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Marital Processes and Parental Socialization in Families of Color: A Decade Review of Research

Research published during the past decade on African American, Latino, and Asian American families is reviewed. Emphasis is given to selected issues within the broad domains of marriage and parenting. The first section highlights demographic trends in family formation and family structure and factors that contributed to secular changes in family structure among African Americans. In the second section, new conceptualizations of marital relations within Latino families are discussed, along with research documenting the complexities in African American men's conceptions of manhood. Studies examining within-group variation in marital conflict and racial and ethnic differences in division of household labor, marital relations,

and children's adjustment to marital and family conflict also are reviewed. The third section gives attention to research on (a) paternal involvement among fathers of color; (b) the relation of parenting behavior to race and ethnicity, grandmother involvement, neighborhood and peer characteristics, and immigration; and (c) racial and ethnic socialization. The article concludes with an overview of recent advances in the study of families of color and important challenges and issues that represent research opportunities for the new decade.

As a review that closes out a decade and a century, leaving us perched to begin a new millennium, we are bid not only to look backward at what has happened, but also to look forward into the future. A look forward reveals a U.S. demographic profile that will be strikingly different than profiles of prior eras. In the 21st century, our country will no longer be overwhelmingly White; we can no longer describe it as simply "Black and White." It will instead be fully multicultural, equally divided between non-Hispanic European Americans and those of other racial and ethnic groups. Among people of color, Hispanics will become the largest group soon after the turn of the century. Asian American and Pacific Islanders

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will increase at the most rapid rate, although Hispanics will add more actual numbers to the U.S. population in the next century. By 2050, the U.S. population is expected to be 8% Asian American, 14% African American, 25% Hispanic, and 53% non-Hispanic White. This differential increase in people of color in the United States over the next several decades is due both to increased fertility rates and to the younger average ages of African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. It is also due to increased immigration among the latter two groups (Lee, 1998; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1995, 1997a).

Yet, if we look backward at the research that has been published in social science journals over the last 10 years, such changes are scarcely reflected. Instead, notwithstanding some sparing changes in the last decade, our research, especially that in the quantitative domain, continues to largely reflect what Collins (1990) called biracial or dichotomous thinking, where the normative work is conducted using European American families and the "minority" perspective is represented via an examination of African American families. Our review necessarily reflects this fact, with the bulk of the empirical research we examine focusing on African American families. Wherever possible we present research that has been conducted on Hispanic and Asian American families. We also discuss briefly the new conceptual and theoretical frameworks that have been put forth to inform this research. Remarkably little research has been conducted on American Indian families. (For a few examples of recent research focusing on this understudied group, see McCubbin, Thompson, Thompson, & Fromer, 1998.) We present pertinent demographic information on this group wherever possible but make no attempt to summarize a knowledge base so small that generalizations are speculative at best.

We limit our review to selected issues within the broad domains of marriage and parental socialization. The first section reviews demographic changes in family structure, followed by a discussion of research that sought to explain these changes. We then turn to studies of racial and ethnic differences in the division of household labor, the frequency and management of marital conflict, and children's adjustment to marital and family conflict. In addition to highlighting new conceptualizations of gender roles within Latino families, we review research on predictors of marital quality and life-course changes in marital quality and relations among couples of color. The third section

of the article devotes attention to parental socialization processes. Our review reflects relatively little of the recent work published in books and edited volumes, but concentrates on quantitative research that appeared in social science journals during the past decade. More in-depth reviews of recent family research on different racial and ethnic groups in the United States can be found elsewhere (Burton & Jarrett, in press; Gadsden, 1999; Gaines, Buriel, Liu, & Rios, 1997; Leyendecker & Lamb, 1999; McAdoo, 1993; Taylor, 1998).

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN MARRIAGE, MARITAL TRANSITIONS, AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Family Formation and Family Structure

Especially relative to African American families, studies of structural changes of families constituted a major portion of the family-related literature in the last decade. The major trends on which researchers have focused attention are overall declines in the rates of marriages and later age at first marriage, along with concomitant trends such as higher proportions of unwed mothers, higher percentages of single-headed households families, and higher numbers of poor households (Taylor, Tucker, Chatters, & Jayakody, 1997). The research emphasis in the last decade was more on single-parent families than on two-parent families, the latter often being used merely as a basis for comparison. As such, the issues of family configurations and nonmarital patterns are more central to our review than is a direct emphasis on two-parent families.

African Americans. In general, structural changes in African American families continued to be more rapid during the last decade when compared with the general population. Between 1990 and 1998, the percent of individuals aged 15 years and older who were married declined 3.8% among African Americans (42.7% to 38.9%) but declined only 2.3% in the general population (58.8% to 56.5%). Correspondingly, during this same period, the percent of never-married individuals in this age group increased 3.7% among African Americans (40.1% to 43.8%) compared with an increase of 1.6% in the general population (26.4% to 28%). During the past decade, African Americans continued to have higher divorce rates than those in the general population, but the increase in divorce from 1990 to 1998 was slightly smaller among African Americans (9.7% to 10.7%) than

in the general population (7.9% to 9.2%; U.S. Bureau of Census, Internet Release 1999a, Table MS-1).

After a 7.3% increase during the 1980s, the percent of single-headed families among African Americans rose only slightly between 1990 and 1998, from 54.6% (51.2% female headed) to 54.8% (51.1% female headed). The increase was somewhat higher for European Americans (3.6%), rising from 19.2% (16.2% female headed) in 1990 to 22.8% (18.2% female headed) in 1998. Female-headed households accounted for 26.2% of all American Indian families at the beginning of the decade, with the figures being slightly higher (29.4%) in urban areas (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999a). Sandefur and Liebler (1996) demonstrated that there is considerable variation in female headship across American Indian reservations. Between 1990 and 1998, households headed by single fathers increased .2% among African Americans, 1.6% among European Americans, and 1.5% among Hispanics. Rates of poverty declined substantively over the past decade among African American families (from 29.3% in 1990 to 23.6% in 1997), but not among Hispanic families (from 25% to 24.7% during the same period). The percentage of European American families living in poverty increased slightly, going from 8.1% in 1990 to 8.4% in 1997 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999a, 1999b).

Latinos. Hispanic female-headed families grew to about 31.2% in 1998, an increase of about 1.2% over the 1990 totals. Compared with their White and Asian American counterparts, Latino women in the 1990s, as with African American women, were less likely to be married, more likely to be household heads, and more likely to have younger children at younger ages outside of marriage. Nonetheless, there is considerable variation in rates of female-headed households among Latino subgroups, with rates almost twice as high among Puerto Ricans than among Mexican Americans or Cuban Americans. In addition, Puerto Rican women tend to have their first child before marriage, whereas Mexican American women tend to do so within marriage. Compared with other Latino subgroups, Cuban American women have the lowest fertility rates and are older at the time of their first marriage (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1995, 1997b). These subgroup differences correspond to differences in poverty rates. In 1996, 35% of Puerto Rican families had incomes below the poverty line, a rate considerably higher than

that of Mexican American families (28%) and almost twice that of Cuban Americans (17%). A noteworthy development during the past decade, though, is the end of the sharp economic decline of Puerto Rican families observed throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Tienda, 1989; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997b).

Asian Americans. Discussions of family structure and process within Asian American families cannot be adequately framed in the absence of the concept of the extended family. On average, Asian American households have 3.3 members, a figure that is higher than for European Americans (2.5 members per household) and similar to Hispanic household size averages (3.5). Among Asian Americans, Vietnamese (4.0) and other Southeast Asians such as Cambodians, Hmong, and Laotian (5.1) have the largest average number per household. By contrast, Japanese Americans have the lowest household average (2.5). The greater average household size can largely be attributed to the presence of another relative who is not a child or spouse. Compared with European Americans and African Americans, Asian Americans are more likely to live in households that are comprised exclusively of family members (i.e., family households, as distinguished from households that include individuals who are not related through family ties). Given the relatively high percentage of Asian American families that are extended, researchers who focus exclusively on parents and children as the operational measure of the family unit are prone to lose sight of the social and cultural resources that other relatives bring to Asian American families.

