen and Lancy (1981) found in New Guinea.

The role of urbanization in stimulating competition is confirmed by studies comparing two ecologies in one country. In one such study, Madsen (1967) found that urban Mexican children were much more competitive and less cooperative than rural Mexican children from a small, agricultural community. This pattern of findings points to the conclusion that the greater cooperation of Mexican immigrants to the United States may be, to a great extent, a function of their rural, agricultural background.

Urbanization may play its role in reducing cooperation and increasing competition by loosening the strength of



in-group ties in an ethnically diverse milieu. This was the conclusion of Madsen and Lancy (1981), who, in a study of 10 sites in New Guinea, found that, when primary group identification could be separated from rural residence, it was by far the most important factor in children's choice between a cooperative and competitive strategy in a peer game situation. Children who came from ethnic groups that had retained their tribal coherence were more cooperative, even when exposed to urban centers, than were rural children whose groups had less stability and whose traditional way of life had largely disappeared.

### **Reward Allocation**

Leung and Iwawaki (1988) claim that people from individualistic backgrounds are more likely to want to allocate rewards in proportion to each individual's contribution, whereas people from collectivistic backgrounds tended to allocate rewards equally to everyone in the group. This has been found to be true in numerous studies of adults, such as those comparing Hong Kong and the United States (Leung & Iwawaki, 1988), Korea and the United States (Leung & Park, 1986), as well as Japan and Australia (Kashima, Siegel, Tanaka, & Isaka, 1988).

Kibbutz children, coming from a collectivistic background, fit this pattern and show that the principle starts in middle childhood. In fact, when faced with a game situation in which reward allocation could differ, the kibbutz children showed a concern that "everyone should get the same" and "when, in some isolated cases, one of the children tried to compete against the others, the group usually restrained him" (Shapira & Madsen, 1969, p. 617). Because the city children did not show this same concern, there was some indication that equity of rewards goes with a cooperative approach to playing games and, perhaps, other activities.

### **Implications for Intergroup Peer Relations**

With this in mind, it is apparent that children (as well as adults) with different cultural backgrounds can easily have divergent ideas concerning cooperation, competition, and the allocation of rewards. Without proper awareness of such differentiation in viewpoints, one can imagine the possible confusion and misunderstanding that might occur when one child's assumptions about cooperation, competition, and reward allocation fundamentally differs from that of her playmate. This difference can indeed be yet another source of cross-cultural conflict that can occur among children, particularly following immigration from a collectivistic milieu to an individualistic one.

Kagan and Madsen (1972) found Mexican American children to be midway between Mexican and U.S. children

in cooperativeness. This pattern of findings confirms the hypothesis that Mexican immigrants from rural areas bring a collectivistic orientation with them to the United States. There, collectivistic values come into conflict with an individualistic value system and subsequently diminish (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Raeff et al., in press). Nonetheless, differential cooperativeness can potentially affect peer relations between Latino and European American children, with the most severe conflicts likely to occur for immigrant Latino children playing with European American peers. This kind of situation occurs in multiethnic sports teams. Here is an example of the difficulty in peer relations that can occur when immigrant Latina players are on the same team with European American players. The example comes from a girls' high school varsity volleyball team (B. Quiroz, January 1996, unpublished data):

*Two immigrant Latina players talk about wanting the team to work as a unit. They complain that the European American girls just want themselves to look good, sometimes even at the expense of the team's performance.*

In this example, the European American players try to act like "stars," sometimes even at a perceived cost to team performance. The Latina players are upset at the European American girls' tendency to value individual attention instead of the overall group goal of cooperating as a team to play the game. What is viewed as natural and even desirable from the European American perspective, is seen as an act of bad faith from the immigrant Latina perspective.

Sometimes, in contrast to the situation for most immigrant Latinos, immigrants may arrive in North America with an approach to play that is more similar to the competitive framework of the dominant society. For example, Madsen and Yi (1975) found urban children to be more competitive than rural children in Korea. Unlike Mexican immigrants, most Korean immigrants to North America are urban professionals, and according to Madsen and Yi's (1975) findings, this means that they arrive in North America with some degree of competitive emphasis already present in their socialization and development. This could make adjustment to the dominant mode of peer relations in North America easier than it is for most Latino immigrants coming to the United States from rural backgrounds.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Conflicts among children are inevitable within any culture. The preceding descriptions underscore that the potential for conflict (especially culturally based conflict) is even

greater between children of differing backgrounds. However, it is ironic that acceptable and preferred measures of conflict resolution also differ from culture to culture.

### ***Cultural Bases of Conflict Resolution***

In the United States, success, freedom, and justice are "central strands" of culture (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swindler, & Tipton, 1985). These values are considered "individual" rights and are treasured concepts, written into the Constitution and worthy of fighting wars for. Under the precepts of these rights and the resulting economic system of capitalism, competition among people is seen as healthy, necessary, and even desirable. Thus, resolution of conflict may be competitive and confrontational, based on the concept that the individual, rather than the collective, has rights that may, and should be, actively pursued.

In other societies, however, behavioral ideals lead to different types of desired behavior. Chinese people were found to prefer nonconfrontational approaches to conflict resolution more than Westerners did (Leung, 1988). In fact, there appears to be a strong inverse relationship between the presence of Chinese values and the degree of competitiveness used in handling conflicts (Chiu & Kosinski, 1994), suggesting a strong tie between cultural values and conflict behavior. In general, Toupin (1980) suggests that East Asian cultures share certain norms, including that of deference to others, absence of verbal aggression, and avoidance of confrontation.

