

Draft

Sociology, Communication



DRAFT Mediating Cultures DRAFT DRAFT Mediating Cultures Parenting in Intercultural Contexts Edited by Alberto González and Tina M. Harris LEXINGTON BOOKS Lanham - Boulder - New York - Toronto - Plymouth, UK DRAFT Published by Lexington Books A wholly owned subsidiary of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc. 4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706 www. rowman. com 10 Thornbury Road, Plymouth PL6 7PP, United Kingdom Copyright © 2013 by Lexington Books All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote passages in a review. British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data TO COME. Aesthetics and modernity : essays / by Agnes Heller ; edited by John Rundell. Test test test test test test test test test test test test. p. cