

The changes in ethnic cultures over the years in america

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



The USA is consists of a wide variety of cultural and ethnic groups. Such diversity has variously been described as being a “ melting pot”, “ cultural mosaic” or evens still a “ tossed salad”. Such ethnicities include Chicano, Afro-Latin American, Asian American, American-Indian and African-American. Such peoples exhibit different cultural elements through clothing, food, ceremonies and recreation. Native Americans have evolved from the interaction of typical UScultureplus subjection to alien government structures, ideology, and social arrangement with different Native Americans’ traditional civilizations.

Present Native Americans exhibit certain common features which, to some extent, may be a merger of conventional elements, adaptive tactics, as well as different acculturation levels to prevailing cultures. Such elements include: a persisting feeling of pride regarding cultural legacy; a conviction in spirit and body interrelatedness; dependence upon relationship networks and extended society and culturally uniquecommunicationmethods (Amoko, 2000, 377). The communication style so depicted is less spoken and less direct compared to that of mainstream USA culture.

It exhibits courtesy standards and suitable interaction standards. African Americans are in touch with some conscious knowledge of existing as an ingredient of a grouping having a specific historical position and some political association with different groups in the USA. Additionally, particular African Americans have common world viewpoints and affiliations which are based upon aspects of Protestantism, conventional African culture and indenturehood, subordination and slavery within United States society.

Every African American does not embrace a black uniqueness. Possession of such identity implies that reference grouping functions within individual identity become grounded within an individual's blackness (Tamase, 2007, 476). The values, cultural favorites, artistic flavors, leisure actions, food preferences and cooking methods, religious and secular musical preferences, church association, group membership, plus social associations or close friends all are prejudiced by individual apparent relationship with black persons.

Therefore, several or majority of the hope and meaning individuals have for leading purposeful lifestyle's are related to personal self-perception as African-Americans (Azoulay, 1999, 364). Africentric viewpoints of the world are characterized by commonresponsibility, interdependence and cooperation. Protestantism within black civilization promotes collectivity and group unity. Extended families are the suitable examination for African Americanfamilystudies. With no regard to revenue levels, African Americans exhibit more probability of living together with extended family relatives.

African American place substantially more value to spiritual matters in treating and causing developmental plus other physical disabilities. Rather that, or on top of, seeking medical help or consulting rehabilitation schemes, numerous African Americans greatly depend upon community assistance, especially church aid. Parents of African American children exhibit wider perceptions regarding normalcy plus they possess a broader variety of expectations regarding developmental landmarks in the behavior of children as compared to numerous educational experts (Pincheon, 2000, 273).

The Hipic culture exhibits high diversity as regards ethnicity, Culture, economic and education levels, and geographic source. However, certain commonalities as regards beliefs, customs as well as world viewpoints exist. Conventional Hipics exhibit a culture founded on catholic philosophy with inextricable intertwining of native South American and central ideologies concerning the world.

Characteristics identified from Hipic cultures include: the dominance of the family concept having a obviously defined authority hierarchy; an individualized though ritualistic admiration based upon selfhood as opposed to achievement, and that which makes persons from conventional Hipic civilization to feel at ease amid north American-type professionalism that accords respect based on a person's possession of particular skills and devaluation of persons with darker skin and according of more value to social standing (Amoko, 2000, 376)

Viewpoints regarding disability among Hipics are prejudiced by convictions regarding the interaction of spiritual and physical realms. Families, acting as very influential support organizations, regard certain situations as being only reflections of personal differences as opposed to disability. They thus adapt work and family roles in order to put up with such differences (Anderson, 2004, 346). Nevertheless, extreme disability, particularly developmental types, is regarded as a shame within traditional Hipic families.

Numerous conventional families, despite the fact that they could look for aid from conventional health structures, also could look for assistance from traditional healers and clergy members. However, acculturated, urbanized

Hipics do not exhibit much utilization of traditional healers' services. A 1991 survey involving seventy five Mexican women revealed that 97% were conversant with traditional healing and in excess of 50% had already been subjected to folk healing (Dernbach, 2005, 503).