Conflict resolution in West Africa also emphasizes the importance of group harmony. According to Nsamenang (1987), West Africans emphasize reconciliation as a means of handling disputes and domestic conflicts to "reinforce the spirit of communal life" (p. 279). The preservation of group harmony during conflict resolution is once again crucial in this cultural context.

Both the means and the goals of conflict resolution vary according to the values and ideals to which each culture aspires. We would expect these cultural modes of adult conflict resolution to furnish the developmental goals for the socialization of conflict resolution in children.

### ***Children's Methods of Conflict Resolution Reflect Their Cultural Foundations***

In every society, cultural ideals are manifested in the conflict resolution tactics encouraged by the adults. According to Whiting and Edwards (1988), "The manner in which socializers handle children's disputes is one of the ways in which the former transmit their values concerning the legitimate power ascribed to gender and age" (p. 189). Through adult intervention, cultural and societal ideals and values are transmitted to the children.

For example, in American preschools, one is generally encouraged to use his or her words to "defend oneself from accusations and to seek redress when one feels wronged" (Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989, p. 167). American parents also encourage children to use their words to "negotiate disputes or label their emotions" (Whiting & Edwards, 1988) when having conflicts with their peers. In a culture that highly values equality, individual rights, and justice, expressing one's personal point of view is very important. By doing so, the hope is that justice can emerge out of learning about each child's individual perspective. Note that the emphasis on verbal dispute resolution reflects the emphasis of European American parents on verbalization.

Another tactic used by American adults to reduce conflict among children is "time out." A clear example of this technique is seen in *Preschool in Three Cultures*, a chronicle of preschool observations in Japan, China, and the United States by Tobin et al. (1989). In an observation of a U.S. classroom, the authors describe an encounter in which a teacher isolates Kerry, a boy who refuses to put away toys, until he admits to playing with the toys and becomes willing to help clean up the Legos that he had played with. Repeatedly, the teacher approaches Kerry and attempts to reason with him before finally resorting to a time-out measure.

This individualized attention given to misbehaving children, while heralded as an appropriate and effective means of child management in this particular cultural context, would appear strange in others. In the United States, it is quite common and even desirable for teachers, parents, and children to use negotiation, lobbying, voting, pleading, litigation, encouraging, arbitration, and isolation to resolve conflicts in a just or fair manner (Tobin et al., 1989). However, giving such individualized attention to disobedient children may not be approved of in more collectivistic cultures.

In the same observational field study, Tobin et al. (1989) also observed classroom activities in Komatsudani, a preschool in Japan. Here, teachers were described as being "careful not to isolate a disruptive child from the group by singling him out for punishment or censure or excluding him from a group activity" (Tobin et al., 1989, p. 43). In a society that highly values group interactions and collectivism, such a punishment would be seen as extreme. In this cultural framework, the teachers at Komatsudani would instead take a more unintrusive and collective approach to conflict resolution. When Hiroki, a misbehaving child, causes a stir among his classmates, the Japanese teacher's response is not to single him out but rather to instruct other children to take care of the problem themselves. This technique is in stark contrast to the American

tactic of immediate adult intervention and arbitration, followed by later isolation.

The philosophy behind this mode of conflict resolution at Komatsudani is also closely linked to cultural beliefs. In Japan, group interactions are highly salient, and teachers therefore believe that "children learn best to control their behavior when the impetus to change comes spontaneously through interactions with their peers rather than from above" (Lewis, 1984; quoted in Tobin et al., 1989, p. 28). On being interviewed, Fukui-sensei, the teacher at Komatsudani, said that she believed that other classmates' disapproval would have a greater effect on misbehaving children, perhaps more so than would any form of adult intervention. Here we see peer pressure as an effective means of conflict control.

In the United States, in contrast, peer pressure is usually seen not as a means of controlling behavior in a positive way, but rather, as a negative form of conformity and lack of personal freedom. In this context, having children "work things out on their own" without intervention and assessment by others would be unusual indeed.

### *Implications for Intergroup Peer Relations*

Conflict is unavoidable in any cultural context. However, modes of dealing with conflict can differ greatly. Conflict resolution is difficult enough in a homogenous society where children subscribe to the same cultural scripts and norms. When children from differing backgrounds attempt to reconcile their differences, their task is even further exacerbated by an incongruence between the children's conflict resolution styles. Thus, events such as minor playground altercations can lead to schisms in children's perceptions of people from other backgrounds and beliefs.

### *Implications for Practice*

#### *Education*

Teachers may interact with large groups of children of differing backgrounds where cultural differences in interactive style would be constantly exposed. Many situations might arise in which a teacher could negatively interpret a child's culturally bound peer interactions. Teachers should therefore be trained to become aware of the differing cultural belief systems and modes of behavior that may lead children to peer conflict or make peer conflicts difficult to resolve.

When interethnic misunderstandings occur, Quiroz (personal communication, January 1996) observed that the injured party often attributes the behavior of the other group to prejudice and discrimination. This might

be especially true when the injured party belongs to a minority ethnicity. An understanding of the cultural reasons for peer behavior has the power to decrease attributions of prejudice and discrimination, thus contributing to improved intergroup peer relations.

