Social Development

Relationships in Infancy, Childhood, and Adolescence

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Culture

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THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE

Consider for a moment a thought experiment about the important influences that are going to shape social development. Imagine a neurologically healthy newborn. Bring that image up in your mind and think about that newborn. If you could do one thing that might well be the single most important thing that you could do to influence the life pathway and social development of that baby—what would that be? What comes first to mind?

There are biological and maturational requirements for growth and development that are essential for social development of children (Bogin, 1999; Konner, 1982; Small, 2001). These kinds of requirements will influence how parents in all cultures care for and socialize their children. For example, feeding practices and adequate nutrition will matter for the children. Providing adequate shelter and sufficient security and safety are essential. These requirements include providing the child with one or more caretakers who will give the child stability and primary attachments. A stimulating environment for the child is essential. Stimulation will require touching and holding, verbal and nonverbal communication, and responsiveness, particularly contingent responsiveness, by which the young child experiences reciprocal reaction to his or her own actions (Keller, 2007). Finally, resources are needed in order to provide these requirements and, as the child grows older, to provide the investments in the child that will assist him or her in learning essential skills for social competence. These features all matter as viewed from the point of view of the individual child and from the perspective of dyadic caretaker–child interactions.

However, it is worth considering that none of these specific influences taken separately, important as they are, would be the *most* important influence on social development. The community the child is born into, with its pattern of beliefs and practices,

may be the most important influence. Hence, *it may well be that the most important thing you could do would be to determine where on Earth, in what household in what cultural community, that child is going to grow up.*

The same features (stimulation, nutrition, and resources) that we know are important for social development can also be viewed from the perspective of the cultural community in which the infant and his or her caregiver reside. The infant and caretaker are embedded in that cultural community (Weisner, 1996a, 2009). The parents share a cultural model for parenting (Harkness & Super, 1996). This model includes the features of physical security and safety, social stimulation, and resources needed, among others. A cultural model of parenting and social development is a shared set of goals, beliefs, practices, and experiences that organize socialization in that cultural community. This cultural model is both held in the minds of those in a community and visible in behaviors and the settings children will be in throughout childhood. This cultural community, therefore, organizes into a *pattern* all the specific features that matter for social development, directed at attaining specific goals that have moral value in that community (LeVine & New, 2008).

We might have found that baby in a homestead in rural western Kenya, perhaps among the Gusii (LeVine et al., 1994) or the Maragoli (Munroe & Munroe, 1997) or the Abaluyia in Kisa (Weisner, 1997). In these communities, women might have four to eight children, and they live in extended family compounds. They rely on shared caretaking and a mix of trade, subsistence farming, and remittances by kin from wage work for survival. Perhaps the baby lives among the Beng of the Ivory Coast in West Africa (Gottlieb, 2004), where parents want to draw their infants into the social world of the community and away from the spiritual world to which they believe their babies desire to return. The baby might be in North India, in a large Brahman extended family, also with multiple caretakers and a strong emphasis on familism, gender separation, hierarchy, family responsibility, and intergenerational economic and educational achievement (Seymour, 1999). He or she may begin life in a *favela*, an impoverished slum neighborhood in Rio in Brazil, in which threats from violence, drugs, and circumstances of poverty are powerful (Goldstein, 2003) or in a poor slum neighborhood in northeastern Brazil, in which structural poverty as a form of violence perpetrated on mothers and their children and high infant mortality exists (Scheper-Hughes, 1990). Perhaps the child arrives as the only child in a small nuclear household living in a high-rise apartment block in Japan, a complex civilization, an important part of the world economy that emphasizes academic achievement and social empathy and awareness (Holloway, 2000; Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, Miyake, & Weisz, 2000; Shwalb & Shwalb, 1996). Perhaps the child is in a tragically war-torn region of Africa or Eastern Sri Lanka, with Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist families interlocked and in conflict, with child soldiers and catastrophic violence and destruction (McGilvray, 2008; Trawick, 2007). These are only a tiny fraction of the thousands of communities into which this baby may have been born.

The richest accounts of children's social development in family and community context come from the remarkable holistic, comparative, community-based ethnographic studies of children's lives around the world, past and present (LeVine, 2007), including the rich accounts of the pluralistic worlds of children today (Shweder et al., 2009). Those cultural contexts vary widely and shape social development. The empirical evidence shows "that the conditions and shape of childhood tend to vary in central tendency from one population to another, are sensitive to population-specific contexts,

and are not comprehensible without detailed knowledge of the socially and culturally organized contexts that give them meaning" (LeVine, 2007, p. 247).

This chapter on culture and social development proposes that the place in which we might have imagined that baby to be born is, if not the *most important influence we could imagine for that baby*, surely among the most important. The patterns of socialization the child experiences in his or her local ecology matters a great deal and will continue to be critical as the child grows into the juvenile period and adolescence.

The *cultural learning environment* is our focus. A cultural understanding of social development considers the child and the child's development as always occurring in a context. The context and the child codevelop. It is *analytically* useful for some purposes to think of the individual child in isolation—his or her temperament, genetic characteristics, and unique experiences. It is also analytically useful to think of a child in a dyadic relationship—mother and child interacting together in a mutual way, for example. However, these units for analysis do not exist in the real world. The basic unit for social development would always include the cultural context, the child, and the complex social relationships around the child. This is the cultural learning environment for the child.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER

I begin with a brief inventory of methods and references in this field to guide further reading, followed by a description of some ways to conceptualize cultural contexts, including cultural models for social development. I emphasize the developmental niche of the child and family, as well as the cultural learning environment and biosocial context. I then turn to infancy, middle childhood, and adolescence. For each developmental period, I illustrate some selective cultural influences on social development. For recent books providing an overview of children's social development in a range of cultures around the world, see, for example, Montgomery (2009), Lancy (2008), and Whiting and Edwards (1988).

Social development, as can be seen from the breadth of topics in this volume, is a very large subject indeed, and in this chapter, focused on culture, only some of the many topics can be covered. I touch on several: social responsibility and caretaking; gender; sociolinguistics and language; attachment; socioemotional patterns, such as shyness, aggression, and prosociality; play; and social intelligence.

Other chapters in this volume emphasize the diversity present in the child's community by class, by ethnicity, and in other ways. This chapter adds to these other sources of variation, offering a glimpse of the vast range of communities around the world children grow up in, with their patterned cultural learning environments.

METHODS OF CULTURAL RESEARCH

To appreciate the importance of cultural and contextual influences on social development and the diverse life pathways available to children around the world, leave the lab and the library and go out into some of those communities and observe, participate in, and experience them for yourself. Talk with others in those communities who have intimate, local knowledge about them. Focus on the settings children are in every day

and the kinds of activities that organize the everyday routine of life of the child and family. Understand the cultural and ecological contexts of the child.

Methods of cultural research in social development also include those that address this question: What are the people in that community thinking about their own behavior and conduct? *What does their social world mean to them?* What are their own cultural models, reasons, and intentions for doing what they are doing? Considering their resources and ecology, why do they have those ethnotheories and practices? These are very useful questions to ask and are important complements to the use of standard research methods.