Thus, for numerous Mexican Americans, traditional medical services as well as folk therapy are crucial, with each tackling various requirements in various ways. The Asian American group is very difficult to explain owing to huge racial disparities among groupings and disparities regarding language, culture and religion. It comprises close to 5 percent of the American population. However, certain commonalities exhibit themselves because the core of eastern civilizations is harmony and collectivity.

Such cultures exhibit characteristics such as: social regulation; harmony; regulations regarding propriety; benevolence; filial faithfulness; cooperation; loyalty; obligation and reciprocity. Such qualities exist in a structure of arranged relationships and roles which focus on interdependence and subordination. A conviction regarding the preeminence of the collective harmony over the individual is further exhibited in respect to history (Amoko, 2000, 382). American having Chinese lineage exhibit high levels of social harmony (collectivism) as opposed to individualism portrayed within mainstream USA culture.

Such concern for harmony-within-hierarchy borrows heavily from Confucian ideology and usually persists to influence American with Chinese lineage. Such preoccupation with conventional Chinese culture regarding operation in structured and well-defined social linkages could result to certain Chinese

Americans expecting similar well-defined system and function within a counseling (rehabilitation) relationship (Simon-Klutz, 2002, 284). The client-oriented viewpoint employed by numerous USA rehabilitation therapists could be regarded as too ambiguous by clients of Chinese descent.

Pacific civilization exhibits cultural observations like observing humility, respect, family involvement and choice and being and living with ones family. Conventional pacific Culture reveres family life plus the safeguarding of family respect. For instance, within conventional Samoan traditions, individuals are conferred identity only if they can illustrate their relationships to “ alga” or the extended family (Tamase, 2007, 472). Individual requirements, eccentricities and objectives should be suppressed to benefit the family grouping.

Within Samoa as well as in the greater Pacific region, strong restraints against exposure of family issues to outside parties exist. The language used among American Samoans originates from the Austronesian linguistic family. The subgroups are Tuvalu, Tokelu and Samoan. Residents of American Samoa speak both English and Samoan languages. Symbolism among Samoans exists in from of ‘ the Samoan way” or ‘ fa’samoa’. This includes beliefs, traditions and attitudes symbolizing a world viewpoint explaining suitable way of life, common through out the archipelago (Anderson, 2004, 349).

Ancient Samoans cultivated taro and yams, kept chickens, dogs and pigs and practiced lapita pottery. They sailed using double-hulled sea vessels. Under United States navy government, Samoan culture was preserved when it was

not counter to us regulations. Hereditary and talking chiefs had permission to continue assemblage forms to handle local politics. Up to the 1900s, Samoans practiced rural lifestyles and this still is the case within many villages out of Pago Pago Bay and outlying isles. Urbanization has been slightly attained near the airfield and Pago Pago bay.

Up to the 1950s, ' fale' or traditional homes consisted of elliptical structures having corral pebble floors plus round wood prop underneath a beehive-like roof enveloped by sugarcane leaves thatch. Such open residences promoted contact with members of the public and offered little privacy (Esbenshade, 2004, 351). Many households had a sleeping plus a cooking house of smaller size located at the rear, several owned guest houses for hosting visitors. Starting in the 1970s, construction of ' hurricane' concrete houses having corrugated metallic roofs has been encouraged by the American administration to reduce tempest damage.

Such rectangular houses exhibit increased privacy since they have windows, doors, and at times room dividers. Houses may also be constructed from brick or wood (Amoko, 2000, 385). Traditional homes had minimal furnishings consisting only of sleeping and sitting mats however, contemporary houses exhibit full furnishing with most having telephones and television. Parliamentary structures are of the conventional elliptical shape, as well as community school structures, sections of the airfield terminal and the growers market.

