Chapter 2

Increasing Cultural Literacy: Historical Perspectives and Cultural Characteristics of Minority Groups

Elizabeth D. Palacios, PhD, LSSP, LPC
Baylor University
Pamala Trivedi, MA, MEd, NCSP
University of Washington

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the norms and history within a variety of ethnic and minority groups, including Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, South Asian Americans, Arab Americans, African Americans and African immigrants, Latinos/Chicanos, Native Americans/American Indians, individuals of multiracial descent, and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered individuals
2. To review cultural idioms, formal and informal interactions, phrases, and words that reflect the diverse ethnic and minority groups
3. To gain knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the similarities and differences in the customs, values, and beliefs of the various ethnic and minority groups

INTRODUCTION

Cultural literacy is the knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of cultures and languages reflected in diverse ethnic and minority groups. This chapter presents the history of various groups, as well as the similarities and differences in beliefs, languages, and lifestyles. The authors
attempt to bring to the forefront the importance of understanding how the world view of individuals influence their language, behavior, and interpretation of their experiences.

Individuals who are culturally literate (a) value diversity, (b) demonstrate an appreciation and sensitivity for other cultures, and (c) actively engage in learning and understanding the cultural norms and traditions of diverse groups. To be effective school professionals, gaining cultural literacy is not only desirable but also essential.

Schools are the crossroads between home life and mainstream America, but many times schools can instead become barriers. With mainstream perspectives and expectations, students from traditional ethnic backgrounds may become vulnerable and confused when interacting with mainstream school professionals. According to John U. Ogbu (Noel, 2008), minority groups encounter barriers in school because of community forces. In this model, school adjustment and academic performance depend upon (a) the cultural model subscribed to by minority groups (their understanding of the world and how they respond), (b) cultural/language frames of reference, (c) the degree of trust, and (d) educational strategies that result from the characteristics listed above. All of these factors result from a group’s historical experiences, present situation, and future outlook.

To address differences, it is imperative that students are viewed holistically (i.e., their languages, values, beliefs, traditions, and behaviors are considered in the context of their cultural and ethnic backgrounds). No one world view is shared among the vast collection of ethnic and minority groups. As the different ethnic groups are discussed, it will be quite evident that diversity is as great within ethnic groups as it is between them. Thus, traditional norms and shared world views are addressed in this chapter with the understanding that within-group variation exists.

**ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS**

Asian Americans are a diverse collection of ethnic groups with very different languages, cultures, and immigration experiences. Within the Asian population, there are 43 ethnic groups—28 groups are identified as Asian and 15 groups classified as Pacific Islander (Diller, 2007; Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Sue & Sue, 2007b). For example, Asians comprise Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans, Japanese, and Vietnamese, whereas Pacific Islanders include individuals from Hawaii, Guam, and Samoa. Chinese represent the largest Asian subgroup (2.7 million), with Filipinos the second largest (2.4 million), followed by Asian Indians (1.9 million), Vietnamese (1.5 million), Koreans (1.2 million), and Japanese (1.1 million; Diller, 2007; Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Smith, 2004).

Historically, the Chinese first arrived in the United States in the 1840s, when they were recruited as unskilled laborers to work in the gold mining and railroad industries. Because they filled an economic need, they were tolerated as a group in the American mainstream. However, as jobs became more competitive because of decreasing economic resources, Chinese workers became targets for discrimination and social injustice. Japanese immigrants began arriving in large numbers in the 1890s to work in the railroad industry, canneries, and mining. But many Japanese also gravitated toward agriculture, where they were highly successful. Negative sentiments that had previously been directed toward the Chinese were then channeled toward the Japanese. This was most evident during World War II, when 110,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated in internment camps in the United States following Executive Order 9066, signed on February 19, 1942, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
The next wave of Chinese immigration resulted after the fall of imperial China in 1911. With the new structure in China, a new middle class emerged. Children of affluent families were sent to America to obtain an education and return to China. Although they were immigrants to the United States, they shared little else with the first wave of Chinese immigrants. They came from wealthy families, spoke another dialect, were from large cities, and intended to return to China to secure high-level positions. However, the Communist takeover in 1949 stranded many immigrants (Gibbs & Huang, 2003). In the 1920s and 1930s, Filipinos were recruited to develop California agriculture. In the early years, Asians were important to the development of a young country. In 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act discontinued legislated discrimination and made way for yet another wave of Chinese immigrants arriving in the United States, bringing both skilled and unskilled workers to the country. Although many of the immigrants were well educated (some even spoke fluent English), they suffered from underemployment (Gibbs & Huang, 2003). The immigrant professionals often took jobs well below their training or degrees. Amid the diverse reception by Americans, Asian groups continued to persevere. Eventually, a growing number of professionals became successful, although suffering hardships along the way.

Asians as a whole have been successful economically and educationally. As a result, they have often been referred to as the “model minority.” However, this overgeneralization often puts children at risk of being overlooked, underserved, and misrepresented in American schools. This myth also puts other minority groups at odds because of the erroneous belief that if one only works hard enough, he or she will succeed, thus “blaming the victim” when other Asian subgroups or other ethnic groups live in poverty.

Traditional Asian families are collectivistic in nature, stressing interdependence, while American culture emphasizes individuality and competition. For example, the self is viewed in relation to others; there is no concept of self as an individual separate from others. What might be considered enmeshment and codependence by Western mental health practitioners are highly valued attributes in Asian culture. Asians view the mind–body dualism of Western thought to be segmented and simplistic. In contrast, a holistic view of body, mind, and spirit is emphasized. Their language often blends psychological and physiological characteristics so that a child may complain of a stomach ache when, in fact, he or she may be in emotional distress. It is imperative to explore possible mental health issues when presented with somatic symptoms by a child or family member (Smith, 2004).

Many traditional Asian families value and emphasize paternal hierarchy, authoritative parenting, conformity, obedience, interdependence, clear gender roles, and avoidance of conflict and shame. The father is the undisputed head of the family and responsible for the social and economic well-being of the family; the mother is the nurturer and primary caregiver, often discouraged from working outside the home; gender and birth position also come with certain duties and responsibilities. When speaking with a traditional Asian family, it is respectful to speak to the father first, then the mother, and then the children.

Male children are highly valued, while older daughters are expected to assist in caring for their younger siblings. In teaching the familial values and expectations to their children, parents may use shame or guilt or appeal to their sense of duty. The message is that children must not cause
their family embarrassment, shame, or dishonor (Smith, 2004). Chinese Americans tend to supervise their children closely and hold high expectations for achievement. Filipino Americans may soothe, caress, and play affectionately with their infants, while Korean Americans may view playing in this fashion as too informal and disrespectful between child and adult. Southeast Asian American parents increase restrictions as their children grow older, emphasizing the expectation of obedience, loyalty, and responsibility to the family. Although Asian American families may differ in parenting styles within ethnic subgroups, they may differ as a group from mainstream American parents, who view children as equal participants in the decision-making process, learning experiences, and individuation process (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Smith, 2004).

Interpersonal relationships and indirect communication are important to Asian families. For instance, affect is restrictive and controlled, while the expression of emotions is considered a weakness. If there is a concern, it is likely that it will be communicated in an indirect, nonverbal, intuitive, implicit manner, rather than using the direct communication style that is emphasized in Western culture. Filipino women demonstrate a nonconfrontational style of communication toward others. Koreans use noonchi (measuring with eyes) when relying on their intuition about others (Diller, 2007; Smith, 2004).

South Asian Americans

The South Asian community in the United States comprises people from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. People from India constitute the largest South Asian group in the United States (U.S. Census, 2004). The South Asian American community also reflects the history of often forced migration during British rule (until 1947), in which colonial subjects from contemporary South Asia were sent as indentured laborers to different parts of the British Empire, including the Caribbean, Africa, and the Pacific Islands. South Asian languages include Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bengali, Telugu Malayalam, and Tamil, along with many other regional variants. The scattering of South Asians from their traditional homeland is known as the diaspora. Another result of British colonialism in this region is that immigrants from South Asia may speak English or may have been educated in their countries of origin in English-medium schools, training that is mediated by socioeconomic status. Proficiency in English places South Asian Americans as a whole—in comparison with other Asian immigrants—in a clear position of privilege in the United States. In general, the higher level of education of many South Asian immigrants provides access to industrial, service, and technological sectors of the economy, and South Asian Americans tend to live in the major urban areas where these jobs are located (Leonard, 1997). South Asian Americans predominantly live in cities in California, Florida, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas (U.S. Census, 2004).

Individuals originally from the Indian subcontinent are officially designated Asian Indians in the United States, yet the term South Asian constitutes a coalition identity that first came into common use by scholars and activists in the 1980s (Purkayastha, 2005). Many individuals from South Asia designate themselves by ethnonational terms, such as Indian, Pakistani, or Sri Lankan. Within their own communities, South Asian Americans also refer to themselves as desis or deshis (from the Hindi/Urdu word for someone or something “of the homeland”). A related derogatory
A term used to describe at least second-generation South Asian Americans is ABCD—or American-born, confused desi—emphasizing the cultural differences between people who may have recently arrived from South Asia and those who have spent most of their lives in the United States or may be second- or third-generation Americans.

