

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

William Damon, *Stanford University*
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Socioemotional Development Across Cultures

Dinesh Sharma
Columbia University

Kurt W. Fischer
Harvard University

EDITORS

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Development is an ecocultural project in which we try to achieve cultural goals and well-being for ourselves and our children, despite limited resources and social constraints.

Human Development, Child Well-Being, and the Cultural Project of Development

Thomas S. Weisner

This is a very exciting, promising time for the study of culture and human development. There are new approaches to understanding children in the developmental sciences, psychology, and the clinical professions. One change is toward understanding development as an ecoculturally organized, adaptive project of families, parents, communities, and children themselves. Developmental projects are organized around our efforts to achieve cultural goals for ourselves and our children, despite limited resources and constraints of all kinds. The goals of developmental projects are the future, not mere background, and so are the cultural pathways available to achieve these goals.

Cultural Pathways and Projects

Pathways for development are determined by cultural activities organized into routines of everyday life. Cultural activities are the mundane as well as the

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salient events of the daily routine: dinnertime, watching TV, doing Nintendo, youth soccer, cruising the mall and hanging out with friends, visiting an uncle, prayers at meals, Sunday school, doing homework and domestic chores, bedtime reading. Cultural activities are usually defined by their putative task (sociability, work, entertainment, moral and spiritual training). But we all recognize that activities have many tasks and purposes in addition to the marked one. Cooking dinner together with one's best friend gets dinner on the table, but it may well include sociability, therapy, and entertainment as well. Furthermore, activities have at least five important components that are likely to matter: (1) a task or tasks; (2) the cultural goals they imply or explicitly promote; (3) the motives and emotional attachments that are present in the activity and that brought participants to it; (4) the people available to and appropriate to participate; and (5) a script and schema for conduct—that is, how to carry it out, or the appropriate rules for the activity (Cole, 1985; Weisner and Gallimore, 1985).

Activities and daily routines are shaped by ecology and broader sociohistorical circumstances, the structural constraints of our social address, class, and other features. These social structural influences are visible in activities and daily routines but distinct from them both analytically and empirically.

Cultural pathways are as essential to development as our bodies and the mechanisms of our minds. Cultural pathways can approximate individual hopes, goals, and abilities; they may also lead us astray. Individuals and families create pathways out of a thicket of obstacles using what cultural tools and resources they have. The experience of moving through a pathway in life consists of a sense of agency, of trying to match our cultural goals and beliefs to the constraints of everyday routines and activities (Hansen, 1993).

Developmentalists are turning to cultural perspectives on development in part because of the increasingly tumbled-together, interdependent, multicultural world around us, a world with so many possible pathways to follow and increasing uncertainty about which are the right ones. In the contemporary United States, it is quite possible that we are living in a time when there are more available and acceptable models for domestic and family life, and possible ways to raise children, than have ever existed in a single society in history (Weisner, 1986). These alternative possible cultural pathways for child development and family life are not just hypothetical ways of life, idealized, only vaguely heard of, seen on rare occasions among those considered deviant. We can see them in the media as well as being lived out by neighbors, and even by members of our own kin networks.

The cultural provision of pathways for development is essential in producing one of the most important outcomes in development: well-being. The achievement of well-being is part of the cultural project of development. It is produced by effective, innovative, competent participation in the activities and routines deemed desirable by a cultural community. A family or community daily routine that is sustainable—fitted to a local ecology, meaningful to its participants, relatively stable and predictable to children, and balanced across the

diverse interests of family members—provides greater well-being to a child. Cultural activities that are integrated, coherent, and emotionally engaging for children are also likely to provide greater well-being. The influences of cultural activities and pathways on well-being are complementary to and partly determine other influences, such as close and trusting family relationships, a match between interactional context and child temperament, protection of health, and other resources.

What Develops in the Cultural Project of Development?