Several business buildings at present depict American building designs. Staple foodstuffs in American Samoa include breadfruit, taro, coconuts,

bananas, mangoes, papayas, chicken, canned corned beef, seafood and pork. Occasional foods include potatoes, onions, lettuce, carrots, cabbages, tomatoes and beans. Mostly foodstuffs found within us markets are in stock in supermarkets (Anderson, 2004, 356). Long ago, food was eaten during the mid-morning plus early dusk. Food gets cooked although it could be eaten raw. Majority of families sat on mats down on the ground in the traditional times.

Guests and elders get served initially and children and women eat last. Owing to changing work cycle, now families have three mealtimes per day. Majority of Tutuila restaurants concentrate on American plus other alien foods, however several present more conventional Samoan foodstuffs (Pincheon, 2000, 277). Foods dished up during ceremonial functions include: entire pigs plus daily fare; potato salad; puddings; palusami; chop suey; ice cream and cakes. A lot of food is prepared and served during special occasions as guest may carry home excess servings.

Kava, which is a slightly narcotic, none-alcoholic drink, is given to chiefs during ceremonial events. Majority of land is possessed by Samoans except for a little church and government owned land. Traditional communal land ownership was done through 'aiga' and was governed by 'matai' and this remains the case up to now. Several whites who were spouses to women from Samoa obtained land ownership prior to the 1930s at the time land selling was prohibited by the USA navy (Esbenshade, 2004, 351). Personal land buying is currently allowed only for individuals having a minimum of 50% Samoan ancestry.

Majority of business is related to trading in imported commodities and the American dollar is the exchange medium. Eating places are the most popular retail business ventures followed by grocery shops especially little family-operated general shops. Fish handling and canning is the biggest industry. Tuna is canned and exported to the USA. Age is crucial in determining work functions; young people undertake strenuous undertakings and elderly persons have more inactive, educational and supervisory roles. Children responsibilities are bases in the household while older and middle-aged people assume leadership functions.

Formerly a number of persons possess special skills regarding making traditional houses and boats, medicine and fishing (Dernbach, 2005, 511). No real class systems exist within American Samoa. The titles of chiefs are classified to some extent on the basis of ancient traditions. Such titles are reserved to particular families, called 'aiga'; however, a number of them are positioned higher and get more respect compared to others. Such ranking is basically important ceremonially because it decides membership to the 'village council' or 'fono' and the order of serving kava, however everyone gets a speaking opportunity (Azoulay, 1999, 369).

Any man can vie to become a "matai, because titles get obtained through democratic elections held by the "aiga". Prior to adoption of currency economic systems, men performed strenuous agriculture, house building and fishing. Young males prepared most of normal meals and cooked during ceremonial occasions. Women' chores included weaving mats, sewing, child nurturing, laundry and afterwards preparing meals using contemporary

appliances. Majority of such traditional chores persist to date, however, fresh alternatives are significant.

Women and men currently work within banks, tuna factories, stores, schools and tourist ventures. Men are employed in transportation, construction, government organizations and shipping. Historically, men have dominated Samoan society with women exerting much behind-the-scenes authority authoritative and professional posts are mostly held by males, however females occupy significant positions within government organizations and sometimes act as “ matai” (Simon-Klutz, 2002, 282). The youth select wedding partners; however marriage remains basically a financial alliance joining families.

Previously, chiefs' children intermarried, while those having lower statuses usually eloped. Individuals may not marry or date close relatives. Almost all persons marry, often during mid towards late 20s, and marriages involve intricate exchange of gifts by two family units. Divorce cases are uncommon; however remarriages among the youth are quite common. Households average 7 persons consisting of a single or additional nuclear family units plus relatives. They involve 3 generations and exhibits flexibility as regards composition. Members are linked by blood, adoption and marriage.

Following marriage, reside at the groom's or bride's household. Each household is led by a ' matai'. All economic and social activities are governed by ' matai' (Anderson, 2004, 350). The biggest kin grouping remains ' aiga' that involves every person having a shared ancestor. Such extensive family could have family units in various sections of the village or

within a number of villages. Such households' matai exert different authority levels in the ' aiga'. Matai resolves family disputes and decides regarding fiscal contributions of a family to funerals, church gifts and weddings.

