Humans Engage in Cultural Learning

- Shared intentionality allows for "cultural learning"
- Michael Tomasello studies:
  - 2-Year old humans vs. Apes
    - Intentionality, social learning, communication
- Social learning and communication provides foundation for cooperation with other humans

Enculturation and Socialization

- How do we get culture?
- Culture must be learned with practice through prolonged process
  - Socialization: process by which we learn and internalize rules and patterns of society
  - Enculturation: process of youngsters learning and adopting ways and manners of their culture

Culture, Parenting, and Families

- Family: most important microsystem to child’s development
- By observing parents we are observing essence of a culture
- Study of parenting within cultural context tells us what is important to that culture

Culture, Parenting, and Families

- Six Cultures Study
- Economics
- Goals and Beliefs
- Parenting Styles
- Parenting Behaviors and Strategies
- Siblings
- Extended and Multigenerational Families
### Whiting and Whitings’ Six Cultures Study

- **Major focus**
  - Examine child rearing and children's behavior
  - Child's behavior and personality is connected to the broader ecology
  - Women's work roles contribute to children's social behaviors

### Economics

- Economic conditions $\Rightarrow$ variation in socialization
- Caregiving environment reflects set of goals ordered in importance:
  
  ![Diagram](image)

  - Cultural Values (Prestige)
  - Self-sufficiency
  - Physical health and survival

### Parenting Goals and Beliefs

- So we have safety and physical needs, now what?

- Goals and beliefs
  - What do you want your children to do and value?
  - Parental ethnotheories: parental cultural belief systems
  - Motivate parenting and provide a framework for parenting

- Differences in culturally accepted goals $\Rightarrow$ Differences in parenting

### Global Parenting Style

- Two dimensions of parenting
  1. Parental acceptance.
  2. Parental control.

- Four parenting styles
Global Parenting Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental control</th>
<th>Parental acceptance</th>
<th>Global Parenting Style</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>□ Permissive</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Immature and difficulty acting independently and controlling impulses</td>
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<td>□ Uninvolved/Neglectful</td>
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<td>▪ Noncompliant and demanding</td>
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Parenting Behaviors and Strategies

□ Sleeping arrangements

□ HOME Inventory:
▪ Warmth and responsiveness
▪ Discipline
▪ Stimulation/teaching

□ Parenting beliefs and practices are consistent with developmental goals dictated by culture
Domain-Specific Parenting

- Global parenting ignores differences due to particular child, situation, and context
- Domain-specific approach:
  - Focuses on parenting behaviors rather than general styles
  - Parenting practices must be appropriate for domain in which child is functioning

siblings

- Siblings play important role in socialization of children
  - Roles: tutors, buddies, playmates, caretakers
- Skills learned from siblings
  - Perspective-taking, social understanding, conflict negotiation
- Repeated and prolonged interaction

extended and multigenerational families

- Who lives in your house?
  - In US, multigenerational households are becoming more common

culture and peers

- Postfigurative cultures (culture change is slow):
  - Socialization by elders transferring their knowledge
- Cofigurative cultures (culture change is quicker):
  - Adults socialize their children, but peers play a greater role in socializing each other
- Prefigurative cultures (culture change is rapid):
  - Young people may be the ones to teach adults
Exposure to Peer Groups

- Industrialized countries: Lots of same-age peer interaction
- Solitary farm settlements: limited peer access
- Hunting and gathering society: children may be socialized by multiple-age peers

Peers and Bullying

- Three criteria of bullying
  - Intentional physical or psychological harm
  - Based on a power imbalance between the bully and victim
  - Repeated over time
- Rate of bullying varies across cultures
- Definition of bullying?
  - One on one?
  - Group exclusion?
  - Physical or verbal aggression?

Culture and Education

- Schools
  - Formalized mechanism of instruction
  - Teaches thinking skills and knowledge
- But also reinforces cultural values

Math Achievement

- Math and culture have a very special relationship
- Stigler and Baranes (1988): math skills “...forged out of a combination of previously acquired (or inherited) knowledge and skills, and new cultural input”
- US lags behind China in math
  - Even in children as young as 3!
Social and Cultural Factors That Influence Math Achievement

- Language
- School systems
- Parental and familial values
- Teaching styles
- Attitudes and appraisals of students

Summary

- Cross-national differences in academic achievement not due to biological differences
- Many social and cultural factors play a role:
  - Economics
  - Geography
  - Resources
  - Cultural values and beliefs
  - Abilities and experiences
  - Language
  - Family dynamics

Putting it All Together

- Child rearing represents culture's way of ensuring values and norms are transmitted to children
- Practices are ritualized to transmit information from generation to next generation
- Contemporary theories: children's active processing of information results in reproduction of culture and production of new elements