Methods of studying culture and the developmental niche are mentioned throughout the chapter. Understanding cultural activities and cultural models often requires mixed strategies, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods together (Weisner, 2005b; Yoshikawa, Weisner, Kalil, & Way, 2008). Qualitative methods are based on text, video, and photos. Qualitative methods represent the world through narratives, stories, vignettes, and visual modes and are person-centered as well as context-centered. Quantitative methods use numbers and variables. They represent the world in variable-centered ways. Most of the research summarized in this chapter used both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Ethnography—the study of the way of life of a community—is an important holistic method included throughout this chapter and key to cultural understanding. Ethnography includes participant observation by researchers in a community and in-depth, qualitative *conversations* (not question–answer–next question frames, and not circling numbers on questionnaire items) with children themselves, parents, and community members about their ethnopsychology and their scripts for activities. A key to all cultural data is to include the meanings of activities and of community life as evidence in research—to incorporate the experience and points of view of those whom we are studying. Ethnography can include a whole suite of methods in addition to qualitative ones, however, such as systematic behavior observations, community surveys and careful sampling, and the use of questionnaires and cognitive assessments (Bernard, 1998, 1995). Cross-cultural methods can also include biosocial indicators of stress and genetic relatedness and other physiological indicators (Worthman, 2010).

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH ON CULTURE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

There is a wealth of reviews, texts, and handbooks reviewing the evidence on how culture shapes the learning environment. There is no reason that any claim about processes and outcomes in social development from a sample in one community cannot then be compared with evidence from communities around the world, because an extensive literature is available that can put those specific empirical findings from one population into extensive and well-documented comparative cultural context around the world. For example, extensive collections summarize social development and cultural contexts for children drawn from hundreds of cultures around the world in the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF; *www.yale.edu/hraf*). Summaries of adolescent development using the HRAF and other sources, for example, can be found in Schlegel and Barry (1991). Lancy (2008) frequently uses excerpts from the HRAF along with many other sources to provide a sharp and contemporary contrast between Western

beliefs and practices concerning child care and parenting and those of the rest of the world.

Shweder et al. (2006) provide a scholarly overview and review of much of the literature of the field of cultural psychology, including many topics in social development. Shweder, Minow, and Markus (2002) introduce a range of contemporary moral, ethical, and legal dilemmas concerning families and children from immigrant groups now living together in nations that do not necessarily have the kinds of flexible and pluralistic legal systems available to deal with them. Shweder et al. (2009) edited *The Child*, a remarkable compendium of brief overviews of topics in the field, including many on social development, written by hundreds of experts in their fields; this is a highly recommended, beautiful, and accessible introduction to a pluralistic view of children and parenting around the world.

There are several textbooks and comparative overviews that provide excellent, accessible introductions to the cultural comparative study of children, including Werner (1979), Munroe and Munroe (1975), Cole (1996), Montgomery (2009), and Rogoff (2003). Lancy (2008) not only provides an overview of the rich cultural record on children assembled by anthropologists and other social scientists, but his introduction also compares cross-cultural evidence with that on contemporary childhood and parenting in the United States in interesting and provocative ways.

DeLoache and Gottlieb (2000) imagine advice books about how to raise children written from the points of view of seven different cultures and traditions. Imagine a parenting advice book written for parents on the island of Ifaluk in the Pacific, for example, or for parents during the American Puritan colonial era, or for parents among the Beng in the Ivory Coast. Kagitçibasi (1996, 2007) reviews cross-cultural evidence, as well as providing a rich autobiographical perspective from her own Turkish experiences. LeVine, Miller, and West (1988), Cole and Cole (1993), Ochs (1988), Bornstein (2010), Rubin and Chung (2006), and Tudge (2008) offer essays and collections of review articles covering a wide range of topics in this field.

Children of Different Worlds (Whiting & Edwards, 1988) compares 14 cultures in which comparable interview and observational data were collected on key dimensions of social development. *Children of Different Worlds* and its predecessor, *Children of Six Cultures* (Whiting & Whiting, 1975), offer fundamental empirical studies of social development in cultural context, with rich descriptions of the cultural learning environments of many of these children and parents as well, elaborated in Whiting (1963).

WAYS TO CONCEPTUALIZE CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

When we think of culture, we may begin by thinking of a particular "culture" as identified by a social address category: Italians, Samoans, Mexicans, the Gusii of western Kenya, Japanese. These are useful ways to identify communities, nation-states, or geographic locations that putatively share a common cultural learning environment and that are believed to have ethnotheories, resources, and social relationships that are on average similar (though not identical) across many households in that population and different (though not completely different) from other social addresses. Cultures can be identified by language, cultural history, geography, political status, or ethnic identity.

The cultural learning environment influences social development through mul-

tiple pathways, which I review in this chapter: values and goals, normative scripts for practice, organization of behavior settings and the learning environment, allocations of resources, and others. Social identity theory (Fuligni & Flook, 2005; Hogg, 2003) points to the centrality of cultural and ethnic group identification as an important definer of self and identity and therefore the cultural community. Families often are the context in which this identity is acquired and experienced due to coresidence, shared surnames, and physical appearance, among other features. The more this social identity functions to provide resources and support, and the more salient it is, whether due to external threats or opportunities or shared heritage, the greater the importance it has for human development.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT: THE DEVELOPMENTAL NICHE AND CULTURAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Ultimately, the social address or other categories that define a social identity group must be empirically related to influences on the local world and everyday life of the child, family, and community. If you are thinking of the social development of children in some particular setting or context, you are already on the way to a working definition of cultural context and the importance of this social identity. Super and Harkness (1986, 1999, 2002) describe the *developmental niche* of the child as comprising three core features: "the physical and social settings of development, the customary methods of child care, and the psychology of the caretakers" (Super & Harkness, 1996, p. 449). These three core features jointly structure the child's environment. Parental ethnotheories (shared patterns of beliefs and scripts for behavior that are both part of the psychology and part of local shared customs) are significant because they mediate the past history of that family and community, the current possibilities for what to do, and the shaping of the actual environment of the child's niche. Super and Harkness (1996) emphasize that parental ethnotheories contribute to the organization of children's early experience in several ways: through the choice of settings, the instantiation of customary caretaking behaviors, and guiding of moment-to-moment interaction.

These three core features of the developmental niche (setting, methods of care, caretaker psychology) are in turn organized by the cultural community. The child's and parents' *culture* is that network of beliefs, relationships, and resources (customs, actors, and settings) that the child is embedded in within the niche. It also includes the material products (toys, media, and clothing) of that niche that surround the child and family. When we think of a child, we would at the least also have in mind (in addition to the individual child) the community's beliefs about social development, patterns of child care, the resources and ecological context around that child and family, and the kinds of relationships in which the child is intertwined. The *cultural learning environment*, another useful construct, includes the child's active learning within his or her behavior settings, acquiring the cultural beliefs and practices of that niche (Edwards & Bloch, 2010; Lancy, Bock, & Gaskins, 2010).