Although differences exist among Asian American subgroups, Asian Americans, on average, wait longer to have children and have fewer children than other ethnic groups (Lee, 1998). Only 6% of all births occur to Asian American women under the age of 20 years. Compare this figure with European Americans (10%), African Americans (23%), and Hispanics (18%) and the differences are quite striking. Asian American mothers have a higher average educational level, are more likely to be foreign-born, and are less likely to give birth out-of-wedlock than are other ethnic categories. Fertility rate data provide evidence of the changing nature of Asian American families. Chinese American (1.4 children per woman) and Japanese American women (1.1 per woman) have a fertility rate that is lower than the replacement level (2.1 children per woman). These rates sug-

gest that these ethnic groups will substantially diminish in size over time. On the other hand, Southeast Asian American women have high fertility rates and tend to have children at earlier ages than Chinese and Japanese Americans (Lee). As fertility factors play a larger role in population increases, the population of Southeast Asians will rise compared with the Japanese and Chinese populations. The next generation of studies on Asian American families will need to redirect its foci to reflect this change.

Recent census estimates, like those of the past, indicate that Asian Americans have lower rates of divorce than U.S. averages. Approximately 4% of Asian American men were divorced, compared with 8% in the general male population. The discrepancy in the proportion who are divorced among Asian American women and the U.S. average is similar—4.7% of Asian American females were divorced compared with 10.3% of the U.S. female population (U.S. Census Bureau, 1999a). In a cogent series of analysis, Barringer, Gardner, and Levin (1993) demonstrated that nativity is associated with divorce. In general, Asian Americans who are born in the United States are much more likely to be divorced than are their counterparts who immigrated to the United States. Among Asian American men, the never-married segment is high at 35%, a percentage higher than that for European American men but lower than that for African American men. The reasons for this relatively high never-married rate may be attributed to the high male immigration pattern in the early part of this century (Barringer et al.; Gardner, Robey, & Smith, 1985).

Explanations of Changes in Family Structure

Little research has focused on contributors to increases in female-headed households among Latinos and Asian Americans over the past few decades. Nor has there been serious examination of the factors that account for marked differences among Latino and Asian American subgroups in rates of female-headed households. The past decade brought refinements of the explanations for changing family patterns among African Americans, however (McAdoo, 1998).

Economic factors. Economic factors as a reason for the changes in African American family structures assumed some prominence in the later part of the 1980s because of Wilson's (1987) contention that unemployment rates were a major ex-

planatory factor. Wilson's argument suggested a correspondence between rates of male unemployment and rates of marriage, such that the economic potential of a man was directly related to his eligibility as a desirable mate. Studies of this association produced mixed results. Several reported a positive relation between employment and marriage rates (Fossett & Kiecolt, 1993; Lichter, McLaughlin, Kephart, & Landry, 1992), whereas the results of other studies were less conclusive (Mare & Winship, 1991; South & Lloyd, 1992; Testa, 1991). Some studies even suggested that between the 1960s and 1980s, rates of marriage actually declined more among employed than unemployed African American men (Ellwood & Crane, 1990; Jencks, 1992). Later studies, however, seem to support the conclusion that, although stable employment is indeed positively related to marriage rates for Black men, increases in the joblessness rates of Black men do not fully explain the declining rates of marriage among this population (Testa & Krogh, 1995). Employment factors are critical to African American family formation, but they represent only one set of factors (Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1995).

Receipt of welfare benefits as an economic explanation of declining African American marriage rates continued to receive attention in the last decade. Despite the conclusion of Moffitt's (1992) extensive review that most studies find no relation between welfare benefits and African American family formation, some scholars remain committed to this explanation. In fact, some empirical research has found a negative relation between the level of welfare benefits at the aggregate level and the level of welfare benefits at the individual level (Fossett & Kiecolt, 1993; Kiecolt & Fossett, 1997; Lichter, LeClere, & McLaughlin, 1991; South & Lloyd, 1992). The level of welfare benefits may simply be a proxy for unmeasured characteristics of recipients, however (Kiecolt & Fossett). At present, welfare is most consistent as a predictor of young unmarried women's tendency to set up independent households rather than stay with their parents (Moffitt, 1994).

Gender ratio imbalance. The second major explanation receiving some attention in the past decade is the imbalance in the gender ratio. Essentially the argument suggests that the imbalanced ratio of Black men to women results in a disincentive for both genders to marry and a reduced commitment of men to stay married (Smith, 1995). Research conducted during the past decade yielded increas-

ing support for these hypotheses (Kiecolt & Fossett, 1995, 1997; Lichter et al., 1992; South & Lloyd, 1992). Nonetheless, individual level data are less predictive of the relation for men than are aggregate-level data (Kiecolt & Fossett, 1995).

Growth in the rate of nonmarital births also is a factor contributing to changes in the structure of African American families. Taylor et al. (1997) refined the analysis of this issue, pointing out that births to adolescents account for only a minority of nonmarital births. Taylor et al. (1997) concluded that nonmarital births significantly affect African American family structure because African American women are now less likely to marry in response to a pregnancy than they were in the 1960s; at the same time, they also are more likely to bear a child before marriage.

Racial and Ethnic Intermarriage

Census data indicate fairly stable overall rates of racial and ethnic intermarriage between 1980 and 1992 (Internet Release 1999b). Racial and ethnic intermarriages accounted for 2% of all marriages in 1980, compared with 2.2% estimated by the Current Population Survey in 1992. Of the projected 1,161,000 interracial and interethnic couples in 1992, 21.2% were of the Black-White combination, with roughly two thirds of these involving a Black husband and a White wife. Of all racial and ethnic intermarriages, the percentages that are Black-White couples increased from 12% in 1980 to 21% in 1992.

Ethnic intermarriage is relatively common among Asian Americans and will play a crucial part in making sense of Asian American family life in the near future. During the past decade, approximately 11% of marriages involving an Asian American partner were interracial or interethnic (Kitano, Fujino, & Sato, 1998). Intermarriages are higher for Asian Americans born in the United States than for those born in another country, and variation exists in the rate of intermarriage within the Asian American category. When Asian Americans intermarry, they are more likely to marry someone within the Asian American category than with African Americans or Hispanics. (Kitano et al.; Lee, 1998). As the sociodemographic characteristics of Asian Americans continue to change (e.g., increase in native-born individuals, higher education and income levels), intermarriage rates are likely to rise. Interracial marriages are more vulnerable to divorce than are marriages among same-race individuals (Clarke,

1995). As the trend toward increased rates of racial and ethnic intermarriage continues, it will become increasingly important to understand what factors promote resilience among such families, given the unique challenges they confront.

MARITAL PROCESSES

Most of the empirical research on marital relations during the past decade focused on African American families, although some important work occurred on the Latino front, especially on a theoretical level. The lack of empirical study on marital relations among Asian Americans stands in marked contrast and provides a challenge for researchers in the coming decade. Indeed, although the importance of family to Asian Americans is cited quite extensively in the literature (Lee, 1998), surprisingly few empirical studies have actually analyzed the nature and impact of marital and family processes among Asian Americans or the role that families play in shaping how and when Asian American children develop particular social and psychological characteristics. When statistical differences are found between Asian Americans and other ethnic groups, social and cultural factors such as family values are invoked to explain the findings without systematic observations of these constructs. This problem plagues much research on people and families of color (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993; Cauce, Coronado, & Watson, 1998).

Gender Role Attitudes and Values

The bulk of the work on Latino marital relations this past decade was conceptual. The earliest research depictions of Latino marital relations emphasized the role of "machismo" and "marianismo," two cultural values ascribed to Latino culture (Ginorio, Gutierrez, Cauce, & Acosta, 1995). "Marianismo," based on the Catholic ideal of the Virgin Mary, emphasizes the woman's role as mother and celebrates the mother's self-sacrifice and suffering for her children. "Machismo," on the other hand, stresses the man's role not as father, but as head of household. Taken together and exaggerated to the point of caricature, these Latino values have been used to paint a portrait of the ideal Latino family type as that of the self-sacrificing mother and the dominant, tyrannical man.