Making each group aware of the cultural model behind the behavior of their own and other ethnic groups may be a powerful means for improving intergroup understanding and intergroup relations. This may be achieved through the training of teachers, counselors, and coaches to be more aware of cultural issues (Rothstein-Fisch, Trumbull, Quiroz, & Greenfield, 1997). Workshops may also be started for children and adolescents to increase dialogue on these issues.

Teachers may also choose to change their curriculum to accommodate different modes of participation and interaction among students. Because class activities are generally competitive, the addition of class projects focusing more on cooperative participation may encourage and inspire children to work together in new ways while putting children who are used to cooperative modes of interaction more at ease. This issue will be discussed in more detail in the final section of the chapter on home-school relations.

#### *Parents*

When parents have their children in a multicultural environment in which different cultural goals for human development are idealized, it would be important to recognize these differences and prepare their children for this possibility.

In the United States, conflict resolution between peers depends on a clear presentation of one's personal needs and a recognition of self-responsibility to accomplish change and solve the conflict. This is wholly unlike collectivistic views of conflict resolution, in which the self is responsible for the other and for the acknowledgment of the other's needs. In many home cultures, strongly voicing and defending one's point of view is not encouraged. Yet this skill is often required of children faced with peers in multicultural or bicultural social environments. Parents should therefore be aware of this difference and help their children cope with it.

### *Summary*

Despite some degree of intracultural variation and multicultural influences, overall cultural patterns of interpersonal interaction exist. Differences in peer relations in the areas of communication, self-presentation, helping behavior, play, and conflict resolution organize themselves around what has become a familiar dimension: an idealized

cultural model of independent or interdependent functioning. When interacting peers come from home cultures that have contrasting models concerning this dimension, the potential for problematic peer relations arises.

An important source of perceived prejudice and discrimination is failure to understand the cultural values that generate the behavior of others. Behavior that is valued at home in one ethnic group may be devalued, and even made fun of, by members of another ethnic group. Students can end up criticizing each other for acting in ways that actualize different sets of cultural ideals, learned at home, about behavior and human relations.

Differences in cultural value systems have the potential to cause deep misunderstanding and conflict between children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Interaction between children is never completely conflict free, but when children play among other children who share their cultural values, peer interaction can often be smoother, based on similar assumptions of what consists of fair play, proper methods of conflict resolution, ideal interactive behaviors, and so forth.

In a multicultural society such as the United States, children from various cultural backgrounds have the opportunity to interact with one another. However, interaction alone does not breed awareness of other value systems. There is a tendency for each interactant to see the other's behavior through the implicit lens of his or her own value system. Therefore parents and teachers need to be aware of the potential differences between children to help each child to better understand that children may have different perspectives on proper peer interaction, and that these differences can be acknowledged, respected, and even appreciated.

It is necessary first to educate parents and teachers concerning cultural differences and then have them, in turn, educate children. Teaching children about cultural differences in values and behavior can be an important first step to help children become more aware, accepting, and fulfilled in their interaction with one another as children, as well as to prepare them for their interactions with one another as functioning, socially conscious adults.

## HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

Cultural models of human development and socialization are embodied in infant care practices and parent-child relations. These practices and relations then influence the cultural models and behaviors that children bring into their peer relations. The school is an important institution in the

forging of peer relations. Schooling involves more than just peer relations, however. It also involves relations between children and teachers and between parents and teachers. These relationships will be the focus of the present section.

By the age of 4 or 5, most children venture from their homes to enter a brand-new environment: school. In a culturally homogenous society, this shift between home culture and the culture of the schools is a relatively smooth transition, based on shared goals and assumptions (Raef et al., in press). In a multicultural society such as the United States, however, families come from many cultural backgrounds. Although colorful and joyous, this diversity can also lead to potential misunderstandings and value conflict between school personnel and parents. Some of these misunderstandings occur in the context of peer relations at school, an area where the analysis of the preceding section is relevant. Still others occur between parents and teachers or between children and teachers. Such culture-based misunderstandings will be the central issue of this section.

In the cross-cultural peer conflicts analyzed in the preceding section, contrasting cultural values were, to an extent, on an equal footing. In school, however, this is not the case. The power belongs to the dominant culture that is part and parcel of formal education in the United States or any other country. This inequality of power between the dominant value system exemplified in school and contrasting value systems present in the homes of various ethnic groups is exemplified in the following incident from an elementary school in West Los Angeles serving low-income Latino families (Greenfield, 1995; Quiroz & Greenfield, in press):

There had just been a major conflagration involving the federally funded school breakfast program. The problem, as seen by the school, was that immigrant Latino mothers were accompanying their children to school, bringing younger siblings, eating the school breakfast together with their children, and, as a consequence, eating food that "belonged" to the school-aged children. When the school tried to stop families from having breakfast with their children, there was a major blow-up. Latino immigrant parents who had previously not been involved in school affairs suddenly became very activist. The school personnel, who felt strongly about their position, were astounded at the reaction. (Greenfield, 1995, p. 3)

## How Does This Narrative of Social Conflict Reflect Contrasting Developmental Goals?

This is a situation in which parents and school administrators differed in their opinions about what is best for the

child. From the school's point of view, the sharing of school breakfasts that took place between students and their family members was unacceptable. First of all, this situation violated federal regulations guiding the school breakfast program, an antipoverty nutritional program designed as an individual rather than family-based entitlement. Therefore, the child's individual rights to *all* his or her food were being violated.