Studies of cultural context that incorporate both the proximal learning environment (the behavior settings of everyday child and parental life) and the more distal ecological and physical environment are *ecocultural* theories (Weisner, 2002; Whiting, 1980; Worthman, 2010). A cultural study centers on the *beliefs* and *practices* learned in and shared by a community or a population. Cultural practices and activities are a familiar unit of culture to use: dinnertime, visiting relatives, doing homework, doing

household work, hanging out with friends, organized play dates, bedtime, soccer practice, playing video games, going to church, going on a date, and many others. Activities such as these have certain features that are important in determining how they are done: their goals and values; the tasks that have to be accomplished in them; the norms, rules, and scripts for the right way or ways to do them; the people and relationships in them; our engagement, motives, and feelings in them; the resources it takes to do them; and how stable, familiar, and predictable they are in our lives. Cultures have many activities in common (e.g., all members of all communities visit relatives, eat meals, play with friends, have bedtime and sleeping arrangements), but these activities can vary widely as to how or why they are done. Those social activities are what the child experiences, and thereby they shape social development (Cole, 1996; Farver, 1999; Weisner, 2002).

Another very useful and well-known ecological conceptual framework is from Uri Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1995). Bronfenbrenner's Person/Process/Context/Time model, for instance, considers an active parent or child enmeshed in an equally active and dynamic social-ecological system, which includes everyday behavior settings, family and community context, structural institutions of society, and the wider cultural context.

It is fair to say that there is no single consensus theory of cultural influences on social development in our field. However, there is a broad consensus that some combination of these conceptual approaches will be required for a comprehensive account. Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard (2003) posit three universal tasks of human development: the formation of social relationships, the acquisition of knowledge, and the balance between autonomy and relatedness at adolescence. The interdependent, *contextual* study of these tasks is largely unelaborated in current developmental psychology, compared with the independent-dyadic model. Greenfield et al. (2003) argue that sociohistorical, ecocultural, and cultural values or models are all useful for understanding the roles of cultural context in the varied ways communities address the three universal developmental tasks.

INFANCY: CROSS-CULTURAL VARIATION IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL NICHE

Cultural beliefs and practices begin to influence social development well before birth and throughout infancy (Leiderman, Tulkin, & Rosenfeld, 1977). Super and Harkness (1996) and Harkness et al. (2007) observed middle-class professional Dutch parents and American parents (in Cambridge, Massachusetts), and their babies, interviewed parents about beliefs, customs, and relationships that varied between the two communities, and compared the ethnotheories. The Dutch (compared to U.S. and other communities) emphasized the importance of an infant and young child being calm, rested, relaxed, and regular. They valued an even-tempered child who did not change emotional and social patterns too much and who was rather tranquil. The Dutch community had an expression for their widely shared ethnotheory: *Rust, Regelmaat,* and *Reinheid*—the three R's (rest, regularity, and cleanliness). A related ethnotheory is the belief in innateness; whether some children are innately more regular in sleep than others, for example. Thirty percent of the U.S. sample believed this; almost all the Dutch parents did not (5%). So the Dutch more often believed that social and physical management of the context could give

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most babies the three R's most of the time if they followed up their ethnotheories with specific practices.

The psychologist–anthropologist team did daily routine studies, daily diaries, and observations of the babies' sleep and calm/resting time over a year or more. And sure enough, the Dutch babies, at around 6 months of age, in fact slept and rested 2 hours longer than the U.S. babies; they went to bed around an hour earlier, and they were less variable in sleep patterns as a group. They were more often calmly resting in their beds. The Dutch babies responded to the more scheduled rest and sleep times favored by Dutch parents by resting and sleeping more. In both Dutch and U.S. contexts, babies had separate cribs or sleeping places (unlike babies in most of the world). However, in most of the world, they would be cosleeping with their mothers and with others as they grew older (McKenna & McDade, 2005; Morelli, Rogoff, Oppenheim, & Goldsmith, 1992). Recall that there is pluralism within these communities, of course; some Dutch and American parents sleep with their young children (Okami, Weisner, & Olmstead, 2002). The modal custom is to sleep apart in both societies, however.

Socioeconomic status (SES) and other differences within each community could also have accounted for these differences (and often are related), but they did not account for them in this study. Rather, each community showed a patterned qualitative difference in their ethnotheories, which in turn influenced the organization of the niche of the child and family to promote rest, regularity, and cleanliness among the Dutch. The United States and the Netherlands are both complex, first-world economies with high levels of education, so the group differences cannot be attributed to levels of economic development or formal education. The U.S. babies experienced more verbal, touching, and other "stimulation" during interactions with parents and others compared with the Dutch (and compared with most other communities).

Super and Harkness (1996) worked with a team of researchers from several other countries, including Italy, Australia, Spain, and Sweden, to further compare ethnotheories. In Italy, for instance, parents wanted a baby who was *vivace*—lively, active, smiling, bright—which also described the social child most desired (Axia & Weisner, 2002). With that ethnotheory, Italian parents provided a much more socially engaged, variable social developmental world for infants. So the reason for the differences in social stimulation and routines was indeed cultural—that is, due to the beliefs, practices, and daily routines favored in each community. Abels (2008) compared ethnotheories about infant sleep and independence across 10 communities. German mothers believe that babies can sleep alone at 2.8 months and can be sleeping through the night before 5 months of age. Similarly low ages (well below 12 months) are reported by mothers in urban samples in Los Angeles, Athens, Crete, and Costa Rica. Mothers in Delhi and in rural Gujarat in India, as well as the rural Nso in Cameroon, however, describe ages for sleeping through the night ranging from more than 60 to more than 96 months. Mothers in Mexico, in urban China, and among the urban Nso report around 12–18 months (Abels, 2008).

Ethnotheories emphasizing independence (e.g., German), relatedness but with individual autonomy (e.g., Mexico), and interdependence (e.g., rural Nso), as well as greater concerns about child survival (e.g., among rural Nso and India samples), underlie these wide variations in beliefs and practices regarding early childhood care and sleep. Keller (2007) provides a rich comparative perspective on infancy, contrasting a prototypical autonomous-independent and interdependent pattern of raising infants and uses both prototypes with evolutionary and ecocultural perspectives:

> The model of independence prioritizes the perception of the individual as separate, autonomous, bounded, and self-contained. Socialization strategies focus on mental states and personal qualities to support self-enhancement and self-maximization.... The model of interdependence prioritizes the individual as interrelated with others and heteronomous (coagent). Socialization strategies focus on the acceptance of norms and hierarchies to contribute to the harmonic functioning of the social unit, in particular, the family.... The model of autonomous relatedness combines interpersonal relatedness with autonomous functioning. Socialization strategies focus on both harmonic integration into the family and autonomy as an agent. (Keller et al., 2006, p. 156)

In Keller et al. (2006), a version of this model is used for a comparative study of German, European American, and Greek middle-class women, representing the independent cultural model; Cameroonian Nso and Indian Gujarati farming women, representing the interdependent cultural model; and urban Indian, urban Chinese, urban Mexican, and urban Costa Rican women, representing a combination of these—the third, autonomous–relational model. Infant care beliefs vary along the lines of these prototypical models.