As is not atypical in the rural farming economies that characterized much of Mexico and the

Caribbean through the 1950s, a strongly gendered division of labor, with women's roles largely played out within the domestic sphere, were normative. Despite the rapid changes in the second half of the century, however, stereotypes based on this much earlier period often dominated our views of the Latino family. For example, a review of this decade (Inclan & Herron, 1990) continued to describe the Puerto Rican family as patriarchal and the role of the husband as protector and provider, despite the fact that at the time 44% of Puerto Rican families were headed by women (Ginorio et al., 1995). Feminist re-interpretations focused on correcting such persistent stereotypes, underscoring that these families displayed a much greater diversity of gender role patterns than the emphasis on machismo would have us believe (Ramirez & Arce, 1981; Williams, 1988; Zavella, 1989).

More recent research also focused on how women's increasing participation in the workforce brought with it an increase in women's power both within and outside of the family (Pesquera, 1993; Williams, 1988). Even working class Chicano men who held traditional values about marriage and gender roles counted on their wives' income generated from work outside the home to increase their families' standard of living and upward mobility (Williams). Moreover, Chicana women, like their Anglo counterparts, reported less depression and more satisfaction with their marriages when husbands contributed more to the household upkeep (Saenz, Goudy, & Lorenz, 1989). Although not focusing on marriage specifically, research examining how Latina women exert control over their reproduction, and hence family formation, also suggested that they are adopting values not consonant with stereotypes of passivity or domination by patriarchy, including the patriarchal structure of the Catholic Church (Amaro, 1988; Hurtado, 1995).

Still, the most important contribution of the 1990s may be the feminist critiques of how cultural interpretations of Latino gender roles within families, and Latino family life more generally, serve to mask the role of social-structural factors as shapers of family life and to obscure race and gender as basic organizing principles of society (Baca Zinn, 1994, 1999). Key to this reconceptualization is the premise that social locations rather than cultural differences are the source of ethnic and racial variations in marital relations, family formation, and family lifestyles (Baca Zinn, 1999; Baca Zinn & Eitzen, 1996; Dill, Baca

Zinn, & Patton, 1993). This reconceptualization has the potential to advance our understanding of not only families of color, but of all families, not in group-specific terms, but as part of a socially constructed system.

The decade of the 1990s also was distinguished by efforts to reconceptualize, explain, and document the complexity of gender roles among African American men. As with the discourse on Latinos, this work reflected tensions between structural and cultural interpretations of male gender roles (Duneier, 1992; Hunter & Davis, 1992; Majors & Billson, 1992; Majors & Gordon, 1994). Consistent with a perspective that emerged during the 1980s emphasizing "masculinities" rather than a generic, unidimensional male gender role (Pleck, 1981), Hunter and Davis found that African American men's responses to the question "What do you think it means to be a man?" emphasized four distinct dimensions: self-determinism and accountability, family relations, pride, and spirituality and humanism. In contrast to more stereotyped views of men's conceptions of manhood, attributes associated with masculinity (e.g., physically strong, aggressive, competitive) were rated as only somewhat important, whereas those associated with power were rated as least important. Consonant with the view of social location as a contributor to gender roles (Baca Zinn, 1999), the perceived importance of ownership, manliness, spirituality, and power varied as a function of men's occupational status. Adding yet another level of complexity, Blee and Tickamyer (1995) found that gender role attitudes of both Black and White men change over time in response to marriage and historical period.

Empirical work on race and ethnic differences in gender role attitudes has found that African Americans and Mexican Americans, compared with European Americans, have more positive attitudes toward working wives but ironically are more likely to endorse the traditional role of men as head of household and primary economic provider (Blee & Tickamyer, 1995; Kane, 1992; Taylor, Tucker, & Mitchell-Kernan, 1999). Compared with European American men, African American men report more conservative attitudes about a range of other gender role issues (e.g., responsibility for housework, achievement outside home; Blee & Tickamyer), a pattern consistent with findings reported in the 1970s (McLoyd, 1993). These racial disparities in gender role attitudes may partly account for evidence that in the early years of marriage, race is a salient determinant of whether

social context variables such as husband's participation in housework and the presence of children moderate the impact of women's work on the psychological well-being of husbands (Orbuch & Custer, 1995).

An especially noteworthy set of findings from the past decade documents sources of within race and ethnicity variation in gender role schemas. The belief that men are primarily responsible for making economic provisions for the family is stronger among people of color who are older and less educated, as well as among African Americans who are more religious, experience more financial strain, and live in cities with higher percentages of non-Hispanic Black men below the poverty level. Mexican Americans who are not born in the United States and who are less linguistically acculturated espouse this view more strongly than highly acculturated Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans born in the United States (Taylor et al., 1999). Collectively, the racial, ethnic and economic-related disparities in gender role attitudes and beliefs found in recent research no doubt reflect increased need for wives' income in families of color and heightened sensitivity among men of color to the fact that a combination of inadequate education, high unemployment, underemployment, and racism has limited their ability to be good economic providers (Taylor et al.; Wilson, 1996). Successful performance of the primary provider role is of major psychological significance for men of color. Unmarried African American fathers' evaluations of their performance as primary provider and as fathers are highly correlated, but the former is a much stronger predictor of their psychological well-being (e.g., self-esteem) than is the latter (Bowman & Sanders, 1998).

Division of Household Labor

By the late 1980s, it was well documented that African American husbands, compared with European American husbands, perform a slightly larger share of and spend a little more time on domestic chores (e.g., cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, grocery shopping) and child care. But African American wives, like their European American counterparts, nevertheless assume primary responsibility for household work and child care, irrespective of their employment status (McLoyd, 1993). Studies published during the 1990s based on community and national samples replicated and further differentiated these patterns and ex-

tended the focus to Latino families (Hossain & Roopnarine, 1993; John, Shelton, & Luschen, 1995; Kamo & Cohen, 1998; Oggins, Veroff, & Leber, 1993; Pesquera, 1993; Rubin, 1994; Shelton & John, 1993).

Black husbands or partners are less likely than their White counterparts to view the division of household labor as unfair to their wives or partners (John et al., 1995). It is not surprising that employed husbands who report doing most of the housework have especially low levels of family life satisfaction (Broman, 1991). Although White and Latino husbands and partners do not differ in their total household labor time or attitudes about the fairness of the division of household labor once sociodemographic characteristics are taken into account, contrary to popular stereotypes, some evidence suggests that Hispanic husbands and partners spend more time on typically "female-typed" tasks than do European American husbands, especially if they are employed part time or not at all (Shelton & John, 1993). Qualitative research among dual-earner Chicano families indicates that husbands perform more domestic work if their wives are coproviders (had income roughly equal to their husband's and both husband and wife highly valued the latter's employment) or if husbands had failed to fulfill career aspirations (Coltrane & Valdez, 1993).

Although some have posited that African American husbands' increased involvement in household work is due to reduced hours in paid work, Shelton and John's (1993) work suggests otherwise. These researchers found household labor time varied by race and ethnicity, even after controlling for paid labor time, education, age, presence of children, and husbands' and wives' gender role attitudes. Among both European American and Hispanic husbands, those who were not employed spent more time on household labor than did those who were employed, although this difference was statistically significant only for the former group. In contrast, among African American husbands, the more time they spent in paid labor, the more time they spent on household labor. (Shelton & John). This provocative finding should invite replication studies, especially because husbands' reduced household labor can amplify the negative impact of their unemployment on family life satisfaction, marital quality, and marital stability (Broman, 1988; McLoyd, 1990, 1993).

Not only do employed African American husbands spend more time in household labor if they

are employed, they also appear to increase their household labor in response to decreases in their wives' household labor (Kamo & Cohen, 1998). This finding, along with evidence that resource exchange theory (e.g., the notion that the amount of housework a partner performs is inversely related to his or her personal income) is less powerful in explaining African American men's relative share of household work than that of European American men, prompted Kamo and Cohen to advocate for new theoretical models of household division of labor among families of color. These models might incorporate notions of group identity and utility maximization of the family unit as alternatives to models based on assumptions about utility maximization of the individual.