What develops during the ecocultural project of childhood is the growing capacity in the child for competent, innovative participation in cultural life—children actively taking up, and reshaping, cultural pathways for development. The capacity for cultural participation builds on what individual children bring to their learning and participation. Children acquire specific domains of cultural competence and cultural knowledge (for example, rules for greeting, playing with peers, going to church, understanding spiritual and moral norms, eating dinner properly, enacting gender roles, or doing domestic tasks; see Cole, 1985; Rogoff, 1990). Developmentally, children build on "primordial" experiences in the family and with primary caretakers, in the service of subsequent developmental tasks required by culture (LeVine and others, 1994). According to this ecocultural model of development, we know that development toward competence and well-being is occurring when we see active participation and practice by children in those domains of cultural knowledge that are valued by family or community, and in which the child previously could not participate or could do so only with specialized assistance (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988).

Along with the development of cultural competence, increasingly complex and elaborate schemas for organizing cultural knowledge develop in the mind. A suite of psychological processes organize how such cultural knowledge is acquired: how it is perceived, experienced, felt, memorized or forgotten, repressed, and intended as part of human activities (D'Andrade, 1992; Shore, 1996; Weisner, 1996a). Understanding the mind of the child in cultural context probably requires incorporating several psychological processes: psychodynamic, cognitive, memory, attentional, decision and choice strategies, prepared social learning, or sociolinguistic. Nor is one or another of these capacities of the mind necessarily primary or determinative of children's thought and behavior across all domains, exclusive of other mental processes.

An ecocultural model of development clearly requires a model of the child's mind and psychological processes mutually constituting, but *analytically separate from*, the cultural construction of childhood and children's minds (Shore, 1996; Shweder, 1995). Bringing children, maturation, and developmental pathways back into the central concerns of developmental research as well as into psychological anthropology requires, in my view, a methodological individualism (that is, processes of the mind are analytically separable from

cultural content, and they shape how cultural knowledge is received by individual children and adults). The mind and mental processes of the child develop interdependently with ecocultural learned daily routines along culture-specific pathways.

Children live in a "world of giants" (Young, 1966) who hold nearly total power over children's lives, and that power is sanctioned by the community and state. Children are the objects of coerced change at every turn, changes they simultaneously require, desire, transform, and resist. A child's experiences with power, hierarchy, and dominance start with his or her experiences with adult and older children—the powerful giants in the child's life. The ecocultural approach recognizes the power of the state and of class and social structure. But it does not reduce daily routine and activities to mere reflections of them.

Furthermore, the cultural knowledge represented to children is always ambiguous, inconsistent, inherently filled with conflicting desires and ambivalences (Nuckolls, 1993). Children selectively kick and scream and resist the acquisition of cultural knowledge and activities. Children universally require from the cultural world, and demand for themselves, *individuation* (as contrasted with individualism, or an egocentric self, or personal autonomy). Children bring a temperament with them into the world; that is, they actively choose their environments in part because of greater or lesser dispositional tendencies to approach, explore, remain vigilant and attentive, seek new sensations, respond to impulses, and enjoy novelty (Buss and Plomin, 1984; Kagan, 1994; Zuckerman, 1994). Children acquire cultural models through primordial relationships with parents and close kin, in the midst of emotional attachments and conflicts with them, rather than through relationship-free and detached acquisition of bits of cultural information. Children yearn for positive relationships, which are inevitably unsatisfied; this produces a sense of injury and loss. All of these features of socialization produce limitations, an inevitable and predictable disjunction between cultural pathways and individual development.

This shift in the developmental research paradigm toward culture and context is also occurring at a time when oversentimentalization of children is certainly declining. If there was a time in the study of childhood and culture when children were romanticized, or thought of as empty vessels for seamless socialization into a static cultural world, it is over. There is renewed recognition of children as powerless, as potential victims in abuse, as among the first to suffer during periods of war, famine, dislocation. For example, Scheper-Hughes (1992) studied the tragedies of impoverishment in northeastern Brazil and their effects on child mortality and child care; Jill Korbin writes on poverty and on child abuse (1981); Katherine Newman used ethnographic interviews and cultural analysis to understand the effects on children and mothers of downward economic mobility (1988); Pamela Reynolds described the effects on children's socialization and psychology of political oppression and childhood in a South African squatter settlement (1989); Janis Jenkins

and others have described the effects of war and terrorism on children and families in Central America and cross-culturally (Jenkins, 1991, 1996; Stephens, 1995); and there is a growing literature on homeless and abandoned children (Aptekar, 1988).