South Asian migration first occurred during British colonial rule in the late 19th century, and by 1905, it was documented that more than 5,000 South Asian men had entered the United States. Many of these men originated from the rural Punjab region of what is now India and worked in the lumber and farming industries of the west coast of the United States and Canada (Takaki, 1989). Because of marital restrictions and statutes preventing the families of early male settlers from migrating, Punjabi men experienced family life mainly through alliances with Mexican women who also worked in the region, forming a multiracial community in California’s Imperial Valley that anthropologist Karen Leonard (1992, 1997) has extensively researched. In 1965, legislation was passed that enabled the United States to fill the need for technical manpower; consequently, a large influx of technical and professional workers (i.e., engineers, doctors, and other professionals with advanced degrees) from Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East were able to enter this country. The last wave of South Asian immigrants occurred after the 1990 Family Reunification Act was passed and included many working-class families and students sponsored by relatives in the United States. Census data indicate that South Asian American communities experienced tremendous growth between 1990 and 2000 (U.S. Census, 2004). However, newer South Asian arrivals are not as well educated as previous immigrants and face more challenges in attaining economic stability, shattering myths of the model minority. Reflecting the changing demographics, the New York-based advocacy group South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT, 2005) reports that an increasing number of new immigrants speak English “less than very well,” and a growing number of South Asian American families live below the poverty level.

As will be discussed in greater detail in the section in this chapter on Arab Americans, the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001—widely known as “9/11”—have disrupted immigration patterns and generally limited the mobility of (especially) Pakistani Americans. Since 9/11, more Pakistani foreign nationals have been deported from the United States than foreign nationals from any other Muslim nation, resulting in palpable fear among people of Pakistani descent, as well as in the South Asian American community at large (Nath, 2005), which school staff should be sensitive about. Although the highest incidence of hate crimes occurred in the months immediately following the attacks on the World Trade Centers, it is still essential for psychologists, teachers, and other support staff in schools to recognize the uncertainty, fear, and trepidation that continues to loom over many South Asian American families post-9/11.

Two major religions of South Asia are Hinduism and Islam. Other religions practiced in the mosaic of South Asian American cultures are Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, Judaism, and the Zoroastrian religion practiced by Parsi communities. Prashad (2000) makes the important point that Hinduism and Islam are construed very differently by the dominant American culture, with Hinduism having been glorified in music, clothing, and food in a way that the Muslim faith has not. Nevertheless, a diversity of religions informs South Asian American cultural beliefs, which Almeida (2005) summarizes as follows: family as the basic unit of society, roles for family
members during different parts of the life cycle, hierarchical organization, and a major role of destiny or karma in daily life. Das and Kemp (1997) describe the traditional South Asian American family as “large, flexible, and fluid” (p. 24), which extends far beyond the Western construal of a bounded single household to include extended families across different households and locations. Indian languages have many more words than Western languages to express precise locations in extended family networks (e.g., a father’s sister in Bengali is referred to as *pishi*, while a mother’s sister is referred to as *maashi*, instead of the blanket term *aunt*). In South Asian kinship, cousins are akin to siblings, and people actually refer to their cousins as “cousin-brother” or “cousin-sister” into adulthood. Although this kinship network is inevitably disrupted when South Asians migrate to the United States, parents may follow especially their adult sons, and South Asian American families do sometimes have multiple generations living in the same house. Even in the absence of close-knit family members living in proximity after migration, the second-generation South Asian American young people that Purkayastha (2005) describes often refer to their parents’ friends in South Asian American communities as “aunties and uncles”—fictive kin who can serve not only as a basis of support but also as strong enforcers of cultural norms, reminding young people of the potential of their actions to bring shame upon the family. As is the case in East and Southeast Asian American families, Mathews (2000) describes families in terms of hierarchies with respect for age and acknowledgment of elders as a source of wisdom, advice, and support. Mathews believes that this translates directly into school settings in which the expectation is for school staff to serve as experts to guide families through interventions.

Though Pillari (2005) describes how intimate problems are discussed without qualms in the networks of family and close friends in the South Asian American community, outside help is reluctantly sought. Fortunately, to address sensitive issues of domestic violence or abuse that often cannot be appropriately handled within families (that could also include abusers), culturally congruent social service networks have sprung up in recent years, particularly in support of victimized women. Organizations such as *Sakhi* (which means female friend) in New York, *Manavi* (the name of a goddess) in New Jersey, and *Chaya* (shadow) in Seattle have been invaluable in addressing the social-emotional and legal needs of women by providing support in native languages by other South Asian American women—direct services that South Asian American women were often not able to obtain from mainstream organizations. It is important for school staff to be aware of, and able to refer families to, these groups.

South Asian American children are the object of much adoration, and mainstream American practitioners may be taken aback by how far into childhood pampering and dependence are encouraged in traditional South Asian American families. In spite of gender roles being strictly defined in traditional South Asian American families, Das and Kemp (1997) report that girls as well as boys are equally loved and indulged, though boys and girls may not have the same responsibilities at home. Many South Asian American families believe that no sacrifice is too great for their children’s education (Mathews, 2000), and children who don’t meet high expectations for academic success have the potential of feeling guilty or worried about letting their parents down. School psychologists evaluating Asian American and South Asian American children for learning issues should be prepared to reduce the stigma associated with developmental or learning delays for both children and parents. In a study examining adaptive strategies among South Asian
American parents of children with developmental disabilities, Raghavan, Weisner, and Patel (1999) found that open discussions about a child’s disabilities were often very difficult for families and that South Asian families in the United States felt lonely and unsupported by members of their communities. Pillari (2005) notes that love and caring are often the basis for parent-child relationships and for working through intergenerational conflict and struggles with acculturation. Some of these issues are demonstrated by the following case scenario.

CASE SCENARIO: KOIRALA FAMILY

The Koirala family emigrated from Nepal to the Pacific Northwest two years ago. Their ninth-grade daughter, Lipika, has recently been referred to the school psychologist because of poor performance in her math class. When Lipika and her father arrive for the appointment, the school psychologist, also of South Asian descent, is wary of the possibility that Mr. Koirala may not feel comfortable talking personally with a woman. Her fears are allayed as Mr. Koirala greets her warmly, using her formal surname and extending his hand, apologizing that his wife Usha could not attend the meeting because of work. The family is thanked for coming, and Mr. Koirala is again apologetic, noting this time that the meeting was difficult to arrange because of his full-time work and part-time English classes. “You know, all for the benefit of my children,” Mr. Koirala sighs, glancing sternly at Lipika, who rolls her eyes in silent protest. “Here we go again,” she shrugs. “At home, I have a good job, but here, no English, no job. . . . I never had English-medium [schooling] like these people,” Mr. Koirala laments, again gesturing toward his now stone-faced daughter. “Baba, this is supposed to be about me,” Lipika declares resolutely. “Yes,” Mr. Koirala continues, “we come all the way to this country, and she doesn’t study. I told her and—I don’t know how you can convince her—there are very good teachers and also computers. I like this very much; if I was a child, I would go there, very good”—Lipika angrily interrupts, “Baba, I do go there, but I need my time. All you do is force me to do things like chores and going to temple on the weekend, and I don’t get to see any of my friends from school!” His voice lowers as he uses a Nepali term for affection: “Maiyan [Princess], we all got to help here. Me and Ma, we have to work—” Mr. Koirala’s voice trails off sadly, as Lipika softens and matches his more hushed tone. “I know, Baba, but I have to do a lot of things, like cooking and cleaning, that Rajendra [her 11-year old brother] doesn’t.” Mr. Koirala looks at the school psychologist and replies, with an air of resignation: “She is in her room, writing notes to her friends, reading novels, but I want her to come down and guide her brother if I am working, if I don’t have time.” Lipika takes a deep breath. “Baba, I told you, I will come down, but I need my space, and I need my privacy.”

REFLECTION

Collaborative work with Lipika and her father was predicated on an understanding of South Asian American frameworks of autonomy, interconnectedness, and gender roles. Sue and Sue (2007b) describe an “acculturation gap” (p. 368) between Asian American immigrant parents and their children, which could result in parents feeling that they are at a complete loss as to how to interact with their children. In proceeding with this case, it was helpful to acknowledge Mr. Koirala’s different background, particularly the fact that the “privacy” and “space” his daughter sought were completely inconsistent with his own experiences as a child. In addition, Lipika was given opportunities to discuss her desire to spend more time with her friends and to see a more equitable distribution of chores and responsibilities between herself and her brother, all against the backdrop of South Asian and American expectations. Throughout their interactions, the school psychologist was struck by the general ethic of love and caring, which was
more important to this father than the cultural norms surrounding the role of his daughter (compared with that of his son) in the household. Mr. Koirala eventually displayed flexibility in reaching compromises with his daughter over the amount of time she wanted to spend away from the family and the responsibilities that each of his children had to take on in the household.

This case scenario highlights some of the important considerations for school professionals working with South Asian American families. School personnel should continue to keep in mind that almost any problem is unique to a particular family and take into account factors such as their migration history and experience with Western colonialism, region of origin in South Asia, level of education in their native country, degree of social or familial support in the United States, religious beliefs, and levels of acculturation.