Marital Quality

Frequency and management of conflict. Early work suggested that African American couples and families have more conflictual relations and are more tolerant of open, intense disclosure than their European American counterparts (Aschenbrenner, 1975; Blood & Wolfe, 1969). Such findings may have resulted from a variety of methodological flaws common in these early studies, such as failure to control for social class, income, and family size, biased sampling, and use of measures of unknown or questionable reliability and validity for African American families (Henggeler & Tavormina, 1980). Even with careful controls for factors confounded with race, recent investigations have not resolved this issue. In addition, no consistent patterns of race difference have been found in how couples manage conflict (e.g., confrontation, withdrawal, avoidance) or in the degree of negative affect or hostility expressed by spouses during conflictual encounters (e.g., insults, name calling, bringing up the past, having to have the last word, yelling or shouting; Adelman, Chadwick, & Baerger, 1996; Mackey & O'Brien, 1998; MacDonald & DeMaris, 1995; Oggins et al., 1993; Sistler & Moore, 1996). Although comparative data are sparse, it appears that Hispanic couples do not differ from European American couples in the frequency of major or overt marital conflict (Lindahl & Malik, 1999; Mackey & O'Brien).

Spousal violence. Although race and ethnicity do not appear to be reliable predictors of the frequency and management of marital conflict, a

number of recent studies have found both race and ethnicity to be associated with physical violence among spouses (Anderson, 1997; Hampton & Coner-Edwards, 1993; Sorenson, Upchurch, & Shen, 1996). Even with controls for income, education, urbanicity, age and number of children, and duration of marriage, data from almost 7,000 currently married respondents in the National Survey of Families and Households indicated that Blacks were 1.58 times more likely and Latinos 0.53 times less likely than Whites to report that marital arguments during the past year had escalated into physical violence (i.e., hitting, shoving, throwing things at spouse; Sorenson et al.).

The 1985 National Family Violence Survey found higher rates of husband-to-wife violence and severe violence among both Blacks and Latinos, compared with Whites. Rates of overall wife-to-husband violence and severe violence among Latinos were intermediate between those of Blacks and Whites, with Black women having the highest rates (Hampton & Coner-Edwards, 1993; Hampton & Gelles, 1994; Straus & Smith, 1990). Controlling for income and social class reduces, but does not eliminate, the relation between race and ethnicity and spousal violence (Hampton & Coner-Edwards). Status inequality between partners in terms of earnings and education does not appear to be a central mechanism linking race to domestic violence (Anderson, 1997). Studies of spousal violence that are based on reports by wives (female partners) may actually underestimate race differences in husband-to-wife (male partner-to-female partner) violence. Data from the National Survey of Families and Households indicate that African American women are more likely than European American women to underreport victimization by male partners (i.e., greater percentage of instances among African Americans in which husband (male partner) self-reported his perpetration of violence but wife (female partner) failed to acknowledge victimization; Anderson).

There is some suggestion that Mexican American women, compared with European American women, are more tolerant of physical aggression by their husbands and more conservative in their perception of what constitutes physical abuse (Asbury, 1993; Gondolf, Fisher, & McFerron, 1991). In addition, Mexican American women in shelters report longer duration of abuse, compared with African Americans and European Americans (Gondolf et al.). If indeed these ethnic differences are subsequently replicated in well-designed studies, we need to know the extent to which they are

driven by disparities in economic well-being, educational credentials, employability, and availability and appropriateness of services to assist victims of domestic violence.

Our knowledge about sources of spousal violence within families of color also grew during the past decade (Asbury, 1993; Hampton & Coner-Edwards, 1993). Hampton and Gelles (1994), for example, found that lower income, younger age of couple, shorter residence in a community, unemployment of the husband, being hit as an adolescent, and observing parental violence were significant predictors of husband-to-wife violence among African American couples. African American, Hispanic, and Anglo men in positions of lower income status relative to their female partners are more likely to perpetrate domestic assaults, whereas among women, it is those in positions of higher income status who are more likely to perpetrate violence against their male partners. The former finding is consonant with resource theory suggesting that individuals lacking other means of power, such as income or educational status, are more likely to use violence to achieve greater power within the conjugal relationship (Anderson, 1997; Goode, 1971).

Immigration status also has been found to influence rates of spousal violence among Mexican Americans. Being born in the United States increases the risk of wife assault by both Mexican American and Puerto Rican American husbands (Kantor, Jasinski, & Aldarondo, 1994; Sorenson & Telles, 1991). We now need research that identifies the factors that mediate this intriguing country-of-birth effect. Several factors seem worthy of exploration, including perceived acceptability of violence toward spouse, cultural conflicts, sense of relative deprivation, embeddedness within extended family networks, and internalization of mainstream values regarding autonomy and self-reliance.

Predictors of marital quality. To date, there is little evidence to suggest that the major predictors of marital quality and marital conflict differ across racial and ethnic groups. For example, Lindahl and Malik's (1999) recent study found that low levels of family cohesiveness, and hostile marital coalitions (redirecting marital conflicts into attacks on the child) in comparison to balanced family subsystem interactions predicted higher levels of marital conflict, irrespective of family ethnicity (Hispanic, European American, biethnic). In a similar vein, marital interactions (perceived) as-

sociated with marital happiness are generally similar for African American and European American couples (e.g., affective affirmation, unsupportive spouse, frequency of destructive conflict, sexual satisfaction; Oggins et al., 1993).

There is considerable evidence of racial disparity in marital happiness, however. Even when economic resources, education, premarital cohabitation, family constellation, and patterns of marital interaction are taken into account, African American couples report less marital happiness and satisfaction than European American couples (Adelmann et al., 1996; Broman, 1991; Oggins et al., 1993). Furthermore, contrary to popular perception, educational and occupational status inequality between spouses is neither a reliable predictor of marital quality among African American couples nor a significant contributor to race differences in marital happiness and satisfaction (Adelmann et al.; Creighton-Zollar & Williams, 1992). Another popular explanation of racial disparity in marital happiness is African Americans' greater exposure to extrafamilial pressures, such as racial discrimination and negative conditions in the workplace (Oggin et al.). The past decade brought virtually no empirical tests of these hypothesized links, although some work was done on family-work role strain in families of color (Beale, 1997; Rubin, 1994).

Because families of color tend to be less advantaged economically than are European American families, it is not surprising that the impact of economic resources and hardship on marital and interpersonal relations in families of color is an issue that commanded considerable attention during the past decade (Brody, Stoneman, & Flor, 1995; Chadiha, 1992; Clark-Nicolas & Gray-Little, 1991; Gomel, Tinsley, Parke, & Clark, 1998; Gutman & Eccles, 1999; Lawson & Thompson, 1995; McLoyd, Jayaratne, Ceballo, & Borquez, 1994). Perceived economic adequacy is even more potent than income or income loss in its negative impact on the quality of marital relations (Clark-Nicolas & Gray-Little) and family relations among African Americans (Gomel et al.). It also is a crucial pathway by which low family income increases depressive symptoms (McLoyd et al.) and parent-child conflict (Gutman & Eccles) in this population. Some work documented social support as a buffer of the negative effects of economic stress on individual psychological functioning (e.g., McLoyd et al.), whereas other research emphasized individual and dyadic behavior as

contributors to resiliency in couples facing economic stress (Chadiha).

Whereas prior studies of the processes through which financial resources influence family relations, parenting, and child functioning were based on samples comprised solely of European Americans or African Americans (Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz, & Simons, 1994; Conger, Conger, Elder, Lorenz, Simons, & Whitbeck, 1992; McLoyd et al., 1994; Simons, Lorenz, Conger, & Wu, 1992), by the late 1990s, increasing attention was being given to the question of whether European American families and families of color cope similarly or differently in the face of economic stress (Elder, Eccles, Ardelt, & Lord, 1995; Gomel et al., 1998; Gutman & Eccles, 1999). What gives this question cogency is prior work pointing to racial and ethnic differences in coping resources and the context of economic hardship (Duncan, 1991; Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, & Buriel, 1990).