Gottlieb (2004) studied babies among the Beng of the Ivory Coast. The ethnotheory among Beng mothers and fathers was of a child who was highly social and who could be engaged with many others in their community. There is a connection between ethnotheories such as this and other cultural beliefs. In the Beng community, beliefs about the spiritual world were very important. Beng believe that children before birth live in a spiritual world called *wrugbe*, a wonderful world that children do not want to leave and have to enter the village world. The ethnotheory is that more caretakers and social relationships these babies establish in their early years of life, the more likely they are to be persuaded to fully exit *wrugbe* and live in their new social community. Beng communities are very poor and have few resources. Mothers have to work hard on farms that are often located far from their compact villages, and fathers are often away seeking work, and in any case are not involved in much infant and child care. There are few if any modern biomedical or educational resources available. Infant and young child mortality is unfortunately fairly high, adding to the pressures on mothers to find social support. The Beng also want to protect their children from harm through the use of charms and other body manipulations. They do so by immersing themselves in social relationships—orienting the child outward, toward others; encouraging a social child through socially distributed caretaking; and making sure that the child comes to know lots of other people. For this reason, "A member of every household in the village is expected to call on a newborn baby within hours after the birth" (DeLoache & Gottlieb, 2000, p. 12). Gottlieb (2004) observed infants and young children and found that they were regularly being cared for by three or four people in a 2.5-hour observation period and were typically in the presence of several people. Infants' and young children's anger and frustration are rather calmly accepted, partly because these are interpreted as signs that the child, of course, wants to return to *wrugbe*.

Ecological and Resource Influences on the Cultural Learning Environment and Ethnopsychology

Infant and early childhood contexts influence the physical survival, health, and motoric development of the young child (a "pediatric" emphasis) as in the Beng case. Other

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developmental contexts encourage language and cognitive and early social responsive-
ness in development (a "pedagogical" emphasis; LeVine et al., 1994). LeVine's team
research among the Gusii of western Kenya found a strong emphasis on the pediatric
model. Among families in this horticultural community mothers faced heavy work-
load pressures and had high fertility rates, with completed family sizes of around
seven or eight children per woman during the period of their studies in the 1970s. The
community had a history of high rates of infant and young child mortality as well.
The ethnopsychology of the Gusii focused on signs of children's motoric development
as indicators of physical robustness and health. Caretakers engaged in exercises to
encourage walking and other skills, carried infants and young children close, and kept
them well covered in infancy and early childhood.

The Gusii mothers also avoided directly gazing into the baby's eyes out of con-
cern that they might inadvertently transfer dangerous threats from sorcery and from
the envy of others over the baby to the child. Parents do not boast about their chil-
dren directly, because this potentially would bring envy and attention to them. This
general category of belief, described as the "evil eye" or by other terms, is a common
one, channeling a kind of generalized social and spiritual concern for dangers lurk-
ing that could affect a child. Children are expected to be (and typically are) quiet and
deferential, not boisterous or emotionally labile with one another (though they are
somewhat more so with closer peers and siblings) and certainly not with adults and
strangers (S. LeVine, 2009). This pattern is encouraged through calm, low-affect care-
taker behaviors (Goldschmidt, 1975).

Early Attachment and Cultural Context

The development of social and psychological attachment shows strong cultural influ-
ences. Although the onset of separation anxiety and distress in infants begins around
the similar age of 9–11 months or so, the timing of the resolution of this attachment
distress varies widely, ranging up to 36 months or older in many communities. This
occurs because of the wide variations in ethnotheories about the meaning of the child's
attachment and separation behavior and variations in the caretaking practices that
influence attachment, separation, and social trust. Indeed, the question that is impor-
tant for many communities is not, "Is my child 'securely attached'?" but rather, "How
can I ensure that my child knows whom to trust?" Parents are concerned that the child
learns culturally appropriate social behaviors that display proper comportment and
also show trust toward appropriate other people yet also remains respectful or vigilant
toward others.

In the many communities around the world with multiple caretakers of infants
and young children, the children clearly show attachment toward those other care-
takers, as well as toward their mothers. There is strong evidence that children do
need and benefit from having predictable caretakers available. A chaotic, changing,
unpredictable social world does not promote early security in a young child. But those
caretaking patterns do not need to consist of a single primary caretaker with dyadic,
monomatric attachment in order for the child to be appropriately socially connected
to others in their social world with a sense of emotional, social, and cultural security
(Weisner, 2005a).

Nor do behaviors labeled as *secure* in standardized assessments necessarily always
look the same or mean the same thing in other cultures. Secure attachment is found
among children around the world who experience very different caretaking patterns,

with different ethnotheories about social trust and emotional security (LeVine & Norman, 2001; Lewis & Takahashi, 2005; Weisner, 2005a). Further, the experience of being in the presence of strange and unfamiliar others, which varies across cultural learning environments, itself influences the onset and duration of separation anxiety (e.g., Chisholm, 1996, on the Navajo). Being very strongly attached to a single caretaker and fearful toward everyone else would not be a sign of secure attachment among the Beng, for example. The ability of a young child not to cry when separated from his or her mother and to be able to approach others in such situations may be interpreted as a sign of social intelligence and early interdependence. Attachment behaviors may well have both a universal patterning and an evolutionary basis early in development and, at the same time, be contextually variable and dependent on local cultural context for their expression and developmental meanings (Harwood, Miller, & Irizarry, 1995; van IJzendoorn, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & Sagi-Schwartz, 2006).

Beng infants, like all infants and young children around the world, are learning how to trust others and with whom. Parents shape their children's attentional processes by orienting attention and directing children's gaze outward toward others, not exclusively toward a single (maternal) caretaker. These patterns of very early infant and young child care are found in many parts of the world, such as in Polynesia (Ochs, 1988), in societies in which there often is elaborate social ranking by clans, chiefs, and senior elites as well, making the social hierarchy important and not easy to learn. In agrarian and pastoral communities in sub-Saharan Bantu Africa (Nsamenang & Lo-oh, 2010), there are strong cultural models and ecological and relational pressures on children to work and contribute to the family and household economy. Religious and political beliefs favor the control of those older over the younger, and usually men over women. All these ecocultural patterns share an emphasis on socially shared care of children and pluralistic attachments with those giving such care.

Early Language Socialization and Cultural Context

Language socialization in early childhood varies widely around the world, in the amount of talk directed at a child, the training in word naming and vocabulary enrichment directed at children, and the extent to which children are involved through language socialization in communication with adults and others, which is particularly relevant for social development (Ochs, 1988). Children learn most cultural knowledge, including language, through participation, mimicry, apprenticeship, and observation of others. Language socialization is closely related to young children's learning of appropriate emotional expression and of social rules about hierarchy and the right ways to talk with others (e.g., kin, religious leaders, men, women, elders). One important finding from such research across cultures is how relatively infrequent direct adult tuition of children mediated through language (so common in the Western middle-class family and society) is in many communities. Yet children learn the complexities of sociolinguistic worlds and pragmatics of language, often without such direct adult involvement. They learn through close watching and listening and through their gradual social incorporation into their local speech community with peers (Leon, 1998; Miller, Wiley, Fung, & Liang, 1997; Richman et al., 1988).