A second problem, as seen by the school personnel, was that these mothers were literally spoon-feeding their school-age kids instead of letting them eat by themselves. Such behavior was seen as leading to dependency, rather than to the self-sufficiency advocated by the schools. From a Eurocentric point of view, the indignation and perplexity felt on the part of school administrators toward the Latino parents is readily understandable.

When viewing the school breakfast situation through the lenses of the cultural goals shared by the Latino parents, however, their desire to take part in their children's meals is equally understandable. For the Latino parents, sharing the school breakfasts with their school-age children reflected a desire to emphasize the family unit. In their view, the child's breakfast was not the sole, personal property of the child, but something that could be shared with the entire family. Nutrition was something needed by the whole family, not merely the school-age child or children. Helping the children eat their food also reflected Latino cultural values: Being helpful toward one another is a highly desirable trait. In this situation, differences between the goals of the Latino families and the assumptions and expectations of school personnel came into direct conflict, causing misunderstandings and conflict between Latino immigrant parents and the school.

Because both the individualistic framework that generated the school's interpretation and response and the collectivistic framework that generated the parents' were invisible to all, there was no possibility of each side understanding the perspective of the other. Instead, each side used their own model of human development and behavior to negatively evaluate the behavior of the other side.

### *Developmental Goals of "School Culture"*

How general was this conflict over school breakfasts? Would it be correct to say that it reflected two contrasting cultural models of development? Raeff et al. (in press) conducted experimental research to investigate this. They administered a set of scenarios concerning social dilemmas at home and at school in two different schools. Each dilemma could be solved in a number of different ways, some consonant with an individualistic model of development and

socialization, some consonant with a collectivistic model. Parents, teachers, and children were tested in each school. In one school, the families were primarily European American; in the other, they were Latino immigrants.

Here is an example of a dilemma that relates to the school breakfast example. In this dilemma, which takes place at school, the issue is whether to help or not:

It is the end of the school day, and the class is cleaning up. Denise isn't feeling well, and she asks Jasmine to help her with her job for the day which is cleaning the blackboard. Jasmine isn't sure that she will have time to do both jobs. What do you think the teacher should do? (Raeff et al., in press)

Just as the school was unified in the opinion that mothers should not help their school-age children to eat, teachers (at both schools) were in broad agreement that Jasmine should not be required to help Denise. Most often they thought a third person should be found to do the job, on a volunteer basis.

Although the situation is quite different in many respects from the school breakfast problem, the issue of helpfulness seems to evoke the same underlying model and reveal its generality among school personnel. Teacher ethnicity did not affect the response; teachers as a professional group had been socialized into the culture of the school.

Not only did Raeff et al. (in press) find generality of the cultural model from a real-world incident to an experimental scenario; there was also generality across scenarios and across settings, from school to home. Across a number of different scenarios, the overwhelming number of teacher responses reflected an individualistic model of child socialization and development. Because the scenarios were diverse, we can conclude that a single underlying individualistic model generates coordinated responses in a range of social situations.

### *Home-School Harmony and Conflict*

Raeff et al. (in press) had expected that European American parents would be generally in tune with the school's individualistic model of development. That is exactly what was found: European American parents shared the teachers' view that Jasmine should not be required to help Denise.

Based on information concerning Latino immigrant models of development (discussed in the sections on infancy and parent-child relations) and based on reactions to the school breakfast program, Raeff et al. (in press) expected that Latino immigrant parents would be in sharp

conflict with the school's approach to the school jobs dilemma.

Just as the Latino parents thought mothers should help their children eat their school breakfasts, Raeff et al. (in press) expected Latino parents to think that Jasmine should help Denise. And that is exactly what they found: Latino parents were in broad agreement that Jasmine should help Denise. This response was shown to be part of a more general model of development: Across a number of diverse scenarios, they overwhelmingly constructed responses that reflected an underlying collectivistic model of development.

From the point of view of home-school relations, the Latino parents are completely out of tune with the school's value system, whereas correlatively, the teachers are completely out of tune with the Latino parents' value system. This is in sharp contrast to the picture of home-school value harmony that exists for European American families.

#### ***Children Caught between Home Culture and School Culture***

As a consequence of value harmony between their parents and their teachers, European American children are receiving consistent socialization messages at home and at school. The children of Latino immigrants are not. The results reflect these dynamics: Whereas there are no significant differences between the responses of European American children and their parents, there are significant differences between Latino children and their immigrant parents (Raeff et al., in press).

The Latino children are, overall, significantly more individualistic than their parents and significantly more collectivistic than their teachers. That is, they are different from both their major socializing agents. Little is known about whether such children have successfully integrated two cultures or they are caught in the middle. It has been noted (R. Paredes, personal communication, 1996) that they express Chicano culture, the culture of Mexican Americans in the United States. Although this research was done with a particular population, it is potentially applicable to the children of other collectivistic groups who come to the United States.

The most common problem derives from immigrant parents' collectivistic expectations of children suffused with individualism from the surrounding society, particularly the school. (Recall that problems of differential acculturation rate between parents and children were also discussed in the section on parent-child relations.) The following is an articulately expressed experience of a first-generation college student of Persian Jewish immigrant parents:

Although the collectivistic ideology dominated my home life, at school and within the greater community, a different, and sometimes contradictory, ideology of individualism was taught and had been established as the norm. The "I" consciousness was the norm here; you had to watch out for yourself, you were responsible for your actions, your successes and your failures. I was no longer responsible for whether my brother did well on his tests or not, that was now his problem, not mine. In school my non-Persian friends could not relate nor understand why I had to drive my brother around or why my mother was upset at me because my sister had made a mess in the living room and it had been my responsibility to help her and make sure she cleaned it. In their families, if you had a responsibility and you didn't fulfill it, only you suffered the consequences, not your brother or sister or anyone else.