Life-course changes. The question of how marital quality among couples of color changes over the course of marriage attracted a modest amount of scholarly attention during the past decade. Adelman and colleagues' (1996) analysis of African Americans and European Americans in their first marriages (with years of marriage ranging from 1 to 65 years), indicated a U-shaped association between years of marriage and marital satisfaction, similar to Glenn's (1989) finding. Nonetheless, years of marriage bore a negative linear relation to negative marital quality, such that marital discord and spousal negative behavior (e.g., ill-treatment, inability to forgive, excessive drinking) decreased with increases in years of marriage. Overall, these trends in marital quality held similarly for African Americans and European Americans, except that negative spouse behaviors decreased more sharply over time among the former than among the latter.

Other researchers focused attention on how management of marital conflict changes during the course of marriage (Crohan, 1996; Mackey & O'Brien, 1998). In Crohan's longitudinal study of newlywed couples, irrespective of race, couples who made the transition to parenthood reported more frequent conflicts, more marital tension, and a greater decline in marital happiness than couples who remained childless. Likewise, conflict behaviors among new parents were linked to marital happiness in similar ways for African American and European American spouses. Destructive conflict (e.g., insulting spouse, calling spouse names)

and active avoidance (leaving the scene of the conflict to cool down) predicted lower marital happiness for both new mothers and fathers, whereas passive avoidance (withdrawal) predicted higher marital happiness. Crohan's investigation did, however, reveal some race differences. Among European American couples, but not African American couples, the tendency to respond to marital conflict by becoming quiet and withdrawn increased after the birth of their child. Although African American couples did not respond to parenthood with an increase in passive avoidance, levels of passive avoidance before the transition to parenthood were actually higher among African American couples than European American couples, whereas the two groups were roughly comparable in use of this strategy following parenthood.

Marital and family conflict and child adjustment.

A handful of studies, most conducted within the past decade, suggest that marital and family conflict is linked to psychological distress, externalizing behavior, reduced life satisfaction, lower academic competence, and reduced self-regulation among children of color (Brody et al., 1995; Buehler et al., 1998; Dumka, Roosa, & Jackson, 1997; DuRant, Getts, Cadenhead, Emans, & Woods, 1995; Spencer, Cole, DuPree, Glymph, & Pierre, 1993). During the past decade, some scholars speculated that children of color may be less vulnerable than are European American children to the adverse effects of parental discord, separation, and divorce (Amato & Keith, 1991). Proponents of this hypothesis pointed out, first, that marital discord and dissolution as experienced by children of color often occurs in the context of an overabundance of stressful events and ongoing condition, potentially diminishing unique psychosocial effects. Second, the increased embeddedness of children of color in extended family networks, compared with their European American counterparts (Bahr, 1994; Dalla & Gamble, 1998; Fuller, Holloway, & Liang, 1996; Hunter, 1997; Ramos-McKay, Comas-Diaz, & Rivera, 1988; Vega, 1995; Wilson, 1986; Wilson & Tolson, 1990), is thought to ease the psychosocial burden that marital conflict places on the child by increasing economic resources, increasing the number of nurturant and supportive adults in the child's environment, and reducing children's exposure to marital conflict following separation (Amato & Keith; Smith, 1997).

Although the attenuation hypothesis lacks

strong, direct empirical support, the convergence of three strands of evidence published during the past decade bolsters its plausibility. First, Amato and Keith's (1991) meta-analysis comparing effect sizes across studies of parental divorce and adult well-being indicated that the impact of parental divorce on separation, divorce, nonmarital child-bearing, and educational attainment were significantly greater for European American adults than for African American adults. Some, but not all, of the findings from two recent prospective studies of child externalizing behavior preceding and following marital transitions follow this general pattern (Mason et al., 1994; Shaw, Winslow, & Flanagan, 1999).

A second strand of evidence lending support to the attenuation hypothesis are studies that assess marital conflict directly and report racial and ethnic differences in children's response to it. Buehler et al. (1998) found that the association between overt hostile conflict styles among parents (e.g., calling each other names, threatening each other) and externalizing problems in fifth to eighth graders was much weaker among Mexican Americans than among European Americans; the slope for the latter group (which included some ethnically mixed youth) was twice that of the slope for Mexican American youth. Likewise, Smith (1997) reported that the impact of parental separation on the school grades of seventh and ninth graders was weaker among African Americans than European Americans. In Lindahl and Malik's (1999) recent study, however, marital discord was found to affect externalizing behavior similarly in Latino and White boys.

A third strand of research evidence that provides indirect support for the attenuation hypothesis comes from Gohm and colleagues' (Gohm, Oishi, Darlington, & Diener, 1998) large international survey study of college students from 39 countries on six continents. The negative association of parental marital status and conflict to life satisfaction and affect balance (negative affect minus positive affect) was much weaker in students from collectivist countries (e.g., Ghana, Zimbabwe, China, Columbia) than students from individualistic countries (e.g., United States, Germany, Japan, Italy). Collectivism lessened both the impact of divorce following a high-conflict marriage and the impact of marital conflict when a parent remarried. The authors attributed this effect to higher levels of child-directed social support from extended family members in countries that are more collectivistic than individualistic. Collec-

tively, these findings about families of color, juxtaposed with those reported by Gohm et al., lend considerable plausibility to the notions that even within the American context, embeddedness in extended family networks protects children against the negative psychosocial effects of interparental conflict and that variation in extended family embeddedness may mediate racial and ethnic differences in children's response to marital conflict. Given their tenability and popularity, direct tests of these hypotheses clearly are warranted.

PARENTAL SOCIALIZATION PROCESSES

Although research on parenting and parent-child relations in families of color remains sparse compared with work on European American families, the 1990s saw a modest increase in both conceptual and empirical work focusing on African American, Latino, and Asian American groups. One important trend in conceptual work on the parenting of children of color was the increasing focus on identifying the positive influence on children of color of socialization practices based on cultures of origin (Garcia Coll & Magnuson, 1997; McAdoo, 1993). The shift from deficit models of parenting and child development to more sophisticated, ecological models that place parents and children of color at the center is well illustrated by the work of Garcia Coll et al. (1996). Their integrative model situates parenting within a larger framework that includes social position variables, racism, adaptive culture, and the wider social environment of schools and neighborhoods, among others. Such frameworks remind us that family relations—whether marital, parent-child, or kinship ties—do not occur within a vacuum, a resonant theme in the best work of the last decade.

Paternal Involvement

Earlier studies and writings, preoccupied as they were with the effect of poor fathers' absence on children, tended to portray fathers as uninvolved and distant from their children and largely ignored Latino fathers. Recent research in this area departs from earlier work by giving attention to both resident and nonresident African American and Latino fathers from economically diverse backgrounds. The empirical literature on the role of Asian American fathers continues to be extremely limited.

Quantity and quality of involvement. Roopnarine and colleagues (Ahmeduzzaman & Roopnarine, 1992; Hossain & Roopnarine, 1993, 1994) found that levels of involvement in primary caregiving (e.g., feeding, bathing) by African American fathers in middle-income and lower middle-income, dual-earner families with infant and preschool children tended to be as high, if not higher, than those reported for fathers from other ethnic groups. Increases in the number of hours the wife worked predicts increases in the amount of time African American fathers spend playing, reading, and directly interacting with their preschool children (Fagan, 1998) but appears to have no influence on how much time they spend in primary caregiving activities with infants (Hossain & Roopnarine, 1993). Not unlike their European American counterparts, African American husbands are more likely to spend time playing with the infant than in primary caregiving but, importantly, neither they nor their wives show differential time investment in caring for boys and girls (Hossain & Roopnarine, 1993, 1994). Low-income African American and Hispanic fathers (and mothers) do not differ in their level of parental involvement (Fagan; Hossain, Field, Pickens, Malphurs, & Del Valle, 1997), although African American parents, compared with their Hispanic counterparts, report receiving more assistance from extended family members in caring for their children (Hossain et al.). African American fathers and Hispanic fathers are more likely than are European American fathers to report monitoring and supervising their children's activities. In addition, survey data indicate that Latino fathers spend more time with their children in shared activities than do European American fathers, a finding consonant with the notion of familism (strong value for family closeness and cohesion) as a distinguishing feature of Hispanic cultures (Toth & Xu, 1999).