The complete aiga primarily intermingles during funerals, weddings, elections plus matai installation and emergencies within families ([http://www. everyculture. com/A-Bo/American-Samoa. html](http://www.everyculture.com/A-Bo/American-Samoa.html)). Infants are accorded much attention and affection and are carried or held in the initial year. Household usually have grandmothers who often act as key babysitters. Usually young kids are overseen by grandmothers or other household females and usually by elder siblings. Respect and reverence for authority and age are instilled from early ages.

Educational programs for nursery kids plus universal community school schooling is in place. America Samoans exhibit meticulousness regarding courtesy, especially to chiefs and elderly persons. It is not proper to stand up when other people are sitting. In case an individual gets into a room and finds other persons seated on the ground, they ought to slightly bend and utter " tulouna" or ' excuse me'. Respectful terms are employed when holding discussions with chiefs. Etiquette plus reciprocal politeness are used during political and ceremonial events.

Prior to influx of missionaries by 1830, the maker of the isles plus the people therein was taken to be Tagaloa and religious headship from families was provided by matai (Tamase, 2007, 475). Initial missionaries were from the London Missionary Society and they established the congregation of Christian Church of American Samoa to which 5% of Samoans belong. The

Catholic Church has 20% of Samoan followers while the other 30% is taken by Methodist, Pentecostal and Mormon denominations. Western rites are involved during church proceedings with vocal music being a vital element.

Devotion of fresh churches has supreme significance and vocal competitions and feasts mark it. Visitors from the USA and close by islands come for such celebrations. Death is regarded as the will of God and the customary conviction that when one dies at a far away location from their residence such person's spirits trouble survivors continues. Up to the 1980s, funeral services were held one day after one died. Introduction of morgue services permits delayed interment to cater for relatives abroad. During burials, the deceased family is offered gifts.

Interment happens on relations' land (Dernbach, 2005, 515). April 17th Flag Day is marked by activities like customary grouping singing and dancing, cricket matches, canoe races and speeches. This commemorates the time when the Samoan isles became part of the USA in 1900. Oratory remains a vital custom, and numerous mythology, poetry and legends have survived owing to usage by talking chiefs during village committee deliberation as well as during ceremonial events (<http://www.ncddr.org/products/researchexchange/v04n01/cultures.html>).

The people of Samoa treasure bark cloth wall-hangings (siapo) plus finemats and regard them as family possessions for exchanging during ceremonial events. Finemat and siapo production increasingly is becoming rare. Formerly having tattoos was a prerequisite for being admitted into aumage or qualification for the title of a chief. Such art was outlawed within

American Samoa a long time ago. However, fresh interest recently draws young males to previously Western Samoa to have the intricate knee-to-upper-abdomen tattoos done on them.

Dancing and singing in groups remain popular forms of art. Huge women or men dancing groups perform unified movements characterized by body and hand claps. Village ritual princesses (taupou) perform Solo dances at times accompanied by men prop dancers ([http://www. everyculture. com/A-Bo/American-Samoa. html](http://www.everyculture.com/A-Bo/American-Samoa.html)). The ' face' notion, originating from Confucian ideology, among traditional Pacific and Asian Americans makes people's belief that " losing face" owing to mental diseases within families could subject families or the person to spiritual or religious crisis.

Asians exhibit the least optimistic attitudes towards disabled persons. Numerous Asian Americans are convinced that metaphysical or supernatural forces have a function in disease and health and in misfortune and fortune (Anderson, 2004, 357). Such convictions greatly influence perceptions regarding reasons for disability, therapy of such disability and guilt feelings and shame or responsibility related to having a disabled family member. Conventional Asian Pacific citizens usually source for assistance from sources different from, or on top of, western rehabilitation or medical system.

Families will usually desire to seek customary Asian therapies, like herbal medication, or perform particular actions with a view to restoring the equilibrium of the natural world. Asian Americans depend more upon casual social associations as compared to other minorities. American Indians comprise of in excess of five hundred tribal groupings that exhibit great

diversity within. Majority of conventional Indian dialects have no word for disabled, handicapped or retarded. Instead of utilizing such classifications, phrases regarding persons descriptive of disabilities, for instance, "one-who-walks-with-a-limp" or "one-arm," may be assigned.