ARAB AMERICANS

Arab Americans come from countries in the Middle East where the Arabic language has been traditionally spoken. However, Arabic is not the primary language of all of the countries in the Middle East. For example, people from Iran speak Farsi and are referred to historically in the West as Persian—so not all peoples from the Middle East are referred to as Arabs. Arabs constitute a diverse mixture of people from a variety of language dialects, climates, landscapes, and socioeconomic levels—from oil-rich to developing countries of the region. The 22 Arabic-speaking countries are Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. People from Arab countries are sometimes designated by national origin, such as Egyptian American. According to a human services organization in southeastern Michigan, the Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC), there are close to 3.5 million Arab Americans in the United States, and of those, as many as 500,000 are concentrated in Detroit (Michigan) and its suburbs, the largest population of Arabs outside the Middle East (ACC, 2008). According to the 2000 Census, other major Arab American communities in the United States have been established in California, Florida, New Jersey, and New York. Although many Westerners believe that all Arabs are Muslims, only 20% of Muslims are Arabs (Suleiman, 2000), and the majority of Arabs in America actually practice Christianity (Zogby, 2001). One of the largest groups of immigrants considered under the broad category of Arab Americans are Chaldeans, Iraqi Christians who speak Arabic in addition to a version of Aramaic. The Chaldean community has much in common with the Arab American Muslim community (Hakim-Larson, Kamoo, Nassar-McMillan, & Porcerelli, 2007).

Arab Americans have had a historical presence in the United States since the late 19th century, and three major waves of Arab immigration to the United States have been identified: 1880 to 1914, post-World War II to the 1960s, and 1967 to September 11, 2001 (Abu-Baker, 2006; Al-Hazza & Lucking, 2005). Christians from what was then considered the Ottoman Empire (and is now Syria and Lebanon) predominantly constituted the first wave of Arabs who migrated to the United States for a combination of political, economic, and religious reasons. The second wave of immigration was characterized by Palestinian immigrants displaced by the establishment of the country of Israel. Political upheaval was also a common factor for Egyptian and Iraqi immigrants who settled in the United States during the post-World War II era. The onset of the third influx of
Arab immigrants was marked by the Egyptian defeat by Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967, and it largely ended with the heightened suspicion of the Arab world in the wake of 9/11 (a phenomenon that we also discussed in this chapter with respect to South Asian Americans). In addition to being victims of war and unrest, many of the later Arab immigrants of the 1960s and 1970s were educated elites seeking higher education and professional opportunities in the United States. The last national immigrant group to arrive in the United States from the Arab world was Iraqis, who established themselves in the United States after both the Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988) and the First Gulf War—a primarily United States–led incursion in the early 1990s—with only a scant number of Iraqis granted entry to the United States to date since the 2003 Iraq War. Nassar-McMillan and Hakim-Larson (2003) document the heart-wrenching plight of wartime refugees in the United States—particularly Iraqis and Lebanese immigrants who survived a 20-year civil war. The experience of wartime refugees (Hakim-Larson et al., 2007; Jamil et al., 2007; Nassar-McMillan & Hakim-Larson, 2003) often involves trauma, broken family ties, and severe economic instability that is linked to anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Stereotyping in the media and popular culture and repeated attempts to deport Arab American activists who are naturalized U.S. citizens are among the injustices that resonated for Arab Americans, who felt disenfranchised even before 9/11 (Cainkar, 2002). Given this inhospitable climate, to support Arab American families and children, school staff should be aware of the psychological effects of discrimination, inform themselves of antidiscrimination policies, and address stereotypical views that exist in the school setting. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (2008) also suggests that another way to counteract pervasive negative images of Arab Americans is for school staff to be conscientious about including accurate information in multicultural curricula about the many historical contributions to the arts and sciences by Arab civilizations and about the Arab American presence in the United States.

Nydell (2006) highlights some of the values of traditional Arab American communities that are influenced by Islamic traditions. These traditional values include (a) the importance of dignity, honor, and reputation; (b) a loyalty to family that takes precedence over personal needs; (c) belief in God and acknowledgment of His power; (d) the lack of human control over events, accompanied by the belief that events are predetermined or a matter of faith; and (e) piety as an ideal. Dwairy (2006) elaborates on traditional beliefs by emphasizing the importance of collectivist thinking and interdependence, in which the more individualistic pursuits of competition and self-fulfillment are overridden. Collectivist ethics influence parenting, which tends to be more authoritarian and emphasizes self-sacrifice in pursuit of familial cohesion—as is also the case with Latino American and Asian American families. Given the preeminence of family in Arab American life, it has been suggested that school and mental health professionals make inroads through empathetic communication with parents before working with children or suggesting any changes in parenting style (Hakim-Larson et al., 2007). Arab American families are patriarchal, and in traditional families, it is likely that beginning in adolescence, more restrictions will be imposed on girls as opposed to those on their male counterparts—which may create conflicts in families adjusting to life in the United States. Emotional support and security are largely provided by the extended Arab American family, and in most cases, familial supports will be exhausted before individuals seek outside help (Nassar-McMillan & Hakim-Larson, 2003).
CASE SCENARIO: ZAINAB

Zainab, a fourth-grade girl, and her 8-year-old brother, Sameer, attend a predominantly White, upper-middle-class school in western Washington. They are the only people of Middle Eastern descent in their elementary school. Zainab’s father, Saleem Edwan, an engineer, immigrated to the United States when he was completing his graduate education. Zainab’s mother, Nasreen, immigrated to the United States as a teenager after her father was offered a job in Seattle. The Edwans consider themselves Palestinian Americans, in spite of the lack of existence of a Palestinian state or homeland. From his wife’s account, Mr. Edwan is “obsessed with news from home” and often discusses the political situation of the Middle East quite openly at home. Mrs. Edwan admits that it “could sometimes be upsetting for them; my husband is very passionate!” Having attended high school and college in the United States, Mrs. Edwan (who insisted on being called “Nasreen”) considers herself more “Westernized” than her husband. She has abandoned the traditional hijab (head scarf) that her mother still wears and believes that it is important for her children to be exposed to both American and Palestinian values, as she did during her young adulthood. Zainab and her brother go to Arabic lessons at a local mosque, although the family does not attend services regularly or consider themselves to be particularly religious. Zainab was referred to the school psychologist by her teacher and mother because of a sudden refusal to go to recess and affiliate with many other children in unstructured time throughout the school day. Instead of spending time with other children at school, Zainab’s teacher reports her asking to help in classrooms with younger children or the library at lunch and recess and when she has free time. Zainab has recently declined talking about school with her parents, though she has continued to assert that she wants to be a kindergarten teacher when she grows up. After several meetings, Zainab finally shared that several children had begun to harass her on the playground, calling her “terrorist” and admonishing her to “go back to Iraq where you belong.” Clearly very upset about these incidents, a tearful Zainab indicated that she did not want to share this information with adults at school because she was concerned that it would “really upset my Dad; he knows this always happens to people from Palestine.”

The school psychologist had Zainab role-play different scenarios during which she could address accusations and questions from classmates, thus taking on a teaching role with which Zainab was quite happy. She was able to discuss her parents’ family histories of migration in a safe space, and the school psychologist took many opportunities to validate Zainab’s progress in learning Arabic. The school psychologist was able to follow up with a family meeting that encouraged Zainab to communicate with her parents about things that were bothering her, even if the information was upsetting. This individual work with Zainab was augmented by a fourth-grade-wide curricular intervention about the Middle East, delivered by very willing teachers in consultation with the school psychologist.

REFLECTION

It is clear that to effectively engage with Arab American youth, educational professionals should increase their cultural literacy about the well-established and diverse population that constitutes Arab Americans. As was the case with Zainab and her family, sometimes the approach for connecting with Arab Americans requires individual and class- or school-wide interventions that require coordination among staff members who have to be willing to identify their own attitudes about Islam and Arabs (Sue & Sue, 2007a), a prospect that may be more daunting at a time when events in the Middle East have such a significant impact on the lives of Americans. As always, practitioners must be willing to collaborate with families in obtaining accurate information about each child’s or family’s belief system and history.
AFRICAN AMERICANS

African Americans in the United States make up the second largest minority group in the United States today. The term *African American* includes persons of African descent who were born in the United States. But this term also includes persons from the West Indies, Central and South America, and the Caribbean who do not identify as Caucasian, Asian, Hispanic, or Native American (Smith, 2004). The terms *Black* and *African American* have traditionally been used interchangeably. The younger generation often chooses the term *African American*, whereas the older generation prefers *Black*. *Black* is also a preferred term used among the college-educated and affluent, as well as in rural areas in the south (Smith, 2004). In this chapter, the authors use these terms interchangeably. As with any other ethnic group, within-group differences are just as varied as the differences between ethnic groups in respect to skin color, education, language, socioeconomic status, religion, traditions, food, and celebrations.

Historically, the first Africans arrived in 1619 as indentured servants and were not differentiated much from other indentured servants at that time. But between 1650 and 1700, laws and tobacco cultivation changed—resulting in centuries of slavery. Even with the emancipation of slaves in 1862, many more years of exploitation, misery, and discrimination followed. Much of the dismantling of Black families during slavery resulted in a loss of native customs, languages, values, and beliefs. Today, the overrepresentation of Black families experiencing economic, educational, and social inequities remains a challenge.