Cultural research on children with stigmas, delays, handicaps, and mental illness is active as well (Super and Harkness, 1980; Weisner, 1993). The late Michael Dorris's *The Broken Cord* (1989) described his adopted son, who was found to have fetal alcohol syndrome, something that was not even clearly identified when his son was young. Dorris's son, Adam, was Native American, and the book shows all the dimensions of troubled children that should matter: biomedical, clinical, interpersonal, cultural, experiential, familial, and legal and political. Regardless of differences in our judgments of what are appropriate ways to raise children, here is a fact that clearly, and universally across cultures, is a sign of a condition deleterious to them: hundreds of millions of children and their families do not have a sustainable, meaningful everyday routine of life they can trust and depend on (Bruce and others, 1995; UNICEF, 1992; Weisner, 1996a).

Cultural Projects and the Outcomes of Development

One of the benefits of considering development as a cultural project is to open new possibilities for outcome measures that can be used for comparative work across cultures. Such outcomes for children should offer at least some of these advantages:

- Include context in the very definitions of the outcomes
- Incorporate the role of cultural goals and the central notion of cultural pathway shaping development
- Include children's active roles in acquiring—and also resisting—cultural knowledge and participation, and the ambivalence of this process
- Continue to emphasize the often hazardous and difficult circumstances facing families and children in the wider world

Developmental work now uses a relatively narrow range of outcome measures for social, cognitive, and emotional development, focused on child stimulation, independence and autonomy, verbal and literacy skills, IQ, social adjustment, or secure attachment. These are largely individual measures drawn from specific contemporary cultural contexts. These outcome measures contain in them a particular cultural model of a successful developmental project, such as literacy, or individual success. One concern is that reliance on such measures can confuse specifically Euro-American or Western individual outcome measures with measures of well-being generally.

In the remainder of this chapter, I outline an approach to outcome measures for children based on ecocultural theory. Well-being is an outcome for children that depends on the child's active participation in a sustainable daily

routine of activities. I illustrate the approach with two examples: (1) the study of cultural and family responses to the age-five-to-seven developmental transition, and (2) the study of attachment in infancy and early childhood.

Providing Sustainable, Meaningful, and Congruent Daily Routines for Children

Universal problems face all families and cultural communities in raising children. They provide ways to evaluate and compare patterns of socialization across cultures. One such common adaptive problem facing families in every cultural community is to achieve a daily routine of life for family members. Among the problems that have to be solved in providing a daily routine of life for children are to make the routine:

1. Relatively stable, predictable, and *sustainable* in the local ecology, fitted to that ecology and to family resources, providing for subsistence needs
2. *Meaningful* and appropriate within the moral world of the family and community, close enough to the family's goals and values
3. *Congruent* among family members, such that the daily routine is balanced between the competing needs and goals of different family and household members

Sustaining a routine provides something universally important for children's well-being: a predictable, stable set of activities. Sustaining a daily routine means adapting it to a local ecology and the family resource base. That is, a sustainable routine is adapted to work, wealth, and resources. To sustain a routine means to fit it with the resources and constraints available and perceived in the world. It requires assessment of the constraints imposed by class, gender, and state power, and the ecology surrounding the family and community. A sustainable routine is resilient enough to provide predictability in activities in the face of perturbations. Sustainability is not merely a proxy for income or socioeconomic status, since it is the *fit between* resources and local ecology on the one hand and the daily routine of activities on the other.

A *meaningful* routine is one that has moral and cultural significance and value for family members. It is a routine that meets at least some valued cultural goals for the family. It is also a routine of life that is interpretable within some shared cultural developmental model in a community. That is, it fits reasonably with cultural expectations for a morally appropriate, culturally expectable pathway for children and families.