Convictions regarding spirit and body interrelatedness contrasts with mainstream belief systems. Strongly traditional American Indians could source for assistance from traditional healers and also the typical rehabilitation and medical systems (<http://www.ncddr.org/products/researchexchange/v04n01/cultures.html>). Paradigm modifications happen within all disciplines as technology or knowledge advances. Key shifts within such cultural models are comprehensive, rare and significantly impact on cultural, social as well as political precedence within society.

Industrial revolution's second stage resulted to contemporary society which is characterized by capitalism, humanist principles, political democratic systems, Newton's physics and transcendental romanticism. Contemporary regimes witnessed the appearance of bourgeoisie, contemporary art plus the conviction that it is possible to understand the earth by applying reason. Modern age also incorporated cultural, economic and political policies on the basis of freedom and equality ideals and progress. Postmodernism's arrival within the 1960s led to slight alterations within contemporary society.

Despite the fact that postmodernism dislodged occidental theories plus numerous other ideals related to the contemporary period, it failed to offer the momentum needed to restructure society. This impetus required some

circumstances which exposed social injustices prevailed within existing economic and political systems and at the same time offer alternative solutions (Anderson, 2004, 359). America has ceased to be a “melting point” because it does not incorporate minorities within majority cultures. Currently, there exists diverse pluralism of culture developed by way of acculturation.

Such pluralism is described in regard to minorities’ liberties relative to prevailing culture. Minorities contribute within majority cultures while disregarding the threat of losing their sub-culture uniqueness. Racial minorities, religious groupings, and philosophical subcultures exist side by side and stand other groups’ customs. A non-hierarchical democratic pluralism supported through communication expertise is substituting the prevailing culture. The notion of regarding product utilization as being an end is dying away and focus is directed locally.

The majority has discarded its fixation upon consumerism to embrace fresh attention to friends, family plus social groupings having comparable interests. Owing to divisions emanating from cultural wars and facing economic stagnation, the majority culture started self-realignment on the basis of sub-cultural schemes that offer belonging and equality (Amoko, 2000, 388). While America is enduring economic woes, fresh social systems are developing within the debris offered by disenfranchised cultures.

Majority cultures are experiencing transition from a community of financial classes, credit expenditure and consumer principles to an extra group-centered society. Such shift involves change from getting cultural

significance out of purchasing and possessing media-produced patterns' consumer commodities, to promoting an extra individualized participatory and personality culture. Such change of priorities emancipates a stressed community and offers a feeling of dignity and authority to society (http://www.culturewars.org.uk/index.php/site/article/changing_cultural_paradigm/).

The principal culture has ditched the business sponsored political programs, because of the wickedness within oppressive economic and social policies and also owing to the absence of prestige and gratification exhibited by buyer indulgence within the financial crisis. While the principal culture was losing confidence within consumer principles, the pluralism of culture metamorphosed to become pluralism free of hierarchies.

Within such fresh systems, privileges and rights existent within a democracy get expressed within society with no oppression to lower castes. This seems to be a result of free market financial systems having their majority cultures being hierarchically- arranged. The divisions generated through culture wars merged the diverse and vast multicultural system of hyphenated citizens and subcultures to form a political grouping united through democratic principles, humanitarian standards, and the requirement to make the playing arena even.

Pluralism, which necessarily is not liberal owing to its incorporation of every political viewpoint, also existed alongside the cultural war. Such a multicultural grouping became prominent when consumerism faded away from the principal culture, and assumed the role of acting as a

representation of the fresh social arrangement (http://www.culturewars.org.uk/index.php/site/article/changing_cultural_paradigm/). Works cited Amoko, Apollo O. Resilient Imaginations: No-no Boy, Obasan and the Limits of Minority Discourse. *Mosaic*, vol.

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