In school and in the community life seemed to be so much simpler, you had only to do things for yourself, you weren't bound to any other entity. If your sister was sick, you could go out, you didn't have to stay home and take care of her. You could go away to college and "experience life," you weren't bound to the home and family as in the Persian society and in my family. Their parents weren't strict about curfews, when you could go out, and where you could go; it was your choice and your responsibility. (Yafai, 1992, pp. 3-4)

#### **Bringing a Collectivistic Model of Development to School: The Potential for Home-School Conflict**

In the United States, many schooling options are available to children and their families: public schools, private schools, parochial schools, language immersion schools, college preparatory boarding schools . . . the list goes on. Despite this diversity, research indicates that schools often reflect aspects of individualism that highlight independence as a goal of development. Classroom interactions and activities emphasize individual achievement, the encouragement of children's autonomous choice and initiative, and the development of logico-rational, rather than social skills (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993, 1994; Reese et al., 1995).

Academic activities are also intrinsically individualistic insofar as evaluations are generally made on the basis of independent work accomplished by individual students (Whiting & Whiting, 1994/1973) rather than on group endeavors. This focus on individual achievement and evaluation is a predominant theme in academic settings; individual achievement and evaluation are the foundation on which many schools are built.

These aspects of school culture often come into direct conflict with the collectivistic orientation toward education favored not only by Latinos, but by many minority and

immigrant cultures (e.g., Asian American, Native American, and African American), whose cultures emphasize values such as cherishing interpersonal relationships, respecting elders and native traditions, feeling a responsibility for others, and cooperation (Blake, 1993, 1994; Delgado-Gaitan, 1993, 1994; Ho, 1994; Kim & Choi, 1994; Suina & Smolkin, 1994). This perspective is antithetical to the school's emphasis on individual achievement.

### ***Individual Achievement from a Collectivistic Perspective***

Encouraging children's individual achievements can be seen in some cultures (e.g., Nigeria) as devaluing cooperation (Oloko, 1993, 1994) or group harmony. Research on conferences between immigrant Latino parents and their children's elementary school teachers revealed incidents when the teacher's praise of an individual child's outstanding achievement made a parent feel distinctly uncomfortable (Greenfield, Quiroz, & Raeff, in press).

Parents seemed to feel most comfortable with a child's school achievement if the academic skill in question could be applied to helping other family members. For example, in one parent-teacher conference, a Latino mother (with a first-grade education) created common ground with the teacher when she responded to a question about her daughter's home reading by telling the teacher that her daughter had been reading to a younger family member (Greenfield et al., in press).

In this example, mother and teacher have cooperatively constructed a symbolic child who both practices a skill (reading) and shares this skill within the family (reading to a younger child). Individual achievement is made more consonant with a collectivistic model of development by using the achievement to enrich the experience of another family member.

### ***Written Knowledge from a Collectivistic Perspective***

The reliance on textbooks used in many school settings may also be cause for conflict. In some cultures, the acquisition of knowledge is seen as something that is gleaned not from impersonal texts, but rather from the wisdom and knowledge of relevant others. In the Pueblo Indian worldview, parents and grandparents are seen as the repositories of knowledge, and this fact provides a social connection between the older and younger generations. In cultures such as these, when objects rather than people become the authorities of knowledge, the introduction of resources such as encyclopedias, reference books, and the like is seen to undermine "the very fiber of the connectedness" (Suina, 1991, p. 153) between people. From this perspective, the

school's emphasis on learning through written material may appear to be an impersonal and even undesirable way of acquiring knowledge.

### ***Object Knowledge from a Collectivistic Perspective***

Children whose cultural background has emphasized social relations and social knowledge may not understand the privileged position of decontextualized object knowledge in the culture of the school. The following is an example of culture conflict that can occur between teachers and children:

In a Los Angeles prekindergarten class mostly comprising Hispanic children, the teacher was showing the class a real chicken egg that would be hatching soon. She was explaining the physical properties of the egg, and she asked the children to describe eggs by thinking about the times they had cooked and eaten eggs. One of the children tried three times to talk about how she cooked eggs with her grandmother, but the teacher disregarded these comments in favor of a child who explained how eggs are white and yellow when they are cracked. (Greenfield et al., 1995)

From the Latino point of view, the first child's answer was typical of the associations encouraged in her invisible home culture of interdependence: Objects are most meaningful when they mediate social interactions. The child therefore acted on this value of interpersonal relations in answering the teacher's question. The teacher, however, did not recognize this effort on the part of the child and considered the social descriptions of the time they had eaten eggs as irrelevant; only physical descriptions of these occasions were valued (Greenfield et al., 1995).

The teacher did not even see the invisible culture that generated a description of cooking eggs with one's grandmother; the teacher devalued the child's contribution, and implicitly, the value orientation it reflected. Because she did not understand the collectivistic value orientation, she was also unaware that her question was ambiguous in the following way: Children who shared her value orientation would assume that she was interested in the physical properties of the eggs, even though she did not make this point explicit. Those children who did not share the teacher's value orientation would make different assumptions.