Research points to a range of individual and social factors as antecedents of paternal involvement and responsiveness. Regardless of racial and ethnic background (Hispanic, African American, and European American), fathers who are more involved with their children overall tend to be ones who hold nontraditional gender role and egalitarian family role ideologies, are highly committed to fatherhood and the family, and value obedience and compliance with family rules (Ahmeduzzaman & Roopnarine, 1992; Toth & Xu, 1999; Hossain & Roopnarine, 1994). In general, levels of various dimensions of paternal involve-

ment and nurturance (e.g., socialization, child care, availability) increase in African American and Puerto Rican two-parent families as income rises, and among African American families with increases in education, duration of marriage, fathers' family communication skills, fathers' self-esteem, and extrafamilial assistance to fathers in their parental role (Ahmeduzzaman & Roopnarine, 1992; Fagan, 1996, 1998; Hossain & Roopnarine). Among Ojibwa Indian fathers, paternal nurturance is greater among those who perceived that their own fathers were more nurturant during their upbringing, whereas the quantity of paternal involvement is higher among fathers who report higher community leadership expectations for their children (Williams, Radin, & Coggins, 1996).

Contributions to child functioning. A critical question in the literature is whether father involvement exerts unique effects on children's development beyond maternal characteristics and provision of economic support. Black, Dubowitz, and Starr (1999) found that nurturance displayed by fathers and father figures during play predicted advanced receptive language skills among low-income African American preschoolers, even after controlling for fathers' financial contributions and maternal age, education, and parenting satisfaction. Nonetheless, paternal nurturance was unrelated to children's IQ scores and problem behavior. In other research, father presence (continuous father coresidence; early vs. late onset of coresidence) predicted more advanced receptive language skills among Latino and African American children, but these effects disappeared once controls were introduced for economic resources and maternal IQ and education (Crockett, Eggebeen, & Hawkins, 1993).

Other studies report that greater paternal involvement is associated with higher cognitive and academic functioning in children of color, but the absence of controls for maternal and economic factors makes it impossible to claim that these relations represent unique effects of fathering (Hrabowski, Maton, & Greif, 1998; Williams et al., 1996; Zambrana-Ortiz & Lidz, 1995).

In sum, unique effects of fathering on the development of children of color have not yet been well documented. By countering the stereotype of fathers of color as a homogeneous group largely uninvolved and distant from their children, however, research conducted during the past decade laid the groundwork for more methodologically

rigorous and sophisticated study of relations between fathers of color and their children.

Discipline and Parenting Styles

Race and ethnic influences. The work of Dornbusch, Steinberg and colleagues (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991) suggests that the more authoritarian parenting style of African American and Latino parents is not conducive to school performance. These same studies, however, indicate that the authoritarian style of Asian American parents does not lead to lower school performance in this subgroup. Steinberg, Dornbusch, and Brown (1992) explained this contradictory pattern in terms of the role of peers, arguing that the high premium on school achievement reinforced within Asian American peer culture mitigates the more authoritarian parenting style of their parents. The basic classificatory system undergirding this work, which describes parents as either authoritarian or authoritative, came under scrutiny this past decade. Scholars of color, especially, questioned its generalizability outside a European American middle-class context and took issue with the apparently contradictory nature of the findings (Cauce & Gonzales, 1993; Chao, 1994). A recent study suggested that the "stricter" parenting styles of African Americans may be more in the eye of the (European American) beholder than in African American parenting. When both African American (ingroup) and non-African American (outgroup) observers watched and coded mother-daughter interactions, outgroup observers rated the mothers' parenting styles as more restrictive in their use of control. They also noted more conflict in the interactions than did ingroup observers (Gonzales, Cauce, & Mason, 1996).

Another important development in this area of research is Lindahl and Malik's (1999) distinction between "hierarchical" parenting and authoritarian parenting, somewhat akin to the distinction that scholars make between strictness and punitiveness (Baldwin, Baldwin, & Cole, 1990; Baumrind, 1972). Definitions of both parenting styles encompass parental decision making and the level of behavioral control parents use. However, whereas typical definitions of authoritarian parenting incorporate a cold and unresponsive emotional style, Lindahl and Malik explicitly excluded emotional components from their definition of hierarchical parenting. They posited and found ev-

idence that hierarchical parenting is more adaptive in Latino families than in European American families, presumably because of the former group's strong value of respecting parents, other authority figures, and intrafamilial boundaries. For both European American and biethnic families, but not for Latino families, hierarchical parenting predicted higher levels of externalizing behavior in grade-school boys than did democratic parenting. For all three ethnic groups, though, lax and inconsistent parenting predicted more problem behavior than did democratic parenting.

The past decade also witnessed challenges to conventional wisdom about parenting among Asian Americans. In her inventive study of parenting attitudes, Chao (1994) asked Chinese American and European American parents to rate both prototypical items endorsing authoritarian parenting and Chinese child-rearing items related to the concept of *chiao shun* or training. Chinese American parents were much more likely than were European American parents to score higher on the concept of training, even after accounting for parental control and authoritarian parenting. Chao concluded that characterizing such parents as controlling and authoritarian is inappropriate and ethnocentric. Chinese Americans see their parenting styles as neither controlling nor authoritarian but aligned more with the notion of providing clear and concrete guidelines for behavior.

During the past decade, scholars engaged in an intense conversation about the contribution of culture versus other factors to race differences in parents' use of physical discipline and its impact on children's development (e.g., Baumrind, 1997; Huesmann, 1997; Lytton, 1997), stimulated principally by research and theorizing by Dodge and his colleagues (Deater-Deckard & Dodge, 1997a, 1997b; Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1996). Deater-Deckard and colleagues' (1996) longitudinal study indicated that parents' use of physical discipline predicted higher levels of externalizing behavior among European American children, but not among African American children. In explaining these findings, these researchers asserted that within African American culture compared with European American culture, physical discipline short of abuse is more acceptable and more likely to be viewed as an appropriate display of positive parenting (Deater-Deckard & Dodge, 1997a). Consonant with this view is evidence that African American parents are more likely than European American parents to use physical punishment as a discipline strategy, even

taking account of socioeconomic status (Deater-Deckard et al.; Day, Peterson, & McCracken, 1998; Gils-Sims, Straus, & Sugarman, 1995; Hill & Sprague, 1999). Deater-Deckard and Dodge (1997a) posited normativeness of physical coercion and punishment during slavery, combined with existing racial oppression and threat of societal punishment, as factors underlying African Americans' increased preference for physical discipline. Tests of the replicability of the moderating effects of race found by Deater-Deckard et al. and rigorous data-based evaluations of whether variation in the acceptability, meaning, and parental attributes associated with spanking underlie race differences in the effects of physical discipline would be highly valuable contributions to the field.

One problem in comparing research on parenting in families of color and parenting in White families is the different methodologies used. The gold standard for studies of parent-child interactions requires an observational and interactional component to supplement questionnaires or surveys, which are completed by both parents and children. This provides a broad-based understanding of family dynamics from the perspective of parent, child, and outside observer. This methodology is extremely rare in studies of families of color, despite advances in normative research systematizing observational assessment and micro- and macro-level coding procedures (Okazaki & Sue, 1995). There are no published studies of Asian American family interactions that include an observational component, and there are only a few that focus on Latino or African American families (e.g., Fagan, 1996, 1998; Florsheim, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 1996; Lindahl & Malik, 1999).