Multiparty speaking contexts are practically the only language-learning environment of young children in many African, Meso-American, and Pacific societies, or at least among large segments of those societies. Rabain-Jamin (2001) studied the poly-

vocal language socialization of 2-year-olds and older siblings (4–5 years old) among the Wolof of Senegal. Children learn at an early age their place in a complex social network, in which adults orient the child regarding how and when to respond appropriately. Conversational skills, social positioning and referencing, and prompting are key early sociolinguistic routines commonly found in such sociocentric social developmental learning environments. Rabain-Jamin found in her study of 2-year-olds, 4-year-olds, and mothers that

> appropriate phrases and structures are presented to the learning child in the form of prompts, which the child is expected to try to repeat. Discourse devices that require the involvement of other persons broaden the mother–child relationship and force the child to take part in multi-party dialogues [often directed at siblings and sibling caretakers]. (2001, p. 380)

Older siblings participate sociolinguistically to manage a sequence of acts that must be accomplished. These are culturally framed as positive for the children; they bring younger children into the community activity and recognize the child's active learning role, though not directly through the mother. Wolof mothers' speech to 2-year-olds is primarily directed "to get her child to carry out socially appropriate actions [rather than] teaching the baby to describe the state of the world by means of assertions" (Rabain-Jamin, 2001, p. 378).

Social Intelligence

Social intelligence is a key culturally valued competence linking many of these features of ethnopsychology and the cultural learning environment. An important conclusion from cross-cultural research is that "intelligence is appreciated only if it comes hand-in-hand with a socially cooperative disposition" (Rabain-Jamin, 2001, p. 379). "Participatory pedagogy" scaffolds the development of this social intelligence, because "[in much of Africa, the] attainment of intelligent capacities [in childhood] is not [from the principle of direct] instruction but participatory pedagogy.... children's developmental lessons [are] extracted ... from family routines, ethnic languages, institutional structures, cultural practices, ... and social encounters" (Nsamenang & Lo-oh, 2010, p. 397).

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Social intelligence becomes as or more central during middle childhood. Social development changes sharply as children make the 5-to-7 shift (Sameroff & Haith, 1996). This maturational change marks the transition into the juvenile, or *school-age*, period. Children are much better at self-regulation, and they can engage jointly in complex, collaborative social and task activities that require their understanding of shared goals, joint planning, and a clear grasp of the intentions of others. Attentional skills and focus are much stronger. Such beliefs regarding children's new abilities emerging at around these ages is very widespread around the world and suggests a maturational basis for the recognition of the *age of reason and responsibility*, or the time when children are seen as being able to take on joint and shared tasks for the household and for themselves and to do them reliably and in concert with others.

At this time in development, in fact, brain growth is slowed down, but there is intensified consolidation and synaptic maturation and an increase in the executive functioning areas of the brain. Growth slows down in height and weight, child mortality is relatively low, and, of course, the child is not yet sexually mature (Campbell, 2008). Children can help support a household by doing chores, assisting in child care, and helping with subsistence tasks. However, they will only rarely be living alone outside of a household and family context. If children are living outside a family context during middle childhood, this is almost certainly due to being orphaned or homeless due to family neglect, deep poverty, pathology, epidemics, or the consequences of war and violence.

Social Obligation and Responsibility

The socialization of social responsibility and respect is a domain of social behavior in which there are large cultural differences around the world and which fully emerges during middle childhood. Children learn a respectful awareness of others and a responsiveness to and anticipation of the needs of others. Children often are expected to do important, meaningful work for their families during this period of social development. Intelligence and cognitive ability are believed to increase as a result. Nsamenang and Lo-oh (2010, p. 397) comment that "within the African worldview, responsibility is more valued than cognition, per se, in the sense that one cannot be responsible without cognizing, whereas some people are cognitively alert but irresponsible."

Sibling Caretaking and Social Development

Older children, often beginning at the transition into the juvenile period, are assigned to take on the care of younger siblings or cousins in their household (Nuckolls, 1993; Serpell, 1993, 2008; Zukow, 1989). Middle childhood is also the time when many other chores, tasks, and social obligations and responsibilities are expected from children around the world (Rogoff, Sellers, Pirrotta, Fox, & White, 1975). In rural Gujarat and elsewhere, teenage girls will sometimes take care of babies, often beginning after they have started menstruating and therefore have to leave school due to some parents' concerns about the girl's safety and honor, and thus her marriageability. This is considered a type of training and preparation for marriage and for being a wife (Abels, October 2010, personal communication).

Sibling caretaking, or *socially distributed care*, experiences are a near cross-cultural universal for children in many parts of the world (Weisner & Gallimore, 1977). Caretaking is an example of what Margaret Mead called a pivot role: First, you are the recipient of the care from others, then you gradually age into being a caretaker yourself (Mead, 1949).

Certain ecological and demographic features of a community contribute to the likelihood that children are involved in these socially distributed caretaking responsibilities. These features include heavy maternal workload and resource pressures on the family, fathers who are absent or unavailable for caretaking, relatively large family sizes and households (or single caretakers without much social support for care), and joint or extended families living together. Girls are preferred for performing child care and other domestic tasks. Where there otherwise already is more gender-role segregation and specialization in a community, sibling care is often more common.

Children often will combine child care with concurrent mixed-age and mixed-sex play and work around the home with other children. There often is a shared cultural ethnotheory that children can do such work by middle childhood, that it is good for them to acquire valuable skills through family responsibilities, and that children learn well and rapidly during this time. A 4- to 5-year age gap between a child caretaker and his or her charge might be preferred, if possible. Children are under indirect monitoring and supervision in their care by parents and other adults, so they are not doing these social caretaking activities entirely on their own (Weisner, 1987, 1989).

Socially distributed caretaking may be linked to a common human attribute that underlies the evolution in *Homo sapiens* of sociality itself:

> Where did the human quest for intersubjective engagement [being interested in and responsive to others' mental states; caring about what others think, feel, and intend] come from? ... by focusing [in other theoretical·models] on intergroup competition, we have been led to overlook factors such as childrearing that are at least as important (in my opinion, even more important) for explaining the early origins of human-kind's peculiarly hypersocial tendencies. We have underestimated just how important shared care and provisioning of offspring by group members other than parents have been in shaping prosocial tendencies. (Hrdy, 2009, pp. 20, 29)

All social development—indeed, human culture itself—depends on the uniquely human ability for intersubjective engagement, which requires understanding the minds and intentions of others in our social world and then socially coordinating our behaviors based on that understanding. Selection for shared care of young children may well have gone along with selection for the ability for intersubjective engagement.