### ***Assertiveness from a Collectivistic Perspective***

To give another example, in many collectivistic cultures, the value placed on respecting authority may go as far as to undermine the more individualistic styles of learning that require children to articulate and even argue their views



with teachers and other elders on a relatively egalitarian basis (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993, 1994). The following extract describes the cultural ideal for child communicative behavior for many people of Mexican background. According to Delgado-Gaitan (1994):

Children are expected to politely greet their elders; they are not supposed to argue with them. In the company of adults, children are to be good listeners and participate in a conversation only when solicited. To raise questions is to be rebellious. (p. 64)

A similar view of questioning is found in Japan (Muto et al., 1980). Given this cultural ideal in child communication, one can imagine the scenario in a U.S. school in which a teacher might falsely interpret a Mexican American child's compliance or a Japanese child's absence of questioning as a lack of motivation or intellectual curiosity.

As noted in the section on parent-child relations, many children from different ethnic groups are raised with the notion of respecting and accepting the opinions of elders without question, and this value may be carried with the children to the school setting. The school's emphasis on rational argumentation can be seen to undermine respect for elders. Thus, when children are not vocal and adept at logico-rational modes of argumentation, they can be subjected to criticism by teachers, who focus on fostering individual assertiveness and opinions.

In a study of conferences between immigrant Latino parents and their children's elementary school teachers, Greenfield et al. (in press) showed that the teacher criticized every single child for not sufficiently expressing his or her views in class. The teacher was unaware that such behavior would be contrary to the Latino parents' goals for their own children's development.

### Implications for Educational Practice

In this section, we detail methods for overcoming home-school conflict that occurs when children with a collectivistic background come to school. We also stress the relevance of cross-cultural exchange in educational practice.

#### *Teaching to the Whole Class*

In many collectivistic societies, schools have found ways of integrating indigenous cultural values into the school system. In Japanese and Chinese classrooms, classroom practices that focus the attention of teaching on the class as a whole rather than promoting attention to individual students are common and widely accepted (Stigler & Perry, 1988). This technique might be useful in U.S.

classrooms that are homogenous in the sense of containing only children who come from collectivistic backgrounds. Classrooms for immigrants would be one such example.

#### *Cooperative Learning in the Classroom*

In the United States, there has been considerable experimentation with cooperative learning, particular in classrooms featuring cultural diversity (Aronson & Bridgeman, 1979). Cooperative learning methods represent a compromise with the school's bias toward individual achievement and evaluation (Whiting & Whiting, 1994/1973) and a more collectivistic or interdependent approach. Effective cooperative learning methods have two necessary characteristics (Slavin, 1986, p. 8):

1. Rewards must be given to the group as a whole, rather than to individuals within it.
2. The group's success must depend on the individual learning of each group member.

Thus, individual learning is placed in a context of interdependence.

One method for accomplishing this is the Jigsaw Classroom of Aronson and colleagues (Aronson, Stephan, Sikes, Blaney, & Snapp, 1978). In this method, each student in a small group has access to a part of the information required for a total lesson. Students have to master their own parts and then teach them to the other members of the group. Team members are ultimately tested individually, but they are totaled into team scores and recognition is given to the team as a whole, rather than to individuals within it.

Consonant with the idea that African American and Latino students generally have their cross-cultural ancestral roots in collectivistic cultures, the academic achievement of these minorities was better in the cooperative than in the normal, individualistic learning conditions (Lucker, Rosenfield, Sikes, & Aronson, 1977). Consonant with the idea that European American children more often have their cultural roots in the individualism of the United States and Northern Europe, their academic achievement was not improved by the cooperative conditions. But neither was the academic achievement of European American children hampered by the Jigsaw Classroom. At the same time for all ethnic groups, the liking of students for others within their cooperating group increased, both within and across ethnic boundaries.

This pattern of results indicates that cooperative learning can be of use in the culturally diverse classroom. Cooperative techniques such as jigsaw teaching seem to make children who come to school with cooperative backgrounds

feel more at ease with learning (Widaman & Kagan, 1987) while teaching cooperative behavior to children from more individualistic backgrounds. Most important, cooperating groups become in-groups with positive bonds; these bonds can extend across ethnic lines.

Cooperative learning might be particularly effective with children from cultures in which respectful deference to authority, rather than speaking up to adults, is expected (e.g., Greenfield et al., 1995). In such cultures, free communication among peers is expected. It therefore might be much more consonant with cultural conventions of communication to speak out in teaching a peer in a Jigsaw Classroom than to speak out to an adult authority figure such as a teacher.

### ***Barriers to Introducing the Collectivistic Model of Development into Classroom Management***

Blanca Quiroz, then a bilingual kindergarten teacher, incorporated cooperative classroom management practices into her classroom, composed of children of Latino immigrants. However, she consistently encountered resistance from the supervisory administration. Here is an example:

Three groups were alternating activities; one activity consisted of playing with toys on the carpet. Instead of having each child in each group pick up and put away the toys before each activity switch, the whole class was cleaning up the toys at the end of the complete rotation. Furthermore, they expressed enjoyment at helping out. Yet the single comment that the assistant principal stated on her review was "You have an excellent rapport with the students, but I would like you to work on having every student pick up after themselves, you know, to be more independent. . . ." It is particularly notable that the assistant principal considered the fostering of independence more important than the teacher's rapport with the children. The teacher, in contrast, considered her rapport to be more important than independence. In addition, the children were cooperating to pick up after themselves as a group (Quiroz & Greenfield, in press).

