

Cultural interview critical essay

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Adriana was going to react to certain topics/questions and this made me apprehensive about conducting the interview. I was nervous that she might feel vulnerable about her hearing impediment since she is a private individual. She was ridiculed in school and did not have many friends. I was unaware if Adriana would avoid questions or become emotional about her childhood. I was also apprehensive about mentioning her nationality and if she felt that she had experienced racism. I remained empathetic and nonjudgmental throughout the entire interview.

Adriana is currently a 33-year-old Mexican American left handed female with a hearing disability. She currently has no hearing in her right ear and has only 10% in her left ear. She has two hearing aids and is able to communicate by reading lips, text messaging, and by email. She is not able to communicate utilizing a telephone. She has been bilingual (Spanish and English) since the age of about five. Adriana lost most of hearing at the age of seven because she was afflicted with polio. She mentioned that she was sick for a week and was never hospitalized.

She suffered from high fevers and lost the majority of her hearing over the course of a week. She went from being able to hear the chirping of a bird to only being able to hear muffled voices! She obtained hearing aids about two weeks after being afflicted with polio. She went through extensive amounts of speech therapy during and outside of the school setting. However, she has always excelled academically in school. She claims that most of the teachers were accommodating and let her sit in the front of the class. However, she did mention that she was ridiculed throughout her grade school years.

She claims that her classmates would throw " spit balls" at her and make fun of her speech impediment. She never lashed out at people and tried to ignore their immature behavior. She mentions that she was lucky to have older brothers that were very protective. Many people felt that she was " freeloading" because of her Mexican heritage and did not get to know her or even recognize that she was also an American. She mentioned that her parents came to America legally (n their green cards) and became Mexican American citizens. Adriana mentioned that she was not popular and only associated with a few friends.

She was very emotional during this topic! She would " tear up" at times because she felt like she was reliving bad memories. She felt like no one could relate to her because no one else had a disability and was a " minority. " It was also hard for her to realize that her hearing was gradually deteriorating! She currently has a Bachelor's Degree in Media and the Fine Arts and an Associate's Degree in Medical Billing and Coding. She is currently working at a doctor's office part time utilizing her Medical Billing and Coding degree.

She does not seem passionate about her job because she is in a private office (by herself) doing computer coding. She feels excluded because she cannot fulfill the entire job description. She is only able to complete the paperwork/ computer portion of her current position. She is unable to communicate by telephone and feels incompetent because of her speech/hearing impediment. She always dreamt about becoming a nurse and wanted to follow in the footsteps of her older siblings. She knew that she

would be unable to fulfill her dream because her hearing loss would affect her Job performance.

Despite struggling and having a low self esteem, she found a husband that is able to look past her disability. Her body language and tone of voice seemed to change when we were talking about her husband. She seemed to be very comfortable talking about him and was very open about answering questions. Her face lit up, there was excitement in her answers, and she appeared less tense. She has been married for five years to her husband named Gabriel and resides in Portage, Indiana. She has no children but has two cats and dogs! She constantly has nephews and nieces that spend the night.

They refer to her as the " favorite" aunt. She stated, " I love spending time with my nieces and nephews, however when I have had enough then I can send them home. " They call her " Auntie Nana" and she displays their artwork proudly throughout her house and on the refrigerator. Adriana grew up in a single-familyhousehold in Whiting, Indiana. Her father was in her life for about seven years. She claims that he cheated on her mother and she kicked him out of the house. Adriana is a middle child of four brothers and sisters. Her mother worked at anursinghome as a Janitor and did not make muchmoney.

Her older brother and sister would often look after the younger children when her mother was at work. She was raised Catholic and presently attends church weekly. She grew up in a bilingual and strict household. She was expected to have chores and homework done by the time her mother was home. She still remains close with her family and sees them on a regular

basis. I was shocked to find out that she has not spoken to her father for almost a decade. She also confided in me that she has about 15 half brothers/sisters from her father's " mistresses. She has emailed four of them and does not know anything about the other siblings. I was also amazed that since she has such a large Mexican family, she only participates in some Mexican traditions. She mentioned that her large, extended family gathers together for birthdays, Cinco de Mayo, and holidays. They typically indulge in Mexican Cuisine, such as: tamales, guacamole, tacos, and flautas. She stated that growing up with a disability and being Mexican was never easy. Adriana mentioned that she experienced racism when she was younger. She experienced racial profiling and was referred to as a " Spic. They would ask her if she had a green card and if she was an illegal alien. Her mother's lower socioeconomic status was reflected in Adriana's wardrobe. She also mentioned she received free and reduced school lunches. Her classmates ridiculed her for all of these things. She did not socialize with many students and often sat by herself in the cafeteria. She felt alone because of her disability and race. She often felt that people were making fun of her and talking behind her back. In her current work environments she often feels looked down upon because of her hearing disability.

Adriana still has an upbeat personality despite all of the adversities in her life. She views herself as being successful and accomplished. She overcame the odds and went to college and obtained two degrees. She is married, has a job, and owns a home. She credits much of her success to having a supportive and loving family. Her mother always encouraged and inspired her to pursue her dreams and never treated her differently from any of her

other siblings (without disabilities). Adriana was raised with love and discipline. Her mother was never embarrassed to punish her or her siblings in public.

They were taught that nothing is free and that they have to work hard for what they have. There are three nurses in her family and each of her siblings has their own homes and jobs. She did mention that she grew up in a poverty-stricken environment. Her mother was on welfare and food stamps throughout the course of her childhood. Her clothing was either from goodwill and/or second hand clothing from her older siblings. She lived in a three-bedroom house and shared a room with four of her sisters. As a counselor, I have learned not to have a pre-conceived notion about a client.

I have also learned that you cannot judge a book by its cover. Adriana has overcome many obstacles/hurdles in her life that most people could never imagine. She is legally "deaf" and has never once given up on pursuing her goals. She mentioned that she is a candidate for the cochlear implant but does not want to undergo the procedure. She assured me that she has learned to adjust her life around her hearing deficit. I have learned that she is not defined by her disability but by her ability! I felt empathetic towards the amount of bullying that she had endured.

She was never once vengeful but was saddened that certain individuals could physically and emotionally torment someone. As a counselor, I would advocate for this client by helping her obtain information on disability and social security. Due to her socioeconomic status, transportation may need to be provided for appointments to/from the counseling sessions. I would also

provide her with a list of vocational rehabilitation offices to help her obtain information related to employment, assistive technology, and transition services.

Other resources that can be valuable to Adriana include a sign language translator and a videophone. I can also provide information on support groups for individuals with hearing disabilities. I feel that she would benefit from individual and family counseling despite having a positive outlook on her scenario. This interview made me realize that someone with a minority/disability can overcome obstacles that seem nonexistent to someone without a disability or a minority. She may have had many struggles throughout her life, but was fortunate to have the support of her mother and siblings.

Even though Adriana is a minority with a disability, she has a positive attitude towards life. She takes everything in stride and does not want sympathy. Adriana has always been successful and seems to excel despite her disability. Overcoming many adversities, she remains optimistic about her future. She is an advocate and role model for minorities with a disability. She is a role model to her nieces and nephews. She constantly encourages them to pursue their dreams and a higher education. She does not let her disability limit her lifestyle or outlook on life.