African American children face a daily dichotomy of cultures: the African American culture found at home and in their neighborhoods and the White mainstream America. For some, their worlds do not differ much because they may attend inner-city schools where minority students are the majority (Noel, 2008). But for others, children must learn to navigate between the expectations of home life and those of school (Baruth & Manning, 2007). Societal inequities and injustices have negatively impacted children’s self-concept and how they view others from their own ethnic group. It is not surprising that children may arrive at school with feelings or beliefs of cultural inferiority. Henry Trueba, theologian and anthropologist, describes the dynamics of cultural transmission through families, schools, and communities as constantly being reinterpreted, re-created, and reshaped (Noel, 2008). With this in mind, school psychologists can intervene and empower their students through cultural understanding and self-awareness of the psychologists’ own biases.

In spite of years of oppression, discrimination, segregation, and deprivation, however, the African American legacy continues to be rich in culture, traditions, and achievement. African Americans continue to achieve significant gains while contributing to literature, science, music, education, entertainment, and many more facets of society. Traditionally, Black families value extended family networks of relatives and nonrelated individuals. It is not unusual for parents to send their child to live with other relatives to diffuse conflicts or simply to change the environment. Family networks may include uncles, aunts, “Big Mamas,” older brothers and sisters, deacons, preachers, and other nonrelated trusted individuals. This practice originated during the time when African ancestors were brought from Africa to the United States as slaves. Families were broken up and thus dependent on both blood- and non-blood-related individuals to
form new family units (Smith, 2004). Older siblings are expected to help with parental responsibilities while parents are working or needing assistance with younger siblings. African American couples are more egalitarian in responsibilities and roles in the areas of working outside the home and rearing children, but within the context of a patriarchal society. Most Caribbean- and African-born Blacks tend to adhere to the more traditional roles, in which the males are viewed as the head of the household and responsible for providing and protecting the family. The females assume the roles of caring for the children and are responsible for their family’s emotional well-being.

Spirituality is a fundamental support for African Americans, whereby the church provides spiritual, psychological, emotional, political, and familial guidance and support. The “Black Church” (referring to many denominations whose membership is predominantly African American) historically has been a place where many individuals sought refuge from the harshness of racism and discrimination; were educated and learned to read; and received resources, assistance, and services. It is understandable that many African American families embrace the concept of community as a collectivist identity wherein resources, knowledge, services, and support are shared. Similarly, cultural celebrations (such as Kwanzaa) and traditions are taught to their children to instill the aforementioned values and foster pride.

AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS

There are approximately 600,000 African immigrants in the United States today, mostly from Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Africa. Most often Africans live in urban areas such as Atlanta, Houston, Minneapolis, New York, Washington (DC), and other large cities. African immigrants have a higher level of educational attainment than any other immigrant group in the United States. Most African immigrants come from Nigeria, followed by Ethiopia, Ghana, and South Africa. Because of the diversity of nations, language, and culture, there is no single identity (“African Immigrants in the United States Are the Nation’s Most Highly Educated Group,” 2006) ascribed to African immigrants.

LATINO AND CHICANO AMERICANS

The Latino American population is the largest minority group in the United States today. In this section of the chapter, the focus is on three of the major Latino ethnic groups: Mexican Americans, Puerto Rican Americans, and Cuban Americans. Although these groups share a common language, they each have different histories, sociopolitical influences, and economic resources (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Santiago-Rivera, Arredondo, & Gallardo-Cooper, 2002). Within the Latino American population, there is much diversity in culture, traditions, food, music, and even vocabulary, although the shared language is Spanish. To attempt one description or overview would be a simplification and perpetuation of stereotypes.

The terms Hispanic, Latino, and Chicano will be used interchangeably, but take note that these terms are not accepted by all groups. In some parts of the country, individuals prefer to self-identify with their specific ethnic group, such as Mexican Americans. The term Hispanic was created in 1978 by the U.S. government to include any “person of Mexican, Puerto Rican,
Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture of origin” (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Santiago-Rivera, Arredondo, & Gallardo-Cooper, 2002). The term comes from Spain, excluding people from Latin America with indigenous roots. The common characteristic of these groups is the Spanish language. Some Latino American groups in various parts of the country may view the term Hispanic as controversial, demeaning, and a gross overgeneralization of diverse races, ethnicity, history, religion, foods, and traditional cultures found among Latino American groups. This overgeneralization has perpetuated the belief that Hispanic refers to an ethnicity rather than a linguistic grouping (Spanish).

The Latino American population in places such as southwestern Colorado and the northern part of New Mexico uses the word Hispano, reflecting its origins from Spain. The term Latino, in contrast to Hispanic, is more inclusive of Latin American countries, especially those whose native language is not Spanish (e.g., people of Brazilian descent who speak Portuguese). The term Latino (Latina for females) is growing in popularity and acceptance among U.S.-born Latinos (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).

Latino American groups have been part of U.S. history since the U.S. war with Mexico of 1846–1848. However, people of Spanish-Mexican-Indian ancestry settled in the United States long before the arrival of Euro Americans. Along with Native Americans, Mexican Americans emerged into the American society through direct conquest of their homelands. Most of the Mexican American citizens were either Indians or Spanish Indians (mestizos). Mestizo is a Spanish term that refers to people with a mixture of European (usually Spanish) and indigenous ancestry living in the region of Latin America. Most people in the Americas would be identified as mestizo, based on the history of the European conquest of Mexico and the Caribbean, which resulted in intermarriage with the indigenous peoples (McLemore & Romo, 2004). The conflict here is the identity development paradigm: Many bicultural or multiracial people face the idea that they must assimilate into the dominant/mainstream American culture. Individuals with mestizo heritage also face discrimination within their groups. Mestizo individuals with more European or Caucasian features enjoy more benefits and privileges than the darker-skinned counterparts. This is evident in Latino American television anchors; sitcom and soap opera actors; and successful Latino American performers, business leaders, government officials, and others (McLemore & Romo, 2004).

Since the 1980s, U.S. politicians, demographers, educators, economists, labor leaders, and others have proclaimed that Latino Americans would soon be the majority minority group. Some forecasted that this would happen by 2050 in states such as California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas. However, it seems that 2025 would be more accurate if the Latino American population continues to grow faster than predicted. Although Mexican Americans have historically lived in the Southwest and Midwest, they now also live in southeastern states like Georgia and South Carolina. Similarly, Puerto Rican Americans and Cuban Americans are no longer primarily in the Northeast and Southeast, respectively, but are now moving west. Central and South Americans can now be found in great numbers in eastern metropolitan areas such as Boston, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington (DC), in addition to Albuquerque, Denver, Kansas City, Los Angeles, and San Antonio, where there are typically large Latino American populations (Valverde, 2008).
Mexican Americans

Mexican Americans, also known as Chicanos and Tejanos, are historically the oldest and largest of all Latino American groups in the United States, with an estimated 20 million persons residing in the United States (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). Chicano/Chicana refers to a native-born American of Mexican descent, as opposed to Mexican natives living in the United States. This term was widely used during the Civil Rights Movement and was also reflective of political and social issues and fighting for social justice. In Texas, the term Tejano has been used since the days of the Texas Revolution, when Tejanos living in Texas joined forces with the White settlers to fight against the Mexican government (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).

A disproportionate number of Mexican Americans live in poverty. Mexican Americans make up a large portion of the labor force, often holding as many as two or three jobs, yet their poverty rate is four times as high as their White counterparts. Barrios are communities largely made up of Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants. Cholos and pachucos are terms often associated with gang-related youth or youth rebelling against both Mexican and American cultures (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; McLemore & Romo, 2004).

Puerto Rican Americans

Puerto Rican Americans are the second largest Latino American group in the United States, with approximately 3 million people. This group may refer to itself as Boricua, which is derived from the word Borinquen, the name given to the island by the aboriginal Taino Indians (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). Many Puerto Ricans migrated to the United States in pursuit of economic survival during the Great Migration (1946–1964). During 1972–1977, a second wave of migration occurred, referred to as the Revolving Door Migration because of the circular pattern of migrating. During the Reagan administration, however, the migration characteristics changed from those seeking economic relief to those seeking economic gain. This migrant population comprised highly skilled professionals, graduate students, and professionals with skills to offer (Gibbs & Huang, 2003). Today, about 30% of the population lives in New York, where many may refer to themselves as Nuyorican, which reflects their love and pride for both New York and Puerto Rican cultures. Another 35% of Puerto Rican Americans reside in Connecticut, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, and about 20% in Florida. The remaining 15% of the population is found in the Midwest and the West, such as Chicago and Los Angeles (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).

Cuban Americans

Cuban Americans are the third largest Latino American group, with an estimated 1.3 million people. Cuba and Puerto Rico share similar experiences that began with the arrival of the Spanish conquerors. The two islands endured oppression, slavery, and colonialism (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). The first wave of migration from Cuba comprised mostly well-educated, upper-class, and fair-skinned Cubans. They were quick to transition into mainstream society because of their professional skills, education, and light skin. The second wave of emigration from Cuba was during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, and these Cubans were also well received and
granted substantial U.S. aid. Americans were eager to assist those fleeing from Communist dictatorship. However, in 1994, the United States experienced a huge wave of emigration (a mass departure) from Cuba because of economic instability caused by the economic collapse of the Soviet Union. These Cubans were not well received by Americans, and fewer resources were afforded the Cubans on arrival. Approximately 65% of all Cuban Americans live in Florida, mostly in Miami, with a substantial number of others living in California, New Jersey, and New York. Unlike the Mexican Americans and Puerto Rican Americans, Cuban Americans are steadily declining. In the 1970s, Cuban Americans made up 6% of the total Latino American population, but today, Cuban Americans make up only 4.3% (U.S. Census, 2000; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).