In sum, although there is some evidence that the childrearing practices of African American, Latino, and Asian American parents may not always reflect European American middle-class norms, there is no clear consensus on just how they differ. This is, in part, because research directly addressing this issue is sparse and generally not up to the rigorous methodological standards now commonplace among the best studies examining parenting among European Americans. Nonetheless, the lack of clear-cut differentiations in parenting across ethnic groups may also reflect the wide diversity in parenting within these groups. To rival the conceptual advances of this decade, empirical research of the next decade will need to find ways to retain a focus on culture and

ethnicity while treating it as one of a number of factors that interact to affect family and child functioning.

Grandmother involvement. Keen interest in the impact on parenting of Latino and African American grandmothers' involvement in family processes began during the 1980s and was sustained throughout the 1990s. In most cases, the work focused on adolescent mothers, who are viewed as particularly vulnerable and whose children are considered at high risk for a host of negative outcomes. Some of this work paints a very positive portrait of grandmother involvement and support. African American and Latino adolescent mothers who report higher levels of grandmother support experience less psychological distress (Leadbeater & Linares, 1992), more positive interactions with their babies (Chase-Lansdale, Brooks-Gunn, & Zamsky, 1994), and higher levels of educational attainment (Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, & Morgan, 1987). Based in part on the belief that it is better for both the adolescent mother and her child(ren) to live with her mother, some welfare policies require adolescents to reside with a parent to receive benefits (Leven-Epstein, 1996).

Upon closer inspection, however, the impact of grandmother involvement, especially when mother and grandmother are coresiding, coparenting, or both, is decidedly mixed. For example, Latina adolescent mothers who report very high levels of support from their mothers have been found to display less maternal sensitivity (Contreras, Mangelsdorf, Rhodes, Diener, & Brunson, in press). Studies of Black and White urban or high-risk families have also suggested that coresidence and high levels of grandmother involvement can predict lower quality parenting by adolescent mothers (Black & Nitz, 1996; Oyserman, Radin, & Saltz, 1994; Unger & Cooley, 1992). These discordant findings beckon us to seek a better understanding of what types of support from grandmothers are helpful, what types are inert or detrimental, and under what circumstances these outcomes vary. Some work along these lines has been done (Chase-Lansdale et al., 1994; Contreras, Lopez, Rivera-Mosquera, Raymond-Smith, & Rothstein, 1999), but more is needed.

Neighborhood and peer influences. The well-designed and richly textured study conducted by Furstenberg and colleagues (Furstenberg, Cook, Eccles, Elder, & Sameroff, 1999) of African American and European American families living

in Philadelphia produced evidence that neighborhood characteristics have modest effects on two types of family management strategies: promotive strategies intended to foster children's talents and opportunities and preventive strategies that aim to reduce children's exposure to various types of dangerous circumstances. In terms of promotive strategies, parents in high-resource neighborhoods were more likely than parents in low-resource neighborhoods to enroll their adolescents in and take them to organized programs, whereas parents in low-resource neighborhoods were more likely to use verbal strategies, such as pointing out what might happen if the child did not develop his or her talents. Parents in low-resource communities used more preventive strategies than parents in high-resource communities and, in particular, were more likely to keep children home as much as possible, talk to them about dangers, and get them involved in prosocial activities outside their neighborhood. Parents in high-resource communities were more likely than those in low-resource communities to get their child involved in activities within their neighborhood as a preventive measure.

Other research affirmed the salutary effects of parental responsiveness to neighborhood conditions and peers (Baldwin et al., 1990; Jarrett, 1995). For example, Mason, Cauce, Gonzales, and Hiraga (1996) found that among adolescents who reported that their peers engaged in relatively low levels of problem behavior, the optimal level of behavioral control by mothers was low, whereas for those reporting that their peers were involved in higher levels of problem behavior, the optimal level of control was higher. Deviations from the optimal level of control had greater negative consequences on problem behavior among the latter group than the former group.

Immigration influences. Immigration accounted for a net increase in the United States from 1970 to 1990 of approximately 10 million people—a rare growth spurt that matches the rise in the immigrant population at the onset of the 20th century. The estimated number of undocumented migrants increases the figure by another two million (Muller, 1993). A major difference between the rise in immigrants coming to the United States in the early 1900s and the current increase is the source of immigration. At the turn of the century, most immigrants came from Europe and Canada, whereas the recent immigration has come primar-

ily from Asia and Latin America (Portes & Rumbaut, 1990).

It is not surprising, then, that much of the sparse research on Latino and Asian American families focused on issues related to acculturation. Most of this work suggests that as Latino and Asian American parents become acculturated, their childrearing practices (e.g., teaching and play interactions, use of reasoning) and attitudes become more similar to those of parents born in the United States (Kelley & Tseng, 1992; Perez-Felbes, 1992). Although most theories and studies of acculturation and assimilation place individuals and families on a linear path from immigration to assimilation to acculturation, the recent work of Zhou and Bankston (1998) provides a more complex picture of how families choose different paths toward adaptation and mobility. Because Vietnamese families typically live in low-income neighborhoods that may be divorced from the mainstream, they can choose from at least two paths. They can become marginal to their own ethnic community, abandon their ethnic identity, and adapt an identity common to inner cities that has few options for upward mobility. Or they can choose to adhere to Vietnamese community values and follow Vietnamese authority figures, which may eventually lead to more opportunities for upward mobility. Other research illustrates how acculturation may erode some primary cultural differences, even when others are maintained. For example, in an empirical study of cultural values, parents from four immigrant groups (Cambodians, Filipinos, Mexicans, and Vietnamese) were contrasted with Anglo American and Mexican American parents (Okagaki & Divecha, 1993). Immigrant parents placed more importance on promoting behaviors that conform to external standards, whereas the two American groups placed more value on promotion of autonomous functioning. Nonetheless, only European Americans rated cognitive factors as more important than noncognitive factors as determinants of whether a first grader was “intelligent.”

Adding to the complexity of the acculturation process is the finding that the speed of this process may vary by generation. Children adjust to new environments and adapt to new values more quickly than do their parents. Hence, another area of research focuses on how acculturation affects intergenerational conflict between children and their parents. This line of research has been best elaborated over the past two decades by Szapocznik and his colleagues (Santiesteban et al.,

1996; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1989, 1993; Szapocznik, Kurtines, Santiesteban, & Rio, 1990; Szapocznik, Rio, Hervis, Mitrani, Kurtines, & Faraci, 1991). These scholars have illuminated how acculturative stresses can lead to family conflict that, when handled poorly, can engender increased problem behaviors among Cuban American and, more recently, non-Cuban Latino youth in South Florida. They illustrate how culturally sensitive, conceptually grounded, and empirically driven family treatment and intervention can ameliorate these difficulties and improve Latino family and youth functioning. This work is among the only to examine programmatically and empirically the utility of a family therapy strategy developed specifically for families of color at various stages of acculturation.

Fulgini and colleagues' investigation of the attitudes toward autonomy, family cohesion, and family obligations of adolescents with Filipino, Chinese, Mexican, Central and South American, and European backgrounds, many of them immigrant, reveals that immigrant and first-generation youth display influences of both their culture-of-origin and American culture. For example, Asian American and Latino youth, whose cultures have been considered more collectivistic, possessed stronger values and greater expectations regarding their obligation to assist and support their families than did European American youth (Fulgini, Tseng, & Lam, 1999). Both Mexican and Filipino youth were less willing than White American youth to disagree with their fathers. Yet developmental trends toward increasing autonomy over time, including greater willingness to disagree with parents, were the same across all groups (Fulgini, 1998). Fulgini concluded that immigrant youth may have difficulty maintaining some traditional values (e.g., lower levels of autonomy) when they move to a new society that does not support those values, but other values (e.g., accepting and fulfilling familial obligations) remain strong.

Racial and Ethnic Socialization

Building on extensive conceptual and psychometric work and a handful of empirical studies published between 1980 and 1990, scholarly attention to the contents and correlates of racial and ethnic socialization intensified during the past decade. Although the bulk of this research continued to focus on African Americans, the past decade brought increasing attention to these issues in oth-

er groups of color. It is also noteworthy that many of these studies included both mothers and fathers (DeBerry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Thomas & Speight, 1999).