Play

Play is a universal feature of children's social development, although the kinds of play and the games, the participants, and the contexts of play vary widely in cultures around the world (Edwards, 2000). Western middle-class parental play encourages verbal and cognitive abilities, egalitarianism, providing choice for children's play, and a kind of child–adult protofriendship role and routines. In this reciprocal role, adults treat the child as a kind of coequal playmate and take on the playful, emotional roles of the child's level of play and understanding. Special toys, play areas, fantasy play, symbolic play and special scripts, media characters, films, videos, and so forth are used and marketed specifically for play (Berk, 2009). These commercial images, narratives, and marketed toys are themselves important symbolic partners in children's play.

One striking feature of cross-cultural research on play that is not fully appreciated in most Western research (and not reflected in our own ethnopsychology and theory about play) is that in most of the world, adults rarely or never engage in play with children in the ways that U.S. parents do (Lancy, 2007). U.S. parents might very actively get down on the floor with children and play or engage in sports and games with children. But in most of the world, parents and other adults do not do these types of play activities with children. Parents often engage children in work for the household, as we have seen, and do not see the value for them or their children of adult–child play (Lancy, 1996). In nearly all cultural learning environments described from around the world, regardless of adult involvement, children will seek out play with objects

and others, make toys, fantasize, and play sports and games without adult management and intervention. But in most settings, parents do not view their roles, nor their ethnopsychological script for parenting and development, as including play (Gaskins, 1996). Nor are marketed commercial toys even necessarily available or affordable, if available. Children are exceedingly creative, however, in making their own toys (dolls, toy boats, toy cars, kites, pictures) from found objects in their environment—old plastic bottles or gourds, string, wire, bits of cloth, corn cobs, and so forth (ChildFund International, 2009).

Gender

Culture deeply influences gender development and play. For example, by middle childhood, it is more likely that boys and girls will play with same-sex groups (boys somewhat more likely than girls to form such groups; Whiting & Edwards, 1973). More generally, gender has "profound effects on most every aspect of behavior, prescribing how babies are delivered, how children are socialized, how children are dressed, what is considered intelligent behavior, what tasks children are taught, and what roles adult men and women will adopt.... Children grow up in the context of other people's [gendered, cultural] scripts" (Best, 2010, p. 211; Williams & Best, 1990). Culture is not the only influence on gendered differences in social development, of course, but studies from the Six Cultures research program and its successors (in communities in India, Kenya, Mexico, Okinawa, the Philippines, and the United States) show both universals and variations in gender and social behavior (Munroe & Munroe, 1997; Whiting & Edwards, 1988; Whiting & Whiting, 1975).

Cross-cultural evidence provides support for some broad pancultural differences by gender, as well as features that vary across cultures. Boys more often appear to display physical aggression toward others and, on average, to display less social nurturance and domestic and other task responsibility than girls (Whiting & Edwards, 1988; Whiting & Whiting, 1975). However, there are often local exceptions to these patterns, and they may not hold at all ages. These kinds of gender differences become more pronounced during middle childhood, when often quite sharp separation of the social contexts for boys and girls develops (Whiting & Edwards, 1973). Social and life pathway opportunities for girls vary dramatically across cultures and are reflected in family practices regarding task training, whom girls can be with socially, age of marriage, and many other domains (Schlegel, 1977; Seymour, 1999).

Children are more likely to seek out same-sex children to interact and play with and to prefer to play with same-sex children, if they are available, from ages 3–4 on. There often are differences, on average, in what boys do in interactions and groups of peers compared with girls: Boys typically engage in more rough play and aggressive, physical competitive activities, take more risks, are less likely to disclose weaknesses, talk less, and more often exclude others (Best, 2010; Whiting & Edwards, 1988; see also Leaper & Bigler, Chapter 12, this volume). Where both boys and girls are expected to take on household tasks and child-care responsibilities and do so about equally, some other social behaviors, in turn, are less likely to differ by gender (Ember, 1973). More often than not, however, girls in cultures in which they have significant child work and household task responsibility expectations were treated differently in many other domains as well, compared with boys in those societies (Edwards, 2000). Recall that these are averaged, generalized patterns across the ethnographic record. None are invariant across cultures, and there is always variation within cultures as well.

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Peer Relationships and Aggression

Peers and peer relationships provide a rich context for cultural differences and variations (Edwards, deGuzman, Brown, & Kumru, 2006). Rubin, Cheah, and Menzer (2010) have reviewed some of the cross-cultural findings on social development and peers. Not all cultural communities provide open and ready access to peers (outside of schools or other institutional contexts) because families may worry about and fear (often with good reason) negative peer influences on children. Children may be needed for work within the household and family or peer contacts may be restricted to subgroups (ethnic groups, religious communities) that may be viewed as more similar to their natal family or group or more important than others.

Aggression (physical, relational, social, verbal) is not tolerated in many communities from younger children toward adults or even toward older peers—but it is not necessarily the other way around. Physical aggression is generally more common in male groups, though not absent in girls' groups (Goodwin, 2006). Bergeron and Schneider reviewed cross-national differences in peer aggression among children in school in 28 different countries and reported that "cultures characterized by collectivistic values, high moral discipline, a high level of egalitarian commitment, and high uncertainty avoidance ... [and with] heavily Confucian values showed lower levels of aggression towards peers" (quoted in Rubin et al., 2010, p. 227). Communities emphasizing the importance of social order, responsible and task-dedicated behavior, egalitarianism, voluntary cooperation, and moral restraint reported lower aggression levels among children as well.

In communities with few strangers or outsiders in them, consisting mostly of kin known to children and families, the task for children and others is not to meet strangers and form new friendships and groups, because everyone largely is known. Rather, the task is to differentiate among peers and others one knows already and then form closer relationships with some of them.

Desirable Emotional and Personality Attributes

Cultural ethnotheories of temperament and personality and, more generally, concepts of what patterns of social behavior are desirable can deeply influence not only how the behavior is evaluated but of course what parents and peers do about it (Kitayama & Markus, 2000). Cultures differ significantly in how they evaluate behaviorally inhibited or shy versus bold children, for example. Rubin et al. (2006) contrasted the influence of cultural beliefs about children who are shy and withdrawn, reserved, or very cautious and wary with that of beliefs about children who are gregarious, outgoing, exploratory, socially active, and bold. North American parents are very concerned about children with withdrawn behavior; peers may well victimize and reject such children in the United States. They have few friends and often feel lonely and depressed. However, in mainland China (at least until recently) such children might be seen as

> reverential, conforming, reserved, and compliant. These characteristics are considered typical and desirous. Given the significance attached to achieving and maintaining social order and interpersonal harmony with traditional Chinese culture, it makes sense that individuals are encouraged to restrain their personal desires and to behave in a sensitive, cautious, and inhibited fashion. Indeed, children who exhibit

such tendencies are described as *Guai Hai Zi* in Mandarin, which may be loosely translated as meaning "good" or "well-behaved." (Rubin et al., 2006, pp. 91–92).