A *congruent* routine is one that sufficiently balances the competing needs and goals of different family members—a routine that is not overly focused on any one member to the substantial detriment of another. Congruence recognizes the fact that children and parents are in relationships of competition for scarce resources, as well as in relationships of cooperation, continuity, and intimate affection.

The focus on cultural context, parental goals and family adaptation, daily routine, and behavior settings—and their power to shape interaction and cognition—comes from ecocultural theory and its long tradition of emphasizing cultural influences in development (Whiting, 1976, 1980; Whiting and Edwards, 1988; Munroe, Munroe, and Whiting, 1981; LeVine, 1977; LeVine and others, 1994; Nerlove and Snipper, 1981; Super and Harkness, 1980, 1986; Weisner and Gallimore, 1985; Weisner, Gallimore, and Jordan, 1988; Whiting and Whiting, 1975). The core hypothesis in ecocultural theory is that daily routines and activities children routinely participate in are the most important influence shaping a child's cultural developmental pathway. In this theory (or, since they vary somewhat, in these related theories), culture is represented both as a model held in the mind guiding behavior and as the activities and settings within which human action is lived out. Daily routines and activity settings are organized by these cultural models, and through repetitive, redundantly patterned participation in these activities they guide the cultural developmental pathways of children.

Developmentally sensitive interactions and language socialization with children always occur in the context of cultural activities (see, for example, Ochs, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978; Cole, 1985; Rogoff, 1982, 1990; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; Wertsch, 1985). A useful unit of analysis for studying the context of developmentally sensitive or stimulating experience is the activity setting. The components of cultural activity settings are analytically separable into at least five aspects: *who* is present, *what* are their *tasks*, *what* cultural *scripts* guide action, *what* *goals* and meanings guide action; and *what* *motives* and emotions are brought to the activity and shaped by it. Cultural activities combining these five core elements, organized into meaningful routines of life for a child in a family, provide a powerful tool for comparing and evaluating patterns of socialization across cultures. This activity expands on earlier notions of "behavior settings" influencing children (Whiting and Whiting, 1975; Whiting and Edwards, 1988). This older analytic conceptualization of the setting viewed them strictly as an external context, like the "set" of a play or film. The focus on cultural activities and practices adds goals and preferences, actors' meanings, negotiated understandings, and agentic creativity to the concept of behavior setting.

In summary, families and communities everywhere try to provide pathways for children's development, often despite tremendous challenges. These pathways consist of cultural activities organized into daily routines of life. Cultural activities or practices produce and reproduce cultural pathways; they include tasks, people, goals, scripts, and motives. Three features of daily routines always matter to well-being: sustainability, meaning, and congruence. Outcomes for children and families, then, should incorporate assessment of these daily routines and pathways and the well-being produced by participating in them.

Well-being is the ability to successfully, resiliently, and innovatively participate in the routines and activities deemed significant by a cultural community.

The child's participation in cultural activities that matter to the family and community of the child can provide this. Well-being is also the states of mind and feeling produced by participation in routines and activities. Well-being is participation in cultural activities that produce a positive effectance; a sense of satisfaction with oneself in the world, as an agentic, valued cultural actor; and an internal psychological state of feeling good.

Other senses of well-being focus on a child's or family's resources (wealth, opportunity, education, and forms of social capital), as well as on the psychological sense of well-being, for example, feeling good and having self-esteem, happiness, or satisfaction. An ecocultural definition of well-being is more sociocentric and emphasizes active participation in cultural projects of value, rather than extrinsic resources (important as they are in the child's ecology), or an intrapsychic definition focused on well-being as an affective state of an individual (important as such states can be to feelings of well-being). Resources and positive feelings, without a shared cultural pathway in which to use those resources and express those positive feelings, are insufficient for well-being. Subjective feelings based on reports by individuals are disconnected from the world in which such feelings are lived out. Including cultural activities and pathways ensures that goals important to families and communities regarding the use of resources and expression of feelings are incorporated into assessments of well-being in development and family life.