In this example, as in the sharing example presented early in this chapter, the teacher incorporates a collectivistic framework into classroom practice and management. She succeeds in playing to the strengths Latino children typically bring with them from home to school.

In both cases, however, this strategy goes unappreciated (and is even criticized) by her mentor-trainers, who evaluate her methods through the interpretive lens of individualism. The implication is that strong individualistic constraints are acculturated into educational personnel

and the educational system. At an automatic level, these limit and constrain the transformation of classroom practice in a collectivistic direction.

### ***Cross-Cultural Exchange in Classroom Practice***

It is possible to introduce collectivistic values and practices into the classroom, while still making explicit the individualistic values that guide education for children who may not have met these values in their home cultures. This process yields the integration of multicultural values in classroom practice.

For example, in response to the egg incident described earlier, the teacher could both validate family experiences as legitimate responses in the discussion and also be explicit about expectations for a focus on physical knowledge when that is the topic of study. This kind of approach would create a bidirectional culture exchange at school: Some collectivistic values and practices would become part of the normally individualistic classroom; at the same time, children whose invisible cultures are collectivistic would receive practice in the individualistic cognitive operations necessary for school success. In a similar vein, Suina and Smolkin (1994) discuss the necessity for Native American children to be explicitly taught the cultural demands of the school, insofar as these differ from what they have learned at home.

Sometimes cross-cultural exchange involves a compromise between a collectivistic practice and an individualistic one. In dealing with Latino immigrants who have experienced poverty and little opportunity for education, teachers could, in their parent-teacher conferences, emphasize the child's academic needs and abilities, without downplaying the importance that the parents place on the child's correct social behavior.

On the other hand, teachers could also use this dual emphasis in parent-teacher conferences for European American children. The point here would be to add discussion of correct social behavior to those conferences.

Another example of potential cross-cultural exchange is to establish day-care centers for preschool children in elementary schools, where school-age children could help as caregivers. Through these interactions, the egoistic or individualistic children described by Whiting and Whiting (1994/1973) in the United States could develop the sense of social responsibility that child-care activities engender. This model has been used by the City and Country School in New York, where every 12-year-old is paired to take care of a 4-year-old (H. Davis, personal communication, June 1996).

At the same time, children who came from home backgrounds in which child care was an important socializing experience would have a chance to enact their cultural val-

ues at school. This educational practice would also test the idea that all children, not just immigrant or minority children, could benefit from a heightened balance between social responsibility and individual achievement in their socialization and education.

### ***Teacher as Ethnographer***

Current approaches to education and teacher training that treat immigrant children as *tabulae rasae* (blank slates) need to be replaced by an understanding of the values and practices that children from diverse cultures bring to the classroom. To do this, the teacher must become an ethnographer, a participant-observer in the child's home culture. Observation of parent behavior is one method for gaining ethnographic data. Talking to parents about their hopes, aspirations, and lives is another. The parent-teacher conference could become a two-way street in which both parent and teacher would provide information to the other. Teachers would devote part of the conference to learning about the parents' lives, backgrounds, and goals for their children.

### ***Cross-Cultural Exchange: Parents and Teachers***

Parents, as well as teachers, may not understand that their children's success in school is partly based on mastering modes of activity and interaction that are different from those emphasized at home, and that these modes of acting may stem from a conflicting value orientation. The school's emphasis on developing each individual child's potential may be perceived by collectivistically oriented Latino immigrant parents as encouraging undesirable selfishness. Yet, they might have to accept that this is a necessary means to the school achievement that they desire for their children. At the same time, the teacher could encourage sharing and helping behavior in the classroom and come to understand and appreciate the sacrifice of cultural values that immigrant parents must make in the socialization of their children.

We have carried out an intervention program for teachers to help them become aware of the individualistic and collectivistic belief systems that exist among different groups of students and their families (Rothstein-Fisch et al., 1997). We have implemented a teacher-training program beginning with analysis and discussion of hypothetical scenarios such as the school jobs scenario presented earlier; each scenario presents an interpersonal dilemma that can be resolved along an individualistic or collectivistic pathway. Our goal was to make teachers who served immigrant Latino families aware of these fundamentally contrasting cultural perspectives. Teachers were encouraged to apply the cultural

models of individualism and collectivism to understanding and modifying educational practice in their own schools and classrooms. By the end of a series of three workshops, teachers had increased their understanding of the collectivistic value system typical of Latino immigrant homes (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994), and they had developed ways of working with this value system in their educational practice (Rothstein-Fisch et al., 1997).

### **Historical Relations between Majority and Minority Groups: Implications for Home-School Conflict and for Educational Practice**

Both the ancestral culture, discussed up to now, and the historical context of the arrival of a minority group affect the relations between majority and minority groups. Because schools are an institution of the majority, this context is important in affecting home-school relations.

Ogbu (e.g., 1993, 1994) emphasizes the importance of the history and of the power relations between minority and majority groups within a given society. Ogbu believes that two major classifications of minority groups can be identified: involuntary minority groups (those who become incorporated into a nation through conquest, slavery, or colonization), and voluntary minority groups (those who become incorporated into a nation through voluntary immigration).