**Central Americans**

Approximately 2 million Central Americans are U.S. residents. Central America is made up of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. Many arrive in the United States seeking asylum from war-torn countries. The style of war was characterized as small-scale guerilla-style warfare. Others are fleeing from poverty, violence, political terror, earthquakes, hurricanes, and civil unrest. Many immigrants come with the hope of returning to their home country as soon as la situacion (the situation) improves. Central Americans are about 5% of the Latino American population and are mostly found in the southern (35%), northeastern (32%), and western (28%) parts of the United States.

Understanding the shared history of conquest and colonization helps one understand the traditionally held values, beliefs, and attitudes of Latino Americans. Although the different Latino American groups originate from diverse geographical areas; have diverse reasons for leaving their homelands; and demonstrate a variety of dialects, foods, and cultures, there are commonalities among the groups. A majority of the population is Catholic, although other religions and denominations are growing within this group, especially Protestant evangelical denominations. Another shared characteristic is the importance of family (Gibbs & Huang, 2003), which stems from the social, emotional, psychological, and financial support that the family provides. It is a collectivist world view in which the welfare of all is more important than the welfare of the individual.

Language is important to the identity of the family. Spanish is often spoken in first-generation homes by parents, grandparents, and young children. By the time that children reach school age, their Spanish begins to dwindle while English takes its place. It is important when assessing bilingual children to establish whether the child has substantive language development in either English or Spanish. It is difficult to assess a child in Spanish when he or she has not developed basic language skills. Bilingual school psychologists are most helpful in this area. However, it is imperative that the school psychologist be trained in a bilingual school psychologist program and demonstrate proficiency in a second language (Palacios, Martinez, & Ridley, in press).

**Familismo** refers to the value of family; the shared responsibility for child rearing, decision making, and financial and emotional support; and the interdependence between family members within and across generations (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). The mother plays an important role within the home by providing nurturance, guidance, gender/cultural identity development, and cultural expectations. Godparents (compadres) are expected to assist in childrearing, along with the extended family, including grandparents.
Although the three major Latino American groups differ in traditional values, they share many concepts and gender expectations. For instance, the expectation that the male will protect, provide for, and take responsibility for his family is called *machismo*. In the American use of this term, *machismo* refers to a sexist, male-chauvinistic behavior. However, because of the connotation of an abusive and controlling relationship with a woman, this meaning is in direct contrast to the Latino definition of the concept as a role of protector and provider. *Marianismo* is used to describe the woman as “virtuous and humble, yet spiritually stronger than men” (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002, p. 49).

The value of respect (*respeto*) is evident in the interaction between younger and older generations, females and males, or social positions, with deference to those with more hierarchical status as defined by tradition. *Simpatía* refers to the value of cooperation and harmony, pleasantly working interdependently while trying to avoid unnecessary conflict. *Personalismo* is described as an attitude, communication style, and interpersonal skill that is warm, friendly, personal, respectful, and sincere. These concepts are important to understand when greeting family members and interacting with students (Diller, 2007; Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002; Smith, 2004). It would not be surprising if a practitioner were greeted with a hug or kiss on the cheek by a family member. Another form of affection and acceptance may be the offering of a gift. To refuse the gift may be considered a personal rejection. This practice may be contrary to ethics in the field of psychology, but culturally, it could cause severe damage to the relationship. *Confianza* (confidence/trust) refers to the establishment of trust and familiarity in a relationship (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). All of these attributes contribute to the belief in, and valuing of, an interdependent relationship with the family and community, especially the schools. For this reason, it would not be uncommon for the whole family to participate in a parent–teacher conference, consultation, or meeting. The parents may bring a trusted elder to a meeting with a school administrator and/or school psychologist.

When working with a student from a lower socioeconomic background, there are some beliefs that may influence the school professional’s level of understanding and effectiveness with the student. For instance, illness may be attributed to supernatural forces such as *mal de ojo* (the evil eye). This may manifest itself through high fever, inability to sleep, crying, and headaches (Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). Some families may prefer to seek help from folk healers such as *curanderos* (Mexican), *santeros* (Cuban), or *espiritistas* (Puerto Rican). These folk healers may utilize special ointments, rituals, prayers, herbal teas, or other methods to treat ailments brought before them. Oftentimes, families will give more credence and faith to the folk healers than to physicians and other mental health professionals. When working with poor or traditional families, it is helpful to ask whether they are utilizing other sources of support and see how they can be used in conjunction with the services provided by the schools. More often than not, they do not conflict. But it is best to have school professionals aware of what resources the families are using and acknowledging that such support mechanisms are valid contributors to the functioning of the family. Immigrants are most at risk for underutilizing mental health resources because of the language barrier and (sometimes) their lack of documentation. The fear of being deported is another deterrent that many undocumented families face. If services are provided to immigrant families without any questions, the distrust and resistance to working with outsiders may lessen, although still remain.
CASE SCENARIO: OLGA

Olga, a 15-year-old Mexican American female, was referred for frequent panic attacks to the school psychologist, who is also a Latina American. Olga would hyperventilate in class two or three times a week. The parents explained that she was going through some tough times with the loss of her best friend, who died unexpectedly earlier that year. The school’s students were predominantly Mexican American. In talking with Olga’s teachers, there was no pattern to her panic attacks. She would leave the class and stand by the door until her attack subsided. She had learned some relaxation techniques and was able to weather the attacks without causing too much disruption in class. In a meeting with the school psychologist, Olga reported sometimes seeing her deceased friend and felt that her friend was watching over her. She believed that her friend was trying to say goodbye, but that she could not because she was worried about her. The school psychologist and Olga discussed her relationship with her parents, her teachers, and her deceased friend. She described her family as a “typical” Mexican American family who spoke Spanish at home, were very close, and did not like to talk about their problems outside the family. She liked most of her teachers and felt embarrassed when the panic attacks occurred. When she spoke of her friend, her demeanor changed. She spoke in a quiet voice and noticeably shrank into her chair. She described her friend as the “brave one” of the two. Her friend had been fun, outgoing, and not afraid of anything. Olga reported that one day her friend did not feel well and went home from school. Several days later, she was taken to the hospital and died later that week of pneumonia. Olga felt guilty that she did not go to the hospital to see her. Olga believed that is why she started having panic attacks.

REFLECTION

As soon as the case was assigned, the school psychologist immediately called the parents to introduce herself. She met with both the father and mother the following week. It was important to establish trust (confianza) so that the parents would support the school psychologist’s work with Olga. The father believed that his daughter was indeed sad about her friend, but that the anxiety attacks were not authentic. The mother believed that her daughter was being haunted by her friend’s ghost. Therapy centered on Olga’s feelings of anxiety, guilt, and belief that her friend was still with her because she had not said goodbye. It was important at this point to acknowledge her belief in seeing her deceased friend while at the same time assessing that she did not present with any psychopathology. In Latino culture, it is commonly believed that you may see a loved one soon after his or her death. Olga was able to work through her grief and anxiety. Family support was established, while at the same time holding Olga accountable for practicing techniques for addressing her anxiety. Her mother admitted to having the same anxiety problems. Olga quickly started sharing her knowledge with her mother, which set up Olga as the “expert.” Soon after, Olga did not see her friend any longer and believed that she had been able to say goodbye. Her anxiety attacks diminished, and her relationship improved with her parents.

AMERICAN INDIANS

As with other ethnic populations, there is much diversity among American Indians. The terms Native American and American Indian have been used interchangeably, but no one label has been fully accepted. The term Native American was first introduced in the 1960s and 1970s by the government in hopes that this term would be more accurate and free from negative
connotations; however, it has not been accepted as successfully as anticipated because of the exclusion of other Indian groups (e.g., Eskimos or Aleuts). According to some activists for the American Indian Movement, American Indian is more accurate and widely accepted among American Indians. American Indian refers to all Native American people, as well as Alaska Natives, Aleuts, Eskimos, and metis (persons of mixed blood; Gibbs & Huang, 2003; Paniagua, 2005).

For the past three centuries, American Indians have battled wars, diseases, genocide, poverty, relocation, isolation, oppression, racism, and discrimination. Many of today’s American Indian tribes have vanished as a result of the destruction of families, culture, language, and traditions. In spite of these assaults, the American Indian population has survived and has begun its way back to reclaiming its language, culture, customs, traditions, and way of life (Diller, 2007; Gibbs & Huang, 2003; McLemore & Romo, 2004; Smith, 2004). Between 1960 and 1990, American Indians increased by 255%. From 1990 to 2000, the American Indian population grew another 32% (Smith, 2004).