Children who might be temperamentally more behaviorally inhibited or "shy" (vigilant in new settings; experiencing some negative anxiety; attention more often fixated on fearful events) but living in a community with more positive cultural beliefs about the meaning of such behaviors may well be less negatively affected as a result. The more general point is that variations in cultural beliefs about the positive or negative valence of different behaviors seen in children (such as being reserved or gregarious) can substantially influence the social and emotional consequences of those behaviors for the children and the family and on the other hopes and desires (educational, cognitive, affective, as well as social) parents have for those children:

> If a given behavior is viewed as acceptable [i.e. gregarious, *vivace*, bold children in the United States], then parents will attempt to encourage its development; if the behavior is perceived as maladaptive or abnormal [being overly shy in the United States, thus responded to with harshness and/or overprotectiveness], then parents (and significant others) will attempt to discourage its growth and development. (Rubin & Chung 2006, p. vii)

The existence of lexically marked terms identifying particular behaviors or psychological states, terms that are meaningful in their cultural context, is itself an important indicator that those behaviors and states are important themes in social development in that community. Xu, Farver, Chang, Yu, and Zhang (2006) describe the belief in and Chinese social practice of *ren*, or "forbearance," for example. *Ren* is a known, marked term, a mode of coping, relating, and confronting conflict among peers. It is not avoidance, because children attempt to elicit *ren* from others to encourage social harmony and group orientation and solidarity. It is a very socially competent practice, understood in those communities. Yet *ren* is not a category of behavior named, marked, or studied in the West. A reserved, respectful forbearance to encourage group social harmony might be a phrase that roughly translates *ren*, but this phrase certainly does not index an important socialization goal in the West, and there is no word for it.

Showing respect and anticipating the needs of others also illustrate the salience of culturally indexed and marked categories. The showing of respect for elders and kin living in a child's household is a named and expectable practice in many communities, such as in India, much of the Islamic world, Africa, and elsewhere (Gregg, 2005). Yet it is not to be found on most family or home environment scales developed in the West. Similarly, Tobin (2000) describes the Japanese term *kejime*, "correctly reading the context for what it is and acting accordingly" (p. 1157). An emphasis on "symbiotic harmony" in Japan (as contrasted with "generative tension" in relationships in the United States) and a concern for *amae*, or anticipating the needs of others and appropriately eliciting *amae* from others, are similar concepts widely admired and expected in Japan. All these can be said to characterize Japanese social relationships as a general cultural pattern and emphasis (though not as a rigid absolute by any means; Rothbaum et al., 2000; Shwalb & Shwalb, 1996). It is fair to say that the social development of children in most of the world is much more focused on some version of these kinds of behaviors, states, and abilities than would be true in the social development of contemporary middle-class children in the United States.

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High- and Low-Threat Cultural Environments: Effects on Social Relationships and Parenting

Parental and community concerns over fears and threats to children, including the potential harsh treatment of children in such situations, have been mentioned earlier as shaping cultural ethnotheories, practices, and settings. The example of families and child care in an impoverished *favela* in Rio do Janiero, Brazil, shows the effects of such fear and much else on children of all ages, but particularly children in middle childhood and into adolescence (Goldstein, 1998, 2003). These sprawling slum communities are dangerous places, in which physical violence and threats, gang control of territory, drugs and alcohol abuse, often accompanied by deep poverty, are omnipresent and in which sheer survival requires sometimes harsh parental and sibling control over others, over resources, and over the household routine. Goldstein describes this world in great depth through the story of Graca, a single mother holding a large household together in just a couple of rooms. She works for a well-off middle-class family caring for their children and household during the days and then returns to the *favela* at night. Goldstein describes harsh punishments for children if they do not complete household tasks, if they are out when they should not be, or if they take the possessions of others. Graca believes that only through the use of harsh punishment sometimes can children be protected and survive in the *favela*. An emphasis on shared work and obedience required for sheer survival is strongly felt and emotionally emphasized.

Such fears exist in communities around the world, including, of course, in the United States. Kling, Liebman, and Katz (2005, p. 255) quotes a poor working mother living in a dangerous neighborhood in a city in the United States: "bullets got no name," she remarked. She had to keep her kids inside and instructed her children to crouch down below window level inside the house at night for safety. "We came to realize during our interviews that these mothers were more than simply concerned for their children. They had organized their entire lives around protecting their sons and daughters from the genuine dangers of ghetto life" (p. 255).

ADOLESCENCE

Initiation of boys and girls into new social positions and identities is a social practice found around the world in many forms, although some of these rites of passage are declining in frequency and in the participation of the wider community beyond family and close friends. Initiations at adolescence serve many purposes. One is to mark and regulate the maturation of girls and boys as they reach some stage of physical puberty. Initiation ceremonies often separate boys and girls completely for extended periods of time, offer them specialized and secret knowledge, and emphasize their induction into not only a new maturational stage but also new work and tasks. Adult religious knowledge, secret songs, and specialized knowledge are now presented to adolescents. The cohort, or convoy, of peers, adult leaders, and kin sponsors of these initiation or coming-of-age ceremonies can become available to the teen and parents for support throughout life, and children's participation in such groups can be sociopolitically important for parents. Boys might now be seen as ready to help defend their communities, and girls may now be ready for marriage or other family responsibilities. There are new responsibilities and privilege perhaps, but also new forms of adult hierarchical controls over the new youths (Schlegel & Barry, 1991)

Initiation ceremonies can also include adolescent circumcision for boys and for girls. Female genital surgery for girls varies widely in type, extent, and the age at which it occurs. Other scarification, or marking of the body, may be used to show the new social status, now literally inscribed on the bodies of youths. There are active debates and legal and political conflicts over whether such genital surgery should continue at all, and if so in what forms (Shweder, 2002).

In many communities around the world today, adolescence is a brief period in social development, because girls may be married well before 18. They may be forming a household, having children, moving to the households of in-laws, expected to take on significant responsibilities in their natal households for their parents, and in other ways beginning adult life (Herdt & Leavitt, 1998). Boys are less likely than girls to make this transition as quickly, but they also will find themselves more involved in adult roles. This is more often the case in poor families and neighborhoods, with expectations that require youths to support others and to fend for themselves, but it is also a normative pathway in life regardless of SES in many parts of the world. Generally speaking, the greater the economic, subsistence, and survival pressure on a household and community, the greater these kinds of normative, enforced expectations on social development during adolescence are likely to be. In addition, the cultural definition of the length of the developmental stage of adolescence is also likely to be briefer. At the same time, adolescence and young adult status are extended later and later in other settings, including in the more resource-rich first-world economies; this situation characterizes many U.S. middle-class youths today.

Family Patterns and Social Development

We have barely touched on some of the variations in family patterns that affect social development and that in many ways crystallize the variations in cultural pathways that matter for children's social development that we have described throughout this chapter. Therborn (2009) characterizes seven broad cross-cultural patterns: Christian European; Islamic West Asian/North African; South Asian Hindu; Confucian East Asian; sub-Saharan African; Southeast Asian; and Creole (U.S. South, Caribbean, Brazil, parts of South America). Each of these seven broad family patterns differs in social dimensions that have profound influences on the pathways of social development for children growing up within those family systems. These highly cultural variable dimensions of family systems include, for example, norms concerning inheritance (e.g., whether all children inherit equally, or only males, or only firstborn males) or descent rules (e.g., bilateral as in the United States or patrilineal); marriage customs that are preferred or permitted in different communities (e.g., whether there is an ideal norm of lifetime monogamy; whether divorce and serial monogamy are allowed or plural marriage is permitted). Beliefs about sexuality and gender and patterns of household formation (i.e., whether couples form independent households, live with parents, or form joint or extended households; whether children typically remain in one household or move between multiple households during childhood) also vary systematically across these family regions. Influences of religious practices on families and many other norms, laws, and customs that shape family life show such patterned variation, and so they deeply affect the developmental pathways of children and youths.