Nature and content of messages. Parents of color and White parents alike talk to their children about race, but they do so with very different goals. Whereas White parents discuss race with their children to promote attitudes of tolerance and equality, African American parents' discussions of race with their children tend to focus on preparing their children for prejudice (Kofkin, Katz, & Downey, 1995). Within-group analysis indicates that parents of color convey messages about children's cultural heritage and the importance of racial pride more frequently than they convey messages about racial bias and discrimination and how to prepare for these circumstances (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Marshall, 1995; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Thomas & Speight, 1999). In addition, especially when they are first-generation, Asian American and Latino families typically teach their children the traditions and values of their cultures-of-origin (Buriel & DeMent, 1997; Garcia Coll & Magnuson, 1997; Kibria, 1997). Messages intended to promote racial mistrust are a comparatively minor, if not rare, element of racial socialization, at least among African American parents (Hughes & Chen; Thomas & Speight). Nonetheless, these general patterns inexplicably are not found when offspring, rather than parents, are informants about parental racial socialization (Sanders-Thompson, 1994).

Racial and ethnic differences. African American parents vary considerably in the importance they attach to preparing their children to deal with racial stereotyping and discrimination and in the frequency with which they reportedly engage in racial socialization (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Marshall, 1995; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990). Nonetheless, they generally provide more extensive racial and ethnic socialization than other parents of color studied thus far, a finding in keeping with the especially virulent and egregious discrimination that African Americans have historically faced and continue to experience (Feagin, 1991; Jaynes & Williams, 1989). Phinney and Chavira's (1995) study of a triethnic sample indicated that African American parents were more likely to report talking with their adolescent children about racial and ethnic prejudice as a prob-

lem and how to handle it than were Mexican American parents, who in turn were more likely to talk about these issues than were Japanese American parents. The themes that parents emphasize during the course of ethnic socialization are also related to race and ethnicity. Whereas Japanese American parents are more disposed than African American and Mexican American parents to underscore the importance of achievement, without mention of prejudice, African American parents report a greater tendency than the other two groups to discuss both achievement and themes dealing with prejudice.

Sources of within-group variation in racial and ethnic socialization. Among African American parents, factors that predict greater parental racial and ethnic socialization include higher levels of exposure to parental racial socialization during the parent's own childhood, heightened perception of racial bias in the parent's workplace (Hughes & Chen, 1997), and having a race-linked self-concept wherein racial identity is internalized with one's self-concept (Thomas & Speight, 1999). Among Mexican American mothers, those who engage in greater ethnic socialization tend to have a higher level of comfort with Mexican culture (e.g., speaking Spanish, enjoyment of Mexican foods and activities) and conversely a lower level of comfort with American culture. They also are more likely to have husbands whose families have been in the United States for fewer generations (Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, & Ocampo, 1993). Research is mixed regarding whether socioeconomic factors are related to racial and ethnic socialization (Hughes & Chen; Phinney & Chavira, 1995).

Racial socialization reportedly is more frequent among parents of adolescents than parents of children in middle childhood, who in turn report more frequent racial socialization than parents of children in preschool and the early years of grade school (Hughes & Chen, 1997). No consistent relation has been found between child gender and the frequency and content of parental racial socialization (Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Thomas & Speight, 1999; Sanders-Thompson, 1994).

Relations between racial and ethnic socialization and children's development. Studies of African American children report weak, scattered associations or no relation of racial and ethnic socialization to children's racial identity, school achievement, or beliefs about the best way of

dealing with racial and ethnic stereotyping and discrimination (DeBerry et al., 1996; Marshall, 1995; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Studies of Mexican Americans also have failed to find robust relations between parental ethnic socialization and children's psychological functioning. Knight and colleagues' (1993) investigation indicated that children whose mothers taught more about Mexican culture and lived in homes with more Mexican objects possessed a greater number of correct ethnic self-labels, engaged in more ethnic-linked behaviors (e.g., piñatas at birthday parties; speaking Spanish at home) and had more ingroup ethnic preferences. Nonetheless, no overall relation was found between ethnic socialization and children's ethnic identity. Quintana, Castaneda-English, and Ybarra (1999) found that parental ethnic socialization predicted higher levels of ethnic identity achievement among Mexican American adolescents but was unrelated to adolescents' level of understanding or construction of ethnicity (e.g., focus on physical features vs. internal psychological features). This weak pattern of relation between racial and ethnic socialization and children's development may be due to the small samples characteristic of most studies or may indicate that relations are domain-specific.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Research on families of color made some noteworthy strides in the last decade. For African Americans, the research literature evolved from documenting demographic changes in family structure and formation to investigating the underlying causes of such changes and from a unidimensional perspective on gender roles among African American men to one suggestive of the complexities of this issue. For Latinos, studies began to explode the myth that the macho man and submissive woman are the norm. Our knowledge is much greater than heretofore about the nature and determinants of the division of household labor and marital processes in both African American and Latino families. We also have at least begun to examine Asian American families. In addition to the flourishing of research on racial and ethnic socialization, we witnessed a burgeoning of interest in the role of African American and Latino fathers, the emergence of more culturally valid constructs of parenting for all three racial and ethnic groups, and a remarkable growth in our understanding of how parenting in families of color is shaped by neighborhood context, grandmother

involvement, children's peers, immigration, and acculturation. Although not a theory as such, the growing emphasis on an ecological framework allowed for an examination of a variety of issues within a larger contextual framework. Also discernible, however faintly, is a broadening of the generic perspective on familial socialization from one framed almost exclusively in terms of the parent-child dyad to one concerned with the family system and marital processes as contributors to children's functioning.

Recent increases in the number of studies that focused specifically and exclusively on families of color from a specific ethnic group have important implications for the development of theory. These studies advance a more diverse portrait of people of color, including an appreciation of the role that social class plays within each group. In addition, although rarely acknowledged, many of these studies were conducted by people of color. As such, interpretations are often made from an insider's perspective, in contrast to the outsider's view more common in the 1980s.

Notwithstanding these achievements, social science research on marital processes and familial socialization has considerable distance to go before it adequately reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of the United States. If people from a distant country or planet had to deduce the current racial and ethnic composition of the United States based on reading our family studies and child development journals, they probably would conclude that it is 85 to 90% White and about 10% Black, with a miniscule percentage of Latinos and Asian Americans. It would be easy to miss that there are any American Indian or multiracial families at all. This disconnection between the demographic reality of the United States and our data base is unfortunate and must change if our work is to remain relevant to policy makers or professionals who work directly with families and children. The dearth of family research is a special area of concern because the demographic revolution is already present in the classrooms, schools, and lives of our children. For real progress to occur, we not only need more studies, but higher quality ones (McLoyd & Steinberg, 1998). Studies characterized by poor measurement, inappropriate constructs, or both do not yield useful information. One of the most important advances in the last decade was the new conceptual frameworks that urge us to place families in context and to take into account that ethnicity and race do not exist in isolation from class and gender hierar-

chies. A major challenge for the new century is translation of these sophisticated and nuanced models into sound empirical research. An examination of the interactive and joint effects of culture and context offers to greatly enrich research in the coming decade.

Another important challenge is applying to studies of families of color the methodological sophistication characteristic of the best research on European American families. State-of-the-art work on European American families is typically longitudinal and includes careful observation, yet there are few studies of families of color that encompass these methodologies. Most of our knowledge base on the latter families still depends on cross-sectional studies or short-term longitudinal ones. It is still relatively rare for normative studies of families of color to include both the perspective of parents and children, and still fewer include an observational component. Prevention and intervention studies, review of which was beyond the scope of this paper, are the most common types of longitudinal research conducted with families and children of color. But when our core knowledge on family processes among European Americans is based on normative studies, whereas that on people of color is based on follow-ups of high-risk families, there is grave danger that our work will reinforce common stereotypes and prejudices. Advances in theory and methods throughout the 1990s provide a clear road map for the type of research needed in the future. The road is not an easy one, and we will undoubtedly encounter many unanticipated bumps and detours along the way, but there is no good alternative to continuing the journey. Given projected demographic changes, to do otherwise means short-changing half the American population.

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