Well-being for a child increases if there is a sufficient match between the changing developmental needs and abilities of the child and the daily routines, cultural activities, and developmental pathways a family and community provide for that child. Developmental transitions—adolescence, infant separation, the "terrible twos," the "school age transition"—are "perturbations" (Chisholm, 1983) in maturation that cultures everywhere respond to by altering their adaptive projects and cultural goals. Transitions provide a window on how cultures shape their pathways for development in response to developmental transitions and thereby determine the form those transitions take. The next sections provide two examples: the five-to-seven or "school-age" transition, and the attachment response in infancy.

The Five-to-Seven Developmental Transition as an Ecocultural Project

The age-five-to-seven transition involves changes in internal states and competencies of the maturing child: shifts towards more elaborate and complex cognitive capacities, concept of differentiated self, new visual and perceptual abilities, and social abilities. The transition marks the emergence of increasing capacities for strategic and controlled self-regulation, skills at inhibition, the ability to maintain attention and focus on a complex problem, and planfulness and reflection. The five-to-seven transition in child development therefore also provides the opportunity for new cultural projects for children. We call it the school-age transition; this label of the stage in itself reveals much about our

own contemporary cultural project of development: a press toward literacy, numeracy, and individual achievement in schools. The Western concern with cognition, literacy, numeracy, and verbal skills reflects what the West has made of some—only a small portion—of the emerging abilities of children during this period. Literacy concerns reflect specific sociohistorical concerns about what defines competence in children. Although school activities may indirectly take advantage of certain psychological abilities that emerge at ages five to seven, cognitive skills acquired in schools hardly capitalize on most of the competencies that emerge then. We culturally elaborate a few abilities and ignore or suppress others, in the service of a particular adaptive project: literacy and school learning in children.

Communities in other parts of the world, with other cultural goals and pathways for children, have created quite different daily routines and activities for children. Children are expected to assist in tasks essential to family and community survival; participate in more nurturant, caretaking interactions with other children; and take on new domestic task responsibilities; they are expected by parents and other adults to have the social skills to manage these domestic tasks, and to act appropriately in social situations. They are more likely to choose children of the same sex and those near in age to interact with when they have the options. These children participate extensively and creatively in "socially distributed" caretaking of others, as well as other domestic task responsibilities (Serpell, 1992, 1993). The five-to-seven transition for the family and community, in these societies, is one in which children are increasingly capable of actively participating in socially distributed support and work (Rogoff and others, 1975; Rogoff, Newcombe, Fox, and Ellis, 1980; Whiting and Whiting, 1975; Whiting and Edwards, 1988; Weisner and Gallimore, 1977). There is also evidence that juveniles in many nonhuman primate groups dramatically increase their caretaking, social communication skills, and reciprocal social roles during this period. The nonhuman primate evidence also is at least not inconsistent with the evidence from human groups, who clearly begin to deploy children of these ages for such tasks (Bogin, 1988).

Children caring for infants and younger children become attachment figures to their charges, with all the consequences of such close, primordial relationships throughout life. Attachments to siblings show an onset, intensity, and duration only moderately different than attachments to mothers (for example, LeVine and others, 1994; Leiderman and Leiderman, 1974). Children are influenced in their attachments and relationships to strangers by their familiarity with strangers and by the number of caretakers in their own family (Chisholm, 1983). Fewer strangers leads to more vigilance and wariness of them when they appear, and more caretakers leads to a diffusion of attachment intensity.

The five-to-seven transition is not as often marked by ritual as are such other periods as adolescence, marriage, early infancy, and so forth. The five-to-seven transition is less dangerous and more hopeful and helpful to the family and community than other periods. However, children a couple of years older, perhaps age nine or ten, may be recognized as prepared for spiritual

induction. Although not as culturally marked, the five-to-seven transition is widely recognized in cultures around the world through changes in the child's participation in tasks important for family assistance and caretaking.

Attachment, Trust, and Cultural Goals: Who Is Safe in the Child's World?