Other family dimensions that can strongly influence children's social development include variations in family values: Is it appropriate and even normative for children

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to live with adults other than parents, for example? How important is showing public and private respect for parents? Do parents invest in and sacrifice for children, or are children expected to invest in household and family just as much or more so as they grow up? How important is it for children to show obedience and respect versus showing their independence? Family goals and the moral socialization of all these values and other dimensions of family life have powerful influences on the social development of children growing up in each of these seven prototypical family systems. As Therborn comments about the widely varying families around the world, and the lives of children in them, "The boys and girls of the world enter many different childhoods and depart them through many different doors" (2009, p. 338).

HETEROGENEITY IN CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Cultural influences do not constitute homogeneous, unchanging influences. The fact that beliefs are not completely shared in a cultural community is not evidence that this is not a cultural community. A cultural analysis assumes and predicts some internal *heterogeneity* within every community; cultures are constantly changing, and there is argument and disagreement about many beliefs and practices in most every community (Weisner, 2009). Cultural norms and practices create social and psychological conflicts and frustrations and envy of others. There are always tensions across generations, family groups, neighborhoods, and ethnic groups. There are also differences in temperament and other characteristics between individual children that lead to differences in each person's degree of shared knowledge and his or her sense of comfort living in their cultural community. Socially learned and transmitted shared beliefs and practices in an ecocultural niche are a criterion for those beliefs and practices being cultural—but cultural knowledge is not just uniformly "faxed" into the minds of children. To the contrary: Such knowledge is acquired *selectively* and becomes a part of shared, as well as unique individual, models. The extent to which features of the settings in a cultural learning environment are similar and shared by those in a defined population is an *empirical* question to be investigated and shown in a study, not an assumption to make based only on a shared social address.

CULTURAL MODELS AND THEIR ACQUISITION

Children acquire their cultural models, scripts for behavior, and shared ethnopsychology; it is not present in their minds at birth formed by experiences in utero. The *anthropology of learning* is an important part of understanding social development in context (Lancy et al., 2010). The cultural models in a community are very much a part of the social world of the classroom and of the school, as well. This social curriculum varies widely around the world, even as schools have spread nearly everywhere (Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). There are some general indicators in a cultural community that suggest which features of that culture's practices are particularly intended to be acquired by children and matter to that community (Schönpflug, 2009). We have already touched on several of these in this chapter, such as evidence of a fairly widely shared ethnotheory; similar ecocultural contexts for children; similar relationship models and people to interact with across settings; the "redundant control" or repetition of a desired pattern (Levy, 1973) of some behaviors and practices, created by

adults, peers, and others; and repeating certain ideas across many settings, across age periods, and so forth. More generally, when there is repeated emphasis and repetition of family and community patterns in a child's cultural learning environment, it is then more likely that these in fact are shared, important cultural beliefs and scripts.

These shared patterns are marked as the culturally meaningful practices that the community and parents want to inculcate in their children as part of their project of rearing children to be culturally valued adults. They reflect desired personal qualities and cultural goals (Quinn, 2006, p. 478):

> First, such [cultural models for raising children] universally incorporate practices that maximize the constancy of the child's experience around the learning of important lessons about what is valued. Second, such models universally include practices that make the child's experience of learning these lessons emotionally arousing. Third, such models universally attach these lessons to more global evaluations of the child's behavior, and of the child, as approved or disapproved. Fourth, and finally, such models universally train children first in some emotional predisposition, the strategic role of which is to prime the child for subsequent lessons about what is desired and expected of him or her as an adult.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this volume you will read a wide range of hard-won summaries of evidence and theory about social development. You might extend the culture framework to those summaries from other chapters by asking: In what ecocultural context, developmental niche, and cultural learning environment were those data collected? Would a particular empirical finding or generalization (likely studied in only one context, in one cultural community) hold up in others? As we have seen, cultural evidence can lead to findings of cross-cultural generalizations that hold quite widely, if not universally. In other cases, such evidence leads to the conclusion that context and culture make a major difference. There often can be universal processes in social development (attachments, dealing with aggression or shyness, early language acquisition) but with widely varying beliefs, practices, and outcomes from those processes, for both children and parents, across cultures. A continuing core scientific question for this field is to disentangle possible universal processes from their varying expressions in local cultural contexts.

The importance of a cultural-comparative database and theory for understanding human behavior and psychology is not limited to social development. The same urgency for developing a global database comes from the fields of visual perception, spatial reasoning, moral reasoning, styles of thinking, variations in self-concepts around the world, and almost any topic in social development. There is a long way to go to fully incorporate the world's children into developmental research. For example, 96% of people studied in the top journals in six subdisciplines of psychology from 2003 through 2007 were from North America, Europe, Australia, and Israel: "this means that 96% of psychological samples come from countries with only 12% of the world's population" (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010, p. 63). Furthermore, the great majority of these samples are composed solely of undergraduates in psychology courses. "A randomly selected American undergraduate is more than 4000 times more likely to be a research participant than is a randomly selected person from outside

of the West" (Henrich et al., 2010, p. 65). So we need a much more representative database for social development; this means greater pluralism in whom we talk with and observe and in the settings around the world to which we go to study. The next generations of scholars—including those reading this volume—are the ones to do this cross-cultural field research. Of the many questions and research programs important for future research in social development, this goal is probably the single most important.

The world is changing rapidly today, and globalization, modernization, and global economic development, underdevelopment, and disparities are important features influencing children's social lives, families, and cultural learning environments (Weisner & Lowe, 2005). Understanding how these changes shape social development is another critical question for the future. Globalization is, among other things, the reducing of barriers to the flow of information, objects, people, and capital around the world. The result has been to give youths, children, parents—everyone—access to incredible new experiences shared regionally or globally and encourage the rise in immigration and mixing of cultural and family traditions in new places. But it is an empirical matter as to how much children's social experiences will become homogeneous as a result of rapid change (Casey & Edgerton, 2005; Edwards & Whiting, 2004). Perhaps the more affluent share more of this global experience and benefit from it more than the poor. There is resistance and pushback to global influences, as well. Family life and parenting are relatively more conservative aspects of life and more difficult to change in many respects than media consumption or work roles, for example. With due regard to the process of globalization, there are still *very* substantial variations in children's cultural learning environments around the world today, and this variation is definitely not about to be eliminated in the next generations. Understanding the influences on social development of these very diverse, pluralistic, and ever-changing cultural learning environments and developmental niches in the coming generations is going to be a fascinating research topic for the future.

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