Voluntary minorities try to maintain their preexisting cultural values but are interested in using institutions such as the school to help improve their opportunities for success in their new country. Because the ancestral cultures of voluntary minorities are often more tolerated by the countries to which they immigrate, "they do not perceive or interpret learning the selected aspects of North American culture as threatening to their cultural identity" (Ogbu, 1994, p. 375). Asian Americans are viewed as a voluntary minority; and schooling is seen and used by them as an effective pathway to achievement in the broader society. Because of the framework of the voluntary immigrant, Asian parents will tend to support educational institutions, even when they challenge their ancestral values of interdependence.

Involuntary minorities, in contrast, tend to define themselves and their culture in opposition to the cultural values of the majority (Ogbu, 1993, 1994), in response to their history of conquerors, enslavers, and colonizers who have tried to wipe out or repress their indigenous cultures. Therefore, unlike voluntary minorities, involuntary minorities feel they cannot adopt any of the majority's ways without losing their own. African Americans (through slavery),

Native Americans (through conquest) and, to some extent, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans (through conquest of the American Southwest from Mexico) fall under the definition of involuntary minorities (Ogbu, 1994). Because schools are identified as a majority institution, academic achievement can challenge the group loyalties and ethnic identities of involuntary minorities.

Involuntary minorities find historical justification for the belief that their ancestral or ethnic culture and European American culture, including its schools, are mutually exclusive. For example, Native American children were forcibly put into government boarding schools, a major goal of which was to eradicate Native American culture and languages. For this reason, the most successful schooling for Native Americans has been their own community-run institutions, such as tribal colleges. Among involuntary immigrants, there will tend to be suspicion of educational institutions; there will be a low degree of tolerance for value conflicts with the home culture.

It is therefore possible that a general implication for educational practice might be the importance of community-controlled educational institutions for involuntary minorities. Otherwise, there is no chance of home-school harmony.

### Summary

By and large, the educational implications of cross-cultural research revolve around a single major theme: the need to recognize that patterns and norms of development and education previously thought to be universal are often specific to European American culture and the culture of the schools. Immigrant families often come from collectivistic cultures, but they must put their children into the highly individualistic institution of the school. On the other hand, members of the dominant culture find relative harmony between their individualistic value framework and that of the school. Finally, particular histories of contact between dominant majority and minority groups can develop particular frames of reference with which to approach the school experience. For example, the oppositional framework that involuntary minorities learn at home (Ogbu, 1994) produces another source of home-school conflict.

The major educational implication of involuntary minority status for educational practice is community-controlled schools with emphasis on retaining and restoring ancestral culture and language. The major educational implication of cross-cultural value conflict is for teachers to acquire an understanding of the collectivistic framework and to then encourage mutual understanding and accommodation

between the two value frameworks in both children and their parents.

### CONCLUSION

Every generalization obscures some things while illuminating others. Cultural variability is no exception. It calls attention to normative cultural patterns at the expense of individual differences. However, individual differences always occur around a culturally defined norm, which also serves as the starting point for historical change. Without knowledge of the norm, individual differences become uninterpretable. This chapter has contributed to a deeper understanding of culturally variable norms around which individual differences can range. It has also contributed to an understanding of the dynamics of intercultural conflict, as these affect development and socialization.

The analysis of cultural variability calls attention to cultures at one point in time, thereby obscuring historical change. It is therefore important to bear in mind that culture is not static; rather, it is constantly reinventing itself through the addition of new ethnic groups to multicultural societies, through changes in educational practices, through widening effects of the mass media, and through transformations in economy and technology. These sociohistorical changes produce constantly evolving cultural modes of socialization and human development.

In a diverse society such as the United States, cross-cultural conflict is unavoidable, manifesting itself in interpersonal misunderstandings and altercations. Every culture must find its own compromise between functioning as individuals and as members of a group, between independence and interdependence. Some cultures stress one, some the other. Although individual differences in this tendency are present in every culture, each of them also has an ideal model of whether independence or interdependence is more important. Differences in these models and emphases generate cross-cultural differences in many domains of child development.

Throughout this chapter, we have seen that cultural models of individualism and collectivism have connected what would otherwise appear to be unrelated cross-cultural differences and, more important, provided an explanation for these differences. The diverse ethnicities that comprise the United States and other multicultural societies have their ancestral roots in cultures that have different positions in the cultural complexes of individualism and collectivism. Prior research (Greenfield & Cocking, 1994) has shown that these constructs therefore also

generate a historical understanding of cultural diversity in child development and socialization in diverse societies like the United States. In this chapter, many cross-cultural differences and intergroup conflicts reflected patterned manifestations of individualism and collectivism.

Although it is clear that such cross-cultural conflicts exist, it is not enough to simply acknowledge their existence. By educating parents, teachers, clinicians, and health care professionals to recognize and deal with cross-cultural difference and conflict, children's social, psychological, and educational needs can be better served. It is hoped that in this increasingly multicultural society, children will learn to prepare for and to appreciate the cultural differences that they will inevitably encounter between themselves and others.

One of our main messages for the application of a cultural perspective on human development is the opportunity for cross-cultural exchange in socialization strategies. Cultural differences are a resource for pediatricians, educators, and mental health professionals who work with parents and children. At the same time, there is an important secondary effect of such cross-cultural exchange: no ethnic group feels that they are parenting the wrong way; parents from all ethnocultural backgrounds can receive the message that they have something to contribute to the raising of children in a multicultural society. At the same time, the message can go out to members of the dominant culture that, in a changing world, they have much to learn from other cultural modes of socialization and human development.

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