A second example of the role of culture in shaping developmental transitions is the attachment system in infants and young children. Like the five-to-seven transition, attachment is a cultural project, in addition to whatever evolved maturational, intrapsychic, and emotional developmental components are also present. Yet attachment behaviors have not been thought of as part of a cultural project in developmental research; rather, this developmental transition uses theoretical models from ethology, psychoanalysis, and behavioral systems (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall, 1978). Hence it might seem harder to use ecocultural analysis to study attachment, since attachment appears in children everywhere at about the same time of onset (ten to twelve months) and it has long been claimed that certain optimal responses indicating "security" on the part of the infant are panhuman. Indeed, these postulated "secure" responses have been incorporated into the very methods for assessing attachment. If attachment is a built-in response with preferred infant and caregiver secure responses, what could the "cultural project" be at this developmental period, other than simply providing an available and responsive primary caretaker for security?

The infant *demands* to know from its social world: Whom can and should I trust? From whom can I demand contact and attention and responsiveness? Whom should I fear and avoid in the world? Who is potentially dangerous to me or to those I trust? And how should I express these demands—in what cultural form? Infants demand to know the answers to such questions by crying, clinging, and becoming angry upon separation from their primary caretakers. The infants thus make demands of them: You are going to be those trusted individuals, are you not? And if you are not going to be, then I am going to protest and resist and struggle to find others.

From the caretakers' and cultural communities' points of view, the cultural project is to *recognize* the infants' demands, perhaps *diffuse* those demands onto others to share caretaking and introduce the infant to those whom it can trust, *shape* the form of response—that is, the context, style, or way infants and caretakers display trust and security—or perhaps *resist* or avoid infants' demands. The primary caretakers' project is to show their trustworthiness by being present, soothing the infant, and shaping the infant to display attachment and show signs of trust and security in a certain way. Every aspect of the parents' project involves use of a cultural model, with its developmental goals put into practice in a particular cultural ecology in the service of providing trust in a particular cultural world. To do this requires fitting the infant's demands into a daily routine of family activities.

Some caretakers organize the caretaking environment such that the infants' needs are diffused among several caretakers available in the daily routine. The infant consistently learns that this diffused, socially distributed pattern of care is its social environment for securing stability and trust. The caretaking roles children play at the time of the five-to-seven shift in socially distributed caretaking systems is an example of such a system. Other caretakers in other cultures organize their environment to focus exclusively on signs of mutuality and high interdependence of the mother and child, and they become very concerned over any signs of diffused attachment. For example, Keiko Takahashi describes studying attachment with Japanese mothers and children and being unable to keep the mothers from rushing in to the testing room to reunite with their children when they showed distress or were alone. So there were no avoidant baby-mother cases in these Japanese strange-situation studies—the mothers did not wait for their children to be avoidant (Takahashi, 1990)!

The emergence of attachment responses to the primary caretaking figures in a child's world is an evolved response. Infants are generally expected to become wary and cry upon separation from primary caregivers (usually mothers, siblings, or fathers), to be soothed upon reuniting with them, and to explore and feel secure when in the presence of the primary caregivers. Children who display such a pattern of exploration and security, crying and wariness upon separation, and soothing upon reunification are called "securely attached." Infants who are "anxious or resistant" on the other hand—that is, who do not explore much or show a sense of security when the mother or primary caretaker is present—are often very distressed when the caretaker leaves and a stranger appears, and they are not comforted much upon reunion with the primary caretaker. Infants who are "avoidant" are not particularly distressed when the primary caretaker leaves and do not approach the caretaker upon reunion; the caretaker-child connection seems tenuous. There are assessment procedures for these varying patterns of infant response to separation from primary caretakers, appearance of strangers, and reunification with the primary caretakers. The most widely used is the strange situation procedure (or SSP) alluded to just above (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall, 1978).