In the United States and Canada, there are 561 federally recognized tribes with 210 distinct tribal languages (Smith, 2004). Some reasons that have been offered to account for the rise in the number of American Indians include (a) the census counting has improved; (b) birthrates have increased and mortality rates decreased; and (c) American Indian tribes have moved toward claiming their heritages, languages, and identities in an effort to strengthen and build up their culture. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 2.5 million individuals identified themselves as “American Indian and Alaska Native only,” while another 1.6 million persons identified with “American Indian and at least one other race.” Most American Indians and Alaska Natives live in six U.S. states: Alaska, Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Washington. Approximately 37% of the total American Indian population lives on reservations, 300 of which have fewer than 1,000 Indian residents (Paniagua, 2005).

Family life may differ across tribes and for those living on reservations versus those who do not. Individuals who have assimilated into mainstream America generally share the attributes of the dominant culture. However, in traditional families, often those found on reservations, family is important and highly valued. Children are regarded as beloved gifts and are taught to respect nature. Childrearing is informal. Time does not dictate one’s schedule, and it is oriented toward the present rather than toward future events and deadlines. Autonomy is highly valued, and children are expected to make their own decisions at an early age. Extended-family members are expected to be involved in sharing responsibilities of childrearing, so it is not uncommon for a child to be disciplined by an aunt, uncle, or grandparent if there is trouble at school (Smith, 2004). In some tribes, such as the Hopi, it is the wife’s brother—rather than the father—who is expected to carry the primary responsibility for educating the sons (Diller, 2007). The communal world view is also evident: Young people are expected to consult the tribal group when making vocational decisions.

As with Latino Americans and African Americans, spirituality is fundamental to American Indian cultures. The shared beliefs that all things are interdependent and that balance and harmony are fundamental to the universe are held sacred by American Indians. Traditional healers (shamans) are responsible for teaching and guiding tribal members. Great importance is placed on sharing and giving away personal possessions, rather than collecting and keeping them.
for oneself. Material objects are merely a means, rather than an end. Cooperation and interpersonal harmony are always preferred over conflict, competition, and discord (Diller, 2007). When communicating, listening is highly valued, as opposed to idle chatting. Therefore, silence may be indicative that the person is collecting his or her thoughts before speaking. Although it may be often quite uncomfortable for mainstream American individuals, it is not uncommon just to have a few minutes of silence when speaking to an American Indian family member. American Indians are more likely to have experienced more significant losses, feelings of hopelessness, substance abuse (including alcoholism), poverty, and discrimination than most others. When addressing well-being, the American Indian population views individuals holistically and in harmony. Life is divided into four harmonies: spirituality, work, relationships, and nature (Benally, 1992).

**CASE SCENARIO: JACK YELLOW BIRD**

Jack Yellow Bird, a 12-year-old, has been referred to the school psychologist, Bill. Jack’s teacher, Ms. Mays, is very concerned about his failing grades and believes that he does not care about the situation. He appears withdrawn, passive, and aloof. She has already visited with his parents, but they did not seem to support her and even made the comment that “he knows the right thing to do.” Hoping for some help, Ms. Mays asked the school psychologist to visit with him. She does not know whether he is capable of doing the work in her class. He is slow to respond when asked questions, resistant to participating in class debates and discussions, and frequently late to class. Ms. Mays grades heavily on class participation; therefore, if she doesn’t see a change, he is most likely to fail her class. She conveys to the school psychologist that any help would be most appreciated. Bill visits with Jack, and at the beginning of their session, he expresses his limited knowledge and understanding of the cultural values and traditions of American Indians. He asks Jack to please help him learn more about Jack and his interests. He avoids asking questions that do not directly relate to the issue at hand.

**REFLECTION**

Bill remembers to use silence as a tool, although it may feel uncomfortable at times. It is clear that Jack is quite reflective, rather than impulsive or assertive. He would rather ponder the questions than compete or debate against his classmates. Jack’s perceptual strengths are visual and auditory. He loves storytelling and hearing stories, especially about his elders. With this in mind, Bill is able to consult with Ms. Mays about alternate teaching methods that he could model for her. He describes Jack's traditional values and strengths and how she might utilize them to enhance her entire class. Finally, the teacher feels that she better understands Jack and recognizes that there are indeed other ways to teach her content.

**INDIVIDUALS OF MULTIRACIAL DESCENT**

In the 2000 U.S. Census, Americans for the first time could self-identify as “multiracial,” and more than 7 million people did so. Of the people who selected more than one racial category on the U.S. Census, 40% were children under the age of 18 (U.S. Census, 2004)—a clear indication that the population of multiracial people in the United States is increasing. By the time of the
2000 Census, this phenomenon had already been dubbed “the biracial baby boom” by Maria Root (1996), a clinician who produced foundational scholarship on multiracial identity development. Although the official recognition of multiracial individuals may be a new development in the United States, families have historically been created across racial and ethnic lines, and a vision of intermarriage could also be considered a uniquely American manifestation of the melting-pot myth. Spickard (1989), citing writings from the time of the American Revolution, describes this master narrative as follows: “People of all sorts would come to America, contribute their part, intermarry, create a new mixed people, and enjoy the unprecedented liberty of life in this place” (p. 4).

A more problematic history associated with multiraciality in the United States involves the twin indignities of slavery and the rape of generations of African American women by White slave owners, producing mixed-race children that were “a mocking symbol of [the] White man’s lapse in morality” (Azoulay [1997, p. 123], quoting Williamson [1971]). The legacy of slavery and multiracial offspring who counted as slaves are related to the premise of hypodescent, in which mixed-race people with even “one drop” of African American blood were considered African American. Multiracial individuals of various parental combinations may continue to identify with one of the heritages in their background in a way that is consistent with the “one-drop rule,” yet in the more empowering manner that Rockquemore and Laszloffy (2005) describe as grounded in the acceptance of their mixed-race parentage and in consideration of personal circumstances and the broader social environment. A timely example of this is the way that Barack Obama—a U.S. senator elected president in November 2008—is of Kenyan and Caucasian descent and identifies as African American.

Individuals of both African American and White parentage are the most visible demographic of multiracial children because of persistent social distance between these groups in the United States. However, African American/White multiracial people do not constitute the largest multiracial subpopulation, and Root (2004) contends that the preoccupation with this particular combination of parentages has resulted in obscuring the experiences and needs of the many other multiracial individuals. Transracially adopted children—or children of one socially designated racial or ethnic group placed with parent(s) of another socially designated racial or ethnic group (e.g., a White family adopting a child from China)—are also considered multiracial by many researchers and practitioners. According to 2000 Census data, the largest groups of multiracial people (which does not include transracially adopted people) are White/some other race, Native American or Alaskan Native/White, Asian American/White, African American/White, African American/some other race, African American/Native American, Asian American/Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Multiracial people are most highly concentrated in the states of Alaska, California, Hawaii, and Oklahoma.

There are a multitude of terms to describe mixed-race individuals. The term biracial seems to include only those individuals whose parents come from two different racial groups. Chiong (1998) points out that terminology could also differ by region because she found the term interracial to be more prevalent in eastern regions of the United States. Other terms include mixed heritage or mixed parentage. In a historical sense, other words have been used to describe multiracial people, some of which are now considered derogatory, such as mulatto (from the
Spanish word for *mule*), a term rooted in 19th century scientific racism that posited that different races actually constituted different species, and when crossed, the multiracial person—like its namesake, the mule—would be infertile.

Recent scholarship suggests that the inconsistency in terminology is indicative of the personal and subjective nature of racial and ethnic identifications. Kelley and Root (2003) note that the diversity of terms used by mixed-race people to describe themselves reflects individual identifications and words that best capture specific backgrounds or mixes of parentage and that they are sometimes described in terms of countries of origin in a multiracial individual’s family background (e.g., Vietnamese/Irish). In this chapter, the term *multiracial* will be used because it appears to be inclusive of interracial relationships over successive generations (i.e., one or both parents of a multiracial child can themselves be multiracial).

Though the lack of a distinct and consistent nomenclature to describe this population could be one indication that the status of multiracial people has still not been resolved by mainstream America, the most inclusive approach for school professionals to adopt may involve being mindful of how multiracial families and children are identifying themselves and to follow their cues. These professionals should determine whether the family and/or student is identifying with one aspect of his or her heritage, whether they are using one of the more common terms we have presented, or whether the term is invented or specific, such as *Happa* (someone of mixed Asian ancestry) or the golfer Tiger Woods’s famous coining of the term *Cablinasian* (referring to his Caucasian, African American, Native American, and Asian backgrounds). School personnel should also be sensitive to derogatory terms that describe multiracial people, such as half-breed, half-caste, or mutt.

**Self Identification**

In our discussion of other ethnic and minority groups, we have cautioned that single terms actually describe very diverse populations, and this is particularly true of people broadly referred to as *multiracial*. How White privilege enters into the dynamics of fairer complexions was alluded to in our discussion of mixed-race Latino Americans earlier in this chapter. Delving further into the issue of Whiteness and multiraciality, Williams (1997) points out that being perceived as White and the social phenomenon of “passing as White” has been a position of privilege for multiracial people and has historically been one of the only strategies available for multiracial people confronting racism and derogatory treatment.