My colleagues and I studied infant and toddler attachment and responses to the SSP among countercultural California Euro-American families (Eiduson and Weisner, 1978; Weisner, 1986). The countercultural families in our study raised infants collectively in communes, in single-mother households, in unmarried couple relationships, and in various shifting and changing configurations of all these. Would infants and toddlers growing up in such situations show differences in their attachments and sense of security to each other, and to a comparison sample of married couples?

We stood behind a one-way window watching a child being assessed for the kind of attachment he displayed during this study. The mother was watching with us, along with an experimenter. The child was acting in a way that would ultimately be scored as avoidant, or "insecurely" attached. Part of the experimental procedure involved the mother leaving the room she and the

child were in, and then having a stranger enter the room. This child did not fuss or cry but instead played alone. The SSP scoring for this behavior was that the child was not securely attached to the mother. The child was avoidant in this scoring scheme compared with a child who would cry upon the mother's departure and then be comforted not by the stranger but by the mother's return to the experimental room.

This particular mother watched her child acting in this "insecure" way—and proudly commented to the researchers standing there (I paraphrase her words): "Look how independent he is! See how he can play by himself? This is what I have been working for by having him be with other kids and families while I am working." This mother was a single parent by choice. She had told us about her cultural goals for independence for herself and her child, her commitment to feminism, her struggles to sustain work and parenting, and many other values. Her construction of her child's behavior and what it meant came from this framework of beliefs and practices. These cultural goals mattered more for her own assessment of her child's long-term outcomes than did the formal SSP classification and scoring. In fact, SSP scores at ages one and three did not predict subsequent child abilities in the countercultural family sample as a whole. However, parents' commitments to their values did influence their children in later signs of competent development if those values were sustained over time (Weisner and others, 1992; Weisner and Garnier, 1992).

The onset of crying upon separation does indeed appear widely around the world at about ten months. But *resolutions* of this crying—the point in development when a child would not cry at separation, and be soothed by others—varies from fifteen to thirty-six-plus months of age in different groups. Attachment responses, then, are influenced by the experiences infants have had with strangers and mothers and other family members. Ethnographic data suggest that children are learning whom to trust and whom to fear in their world during this period of life, and that the timing of the resolution of separation varies widely. The Kenyan children growing up with sibling care learn about a socially diffused group of kin their culture provides for them to trust. The single mother's child learns about his mother's acquaintances, baby-sitter, and child care center. Through social referencing processes and child participation in everyday activities, infants and young children come to learn trust and fear and its cultural expressions in concrete practice and with adults in their social worlds.

The single mother watching her child in the SSP, for example, was matching her own cultural goals for her child, and her developmental beliefs, against the behaviors her child displayed. We have increasingly good evidence that the classification and matching process this mother went through occurs across cultures and influences the attachment process. Robin Harwood, Joan Miller, and Nydia Irizarry (1995) interviewed Puerto Rican (PR) and Anglo (A) working-class and middle-class mothers about desired behaviors and goals for children. First, they asked PR and A mothers about their desirable and undesirable

socialization goals for their children: "What qualities would you like your children to possess as they grow older?" Five qualities emerged from analyses of mothers' narratives: *self-maximization* (self-confidence, independence, developing talents as an individual); *self-control* (curbing greed, aggression, egocentrism, and other negative impulses; sharing, accepting limits); *lovingness* (being friendly and emotionally warm; maintaining close bonds with others); *decency* (knowing social standards of integrity; being responsible, hard-working, honest; not using drugs); and *proper demeanor* (being well behaved, well mannered, cooperative, accepted by wider community). A sixth category, *miscellaneous* (for example, not being a television watcher), was added (1995, pp. 53–56).

Parents were then asked if these five qualities were negative or positive characteristics of children and adults. Cultural differences were clearly present. PR mothers more often emphasized that they valued proper demeanor, and A mothers more often emphasized self-maximization. Self-control and lovingness were mentioned by mothers in all communities but were influenced by intracultural context, that is, the mothers' social class and household and demographic characteristics.

The five goals were not mutually exclusive. They were culturally available and advocated by some mothers in both PR and A communities and working-class and middle-class samples. These are culturally possible and plausible alternative developmental goals and pathways, differentially preferred, elaborated or valorized in different communities. They appear to be available and recognizable as goals for children across these cultural groups but are more salient and culturally elaborated in some communities.

This is an important point in comparing cultural projects and pathways in development. The quality of proper demeanor, as an example, is salient everywhere. Its relative rank and importance varies, as does how it is expressed in behavior and what it means to children and parents. But is *not* the case that "PR culture" is a "proper demeanor culture" relative to "Anglo culture," which is not but rather is a "self-maximization culture." Instead, *both* communities recognize the goals of demeanor and maximization. But they emphasize and express them to different degrees and using different cultural forms.

Harwood, Miller, and Irizarry (1995) used these cultural goals to develop culturally sensitive vignettes regarding attachment, with examples of desirable and undesirable strange-situation behaviors: "Anglo mothers preferred that toddlers balance autonomy and relatedness [they liked children to be balanced in play and relating to others], and they disliked clinginess; Puerto Rican mothers preferred that toddlers display respectfulness, and they disliked highly active or avoidant behaviors" (p. 65).

Anglo mothers emphasized the balancing of autonomy and relatedness in their children, and as goals for their children's development. The PR mothers emphasized relatedness, respect, and affection and sweetness—positive engagement with others (*cariño*). This includes being teachable, or *educado*, which means being respectfully attentive and having proper demeanor. Community

regard was also emphasized by PR mothers. Culture influenced commitment to these varying cultural goals, after controlling for sociodemographic features. To give a sense of the order of magnitudes found in the study, culture (55 percent), social class (28 percent), and demographic characteristics (28 percent) of the mothers and families (child age, household size, marital status) each contributed significantly to predicting how mothers would differentially respond to the positive or negative value placed on these characteristics (Harwood, Miller, and Irizarry, 1995).

The cultural meanings of attachment behaviors are powerful and as yet understudied influences on parental responses to attachment. These cultural meanings are critical to understanding how caretakers are going to carry out their cultural project regarding attachment. This project begins with infants demanding answers, by experiencing fear and crying at separations: Whom can and should I trust, how should I trust others in the social world, and in what contexts? Parents and caregivers required using differing cultural models and developmental goals in varying daily routines of life. The resultant sense of security can take a variety of cultural forms. The cultural model of security clearly varies across cultures, providing different ways to conceive of a secure child and adult.

In summary, there is a panhuman prepared response among infants and toddlers to demand of their environment that it begin to provide particular individuals whom it will trust. However, the cultural solutions to these demands vary widely. Neither the framing of the meaning of infants' behaviors by caretakers nor the responses of society are limited to the particular need for security and the form it takes, in the SSP or in contemporary middle-class Euro-American families. Euro-American children in varying lifestyles grow up to be competent, innovative participants in the activities and tasks deemed desirable in their communities. A wide (although overlapping and clearly not infinitely wide) range of caretaker responses to the infant's challenge to find trust and safety in its cultural world can produce such competence, trust, and well-being in children.

Conclusion

During a period of history as rapidly changing and uncertain as the present one (in which I would include changes in the social and developmental sciences), it is essential to keep available as much knowledge as we can gain about the many ways that cultural communities around the world undertake their adaptive project of raising children. The five-to-seven transition and early attachments illustrate how cultures differentially respond to developmental transitions, offering diverse cultural pathways in the service of diverse cultural goals. These varied cultural-developmental projects are a storehouse of cultural knowledge—of tools for family adaptation—worthy of renewed comparative study. Wider knowledge of this diverse pool of cultural pathways to common developmental challenges can provide contemporary families with valuable

new ideas about how they work, and their costs and benefits to children and families. These cultural responses are in the service of a common goal of families everywhere: to provide a daily routine of life for children that is as sustainable, meaningful, and congruent as parents and communities can achieve, given their resources, and that can bring increased well-being to children and families alike.

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THOMAS S. WEISNER is professor of anthropology in the departments of psychiatry and anthropology at UCLA.