Despite the subjective realities of different combinations of parentages for multiracial individuals, multiracial people still share common experiences. Several researchers and clinicians have discussed the mismatches among physical appearance, how multiracial people identify themselves, and how they are perceived by others (Bowles, 1993; Gaskins, 1999; Root, 1990). Across interviews with multiracial youth by Gaskins, a common theme of being marked by incongruous skin color, hair, and facial features emerged that leads to the oft-repeated question for multiracial people: What are you? Similarly, Wallace’s (2001) interviews with multiracial college students indicated that many participants struggled with how physical dissimilarity among family members impacts relationships within and beyond family units. Because of the frequency, intensity, and early incidence of questions posed about their background, it is likely that multiracial children are thinking about their racial and ethnic identities even before some of their
peers and that they are making choices that could have profound long-term social and emotional implications (Dutro, Kazemi, & Balf, 2005; Park, in press; Trivedi, in press).

For this reason, it is important for school staff to be able to support multiracial children and families in developmentally appropriate ways. According to Wardle and Cruz-Janzen (2004), a crucial step that school professionals can undertake is finding out from the family the identity or identities that they have chosen for the child and how the school can support this. Families often make this choice at the time of school enrollment, and it is a decision that is reiterated by countless school forms and official documents. Chiong (1998) points out that schools often structure for children to think of themselves singularly—in terms of just one race in a student’s heritage—by such practices as having singular categories (“check one box”) on school enrollment or standardized test forms. Wardle and Cruz-Janzen suggest that schools should implement the 2000 Census approach and offer families multiple categories on forms that represent all possible aspects of a child’s racial and ethnic heritage. The choice by parents about how to officially identify a multiracial child is almost always deliberate. As a multiracial child grows up, the initial and sometimes forced (depending on whether multiple racial categories are presented to parents) categorization by parents is not always consistent with how the multiracial child views himself or herself.

Practitioners could easily imagine well-adjusted multiracial individuals identifying with either all aspects of their heritage or one aspect that best fits their appearance and/or cultural experience. However, a more complex—and not uncommon—scenario involves the selection of an exclusively White identity by multiracial people of White parentage. Though Root (1998) suggests that claiming a White identity is not necessarily a sign of maladjustment, Rockquemore and Laszloffy (2005) alert practitioners to monoracial claims that are rooted in denial, such as the public refusal to acknowledge a parent of a different race or making hostile attributions about the race of the denied parent.

Authenticity

School officials should also be attuned to interactions between multiracial students and their peers, being particularly mindful of what Root (2004) refers to as “injurious policing or gatekeeping” (p. 112) in which multiracial people are questioned as less authentic than monoracial people of color. Root further describes authenticity tests that force multiracial young people to exhibit a stereotypical or racially identified behavior to prove that they are members of a group. Gaskins (1999) includes a Native American/White teenage girl’s experience of this form of racial hazing in a New England school by a community of Native American students on campus:

But I felt like I had to pass this test before I was accepted. “Do you know your language?” “Do you know your traditions?” “Do you know your culture?” “Do you dress traditionally?” “Do you go to powwows?” I heard these questions every time I met another Native student. I heard comments like, “Your skin is really light.” “You don’t sound like you’re Indian. You don’t have an accent, you don’t have a twang.” And I was thinking, “I grew up on a reservation. I grew up in a traditional lifestyle. What more do you want me to tell you to prove who I am?” It seemed like there was this checklist of what you needed in order to be Indian here. That was so strange to me because I was expecting to be embraced by this Native community and then I was kind of pushed away, as if I was not Indian enough for them. (pp. 68–69)
To further support their work with multiracial children, school staff could also benefit from learning about the activities of national and state-level advocacy groups such as the Association of MultiEthnic Americans (AMEA) that have coalesced for multiracial families around issues of parenting, education, and the political recognition that culminated in the changes in the 2000 Census. In addition to increasing self-awareness about the history, challenges, coping strategies, and positive and negative stereotypes that pertain to multiracial people in the United States, Sue and Sue (2007c) suggest that practitioners take an active, psychoeducational approach to facilitate healthful and holistic trajectories for multiracial individuals. The following case scenario, with which the second author of this chapter, Pamala Trivedi, was involved, demonstrates several aspects of this approach, grounded in the historical, sociopolitical, and psychological understanding of multiraciality that Sue and Sue have called for.

**CASE SCENARIO: HAO**

Hao, a fifth-grade, African American/Vietnamese/White child, was working with the school psychologist all year on organizational, reading, and writing skills. He was slight and appeared much younger than other fifth-grade boys; his eyes were blue and clear; and he had tightly curled, dark hair, a broad nose, and a deep tan complexion. Hao’s mother, Sheri Nguyen, was also multiracial—Vietnamese and White—and had gotten pregnant with Hao while still a teenager. In her mid-20s by the time that Hao was in fifth grade, Sheri still actively bemoaned the loss of her adolescent years. She played on her exotic looks: She was very fair, with almond-shaped blue eyes and light brown hair. Hao’s African American father, Craig, lived across the country with his African American wife and preschool-age daughter. Sheri, who along with Hao lived with her mother and father, was not on good terms with Hao’s father. Hao’s grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Nguyen, appeared to have taken on most parenting responsibilities at home, and the school psychologist often communicated with them about Hao’s progress or struggles with academic work. Hao visited his father annually during spring break and eagerly anticipated these visits.

Pasted sloppily on top of the three-ring binder was an oversized printed photograph of Hao’s father smiling brightly and giving the thumbs-up sign to the camera. Underneath the picture in his barely legible hand, Hao had printed in capital letters: “No pain, no gain.” He would say, “It’s something my Dad always says to me.” Hao was crestfallen that spring when he couldn’t make the trip to see his father: “My Mom says my Dad didn’t send her the money for the ticket, and we can’t afford it.” His face brightens slightly when he spots his grandfather’s battered station wagon approaching the school driveway, stamped with the insignia of the Vietnamese restaurant his grandparents own. At recess, Hao approached three Korean American boys on the tetherball court and was ignored as he tried to enter their play. Was Hao not authentically “Asian enough” for these boys?

Hao’s fifth-grade teacher approached the school psychologist with a look of intense worry as the children filed out of the classroom for lunch. “I was going to come and talk to you about Hao. Thank God, you’re here!” she whispered with alarm as the last child marched out. “Yesterday, Peter was talking out of turn with Mark during silent reading time, and Hao just stood up and yelled at them: ‘If you guys don’t stop with your Black talk and just be quiet, I won’t be able to think!’ I just didn’t know what to do—it is so unlike him to say anything in class. I was going to send him to the office, but I knew you would be here today—I just don’t know what this means, and you know kids are not supposed to talk like that at this school . . . you know, . . . about race.” The school psychologist assured Hao’s teacher that there were complex and powerful dynamics underlying his disturbing remark and that it would be addressed with him individually.
Hao refused to discuss his "Black talk" comment or his feelings about his family. After counseling one day, Hao and the school psychologist went to the front of the school to wait for Hao’s ride. This time, Hao was happy that his paternal aunt was supposed to pick him up. Because Hao’s aunt was late, the school psychologist telephoned his mother. Upon arriving, Hao’s mother shouted at him, heavily made-up eyes flaring: "What’s wrong with you and your people? They never show up!" In that moment, the school psychologist watched Hao become uncharacteristically agitated as he replied: “Mom, I’m not Black, I’m White just like you!” In that one moment, Hao clearly denied half of his parentage and half of his heritage, a rejection that was merely suggested by his previous "Black talk” remark and desire to affiliate exclusively with Asian American boys.

In the remaining weeks of the school year, the counseling focused on ways to affirm his multiple ancestry and ways that would help him move toward positive thinking about all of the racial and ethnic groups in his heritage. Hao’s grandfather already had him enrolled in school to learn Vietnamese, an activity that this child was very proud of. The school psychologist undertook a bibliotherapy approach suggested by Wardle and Cruz-Janzen (2004), in which the clinician shows the client pictures of other multiracial kids and families in books such as Of Many Colors: Portraits of Multiracial Families (Kaeser & Gillespie, 1997) and Multiracial Child Resource Book (Root & Kelley, 2003). Because family dynamics were so crucial to Hao’s racialized thinking, the counseling also attempted to address his feelings for his father through role play.

**REFLECTION**

This case scenario illustrates not only the importance of having detailed information about a multiracial child’s family dynamics but also consideration of the fact that although it is not necessarily the case with other families of color, in multiracial families, the subjective experience of different family members can be very different, depending on their unique phenotypes and individual racial identities (Wallace, 2001; Wehrly, Kenney, & Kenney, 1999). Among other issues unique to this family, it is possible that even though she was also multiracial, Hao’s mother could not identify with her African American–appearing son’s experience of multiraciality. The possible disconnect between the experiences of family members is cited as the reason that Sue and Sue (2004c) recommend referring multiracial families to family therapists, in addition to working with multiracial children individually.

More affirmative conceptions of multiracial identities acknowledge the complex challenges that multiracial people face, as well as the range of options for self-identifications and how these choices unfold in a context-sensitive way. As multiracial people continue to become a more prominent and cohesive social group, they will undoubtedly continue to challenge our assumptions about race, ethnicity, and mental health.

**LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDERED AMERICANS**

The acronym LGBT (also GLBT) has become a popular and recognizable umbrella term encompassing sexual-minority groups that can be differentiated in significant ways. A lesbian is a woman who is physically and emotionally attracted to other women, but gay could refer to any person who is physically and emotionally attracted to someone of the same sex (although it more commonly refers to men). Bisexual people are emotionally and physically attracted to both same- and other-sex individuals. Transgendered or transidentified people are those who cannot or choose not to adhere to the societal norms associated with their anatomy or physical sex; the term
transgendered can also be applied to people who transcend the conventional definitions of male and female and engage in a range of nonconforming behaviors or identities (Gender Education & Advocacy, 2001). Although these group definitions are widely used, Fassinger and Arseneau (2006) are critical of constraining sexual identities to limited categories, in part because of what they refer to as “the complexity of self-labeling” (p. 21), which can change over time and can be context-dependent.

Just as advocates of multiracial identities highlight the need for conceptualizing race and ethnicity in a more fluid and dynamic way, LGBT activists and researchers suggest considering sexual identities and gender as a continuum that can change on societal and individual levels. In defiance of the strictly bound gender identities associated with the labels lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered, some nonheterosexual people self-identify as queer, a term with historically negative connotations that has been reappropriated and is now considered empowering. No matter if they take on a sexual identity or not, members of sexual minorities face a complex negotiation of self against the pervasive backdrop of heterosexist bias that presumes the normalcy and superiority of other-sex attraction and behavior, as well as the rigid encoding of gender that defines male and female in binary opposition to each other. Consequences of this privileging of heterosexual culture include the ways that members of LGBT communities in the United States have experienced homophobia—or an irrational fear of sexual minorities that could result in the explicit discrimination against, and victimization of, LGBT people.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people come from all socioeconomic levels, all racial and ethnic backgrounds, and every U.S. region and by extension are part of every school setting. Same-sex attraction and behavior have also been documented in almost all the world’s cultures and civilizations. In 1973, the American Psychological Association (APA) declassified homosexuality as a mental illness; before this transformation, a common course of treatment for a member of a sexual-minority community was conversion therapy, in which LGBT individuals underwent counseling or psychotherapy to “change” their sexual orientations to heterosexual. Although conversion or “reparative” therapy is no longer endorsed by most professional organizations of psychologists and the APA has issued several cautionary statements about the ethics of conversion therapy (Haldeman, 2000), methods directed at changing LGBT orientations are still practiced, particularly in the context of religious organizations.

Just as mental health professionals have reconsidered LGBT identities in terms of more positive trajectories, the legal and social policy contexts for sexual minorities have changed dramatically in the past three decades. However, it is important to note that issues of legal recognition for members of LGBT communities vary drastically by state, and as Patterson (2006) points out, the experiences of same-sex couples and families is no longer a “unitary experience of discrimination and oppression,” but has been “transformed into many different experiences” (p. 362). For example, by 2003, same-sex couples could legally marry in the state of Massachusetts, and civil unions have been permitted between same-sex couples in Vermont since 2000. It is also important to note that legal gains and advancements in the LGBT Rights Movement have been accompanied by a backlash, particularly by religious and right-wing organizations that believe that sexual minorities constitute a threat to American family life (Adams, Jacques, & May, 2004).
The laws constraining the choices that sexual-minority parents can make for their children also vary widely. Lamme and Lamme (2002) note that children become part of gay families through birth, adoption, foster parenting, surrogates, or artificial insemination, and the extent to which families are “out” (explicit about sexual orientations) or “closeted” depends in part on local legal and policy realities. As this book goes to press, LGBT adults in Florida cannot legally adopt children. Considering the range of situations that gay families may encounter, it is important for school officials to make themselves aware of local legal realities that could have a tremendous impact on the children and families they serve. Further suggestions by Lamme and Lamme include acknowledging the status and importance of both parents, even if only one parent is genetically or legally tied to the child. The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities is one of many North American organizations that offer handbooks for creating inclusive and safe school environments in support of LGBT families and students. In one such volume, Wells and Tsutsumi (2005) offer several immediate actions that schools can take, including putting up posters, stickers, and signs that have a message of inclusion or depict LGBT families in prominent areas around the school; monitoring adult language for heterosexual bias and the use of gender-specific pronouns (and modeling inclusive language for students); ensuring that schools have enough library books, media, and other curricular materials that feature positive information about sexual minorities; and being particularly sensitive to issues of confidentiality, particularly as it relates to the costs of disclosing sexual identities for LGBT adults and children.

**Evolving Experiences**

Considering the rapidly changing sociopolitical contexts that LGBT communities find themselves in, it should come as no surprise that there are cohort or age differences in experiencing sexual identities in the United States. “Coming out” is considered a lifelong process, yet recent studies suggest that the age of initially self-identifying as LGBT has been decreasing, focusing attention more prominently on adolescence as the time when sexual identities begin to emerge (D’Augelli & Patterson, 2001; Ryan & Futterman, 2001).

The increased attention devoted to LGBT teens in the past 20 years has resulted in a careful consideration of the potentially enduring impact of physical and psychological victimization that occurs in school settings (Rivers & D’Augelli, 2001), constituting the negative social and personal reactions to sexual identities that create a context for increased suicide risk among sexual-minority youth (Russell & Marks, 2006). Although LGBT teens are disproportionately likely to be victimized, bullied, and harassed by their peers, Savin-Williams (2005) highlights the healthy, resilient, and proud stances of increasing numbers of gay teens who are decentering sexuality as the main criterion for personal identities. Similarly, in a survey study conducted with college-age participants, Murphy (2007) found that when victimization was controlled for, LGBT college students did not appear to be at a greater risk for considering suicide than their heterosexual peers.

**Transgendered Individuals**

While there is currently more mainstream acceptance for lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, transgendered individuals are the most stigmatized and least understood of sexual minorities
(GEA, 2001). Lev (2006) describes transgendered people as individuals whose gender expression is inconsistent with norms socially assigned to their biological or natal sex. Many transgendered people engage in cross-dressing or “drag,” and people who wear opposite-gender clothing were historically known as transvestites. It is important to note that the majority of cross-dressers are actually heterosexual. A minority within the transgendered community are transsexuals, transgendered people who believe that their physiological bodies do not represent their true sex (Lev, 2007) and seek gender reassignment through medical means, including taking hormones to develop secondary sex characteristics that correspond with their gender identity or seeking surgical procedures that will alter their physical anatomy.

Professionals working with individuals undergoing gender reassignment should be aware of the long and arduous process involved in “passing” into their target gender—throughout which the transsexual individual is particularly vulnerable to harassment and discrimination—and because these medical procedures are often not covered by insurance, the tremendous expense involved. School staff working with children struggling with gender identity issues should be aware of a controversial treatment for 10–13-year-old children who are thought to be transgendered that actually delays puberty through the use of hormone blockers (Spiegel, 2008, May 8). However, because of the assumption that identities of children are still in flux, not all specialists believe that it is possible to know that a child is transgendered with a level of certainty that warrants a medical intervention with long-term consequences. Regardless of whether a medical intervention is actually undertaken in preadolescent children, school psychologists, counselors, and teachers working with transgendered students should support the choices of families who have opted to allow their children to live out their lives in their desired gender, with the understanding that puberty has the potential of being a very traumatic time.

Transgendered people generally prefer being called “men” or “women,” consistent with their true gender identity, regardless of their natal sex; and this is true also of children who are transgendered. Whether they belong to the minority of transgendered people seeking sex reassignment or are transgressing gender in other ways, it is important to understand that transgendered people are subject to disproportionate amounts of antigay violence and discrimination.

CONCLUSION

For culturally literate educators and clinicians in school settings, the challenge of taking into account and honoring the overlapping aspects of American families’ diversity is indeed daunting. Yet, transforming school cultures into more inclusive and safe settings for all members of ethnic, racial, and sexual minorities is a mandate that involves continuous engagement with the communities served by schools and is part of a lifelong journey for school professionals committed to culturally congruent practice. To facilitate effective services to students from all backgrounds, it is imperative that knowledge, understanding, empathy, and competency are in the toolbox of every teacher and school professional. Self-reflection and the recognition of one’s biases and prejudices are just the beginning of this journey. To truly seek to understand the cultural differences in language, history, celebrations, customs, food, values, beliefs, and world views of our students is to be both enriched and empowering. Students from all backgrounds can be successful with the help of one school professional at a time.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How might the stereotype that Asian Americans are a model minority interfere with providing educational or psychological services?
2. What are the impacts of the more holistic thinking about the body and mind present in traditional Asian and Arab thought on treating members of these populations?
3. How would the history of most African Americans affect present-day attitudes and beliefs?
4. What are some differences between Latino and Western cultures on gender roles? How might they affect working with the family?
5. What stereotypes or myths might you have about Latino Americans, and how would they interfere with your effectiveness as a school professional?
6. How does the traditional concept and structure of family and tribal affiliations in the American Indian culture differ from the Western concept of family?
7. How does the value of silence differ between the American Indian culture and Western culture?
8. How can legal and social policy contexts mitigate the experiences of LGBT people?
9. How does understanding the culture and history of a racial-, ethnic-, or sexual-minority group differ from understanding the experiences of a cultural group? Provide some specific examples of culturally literate practice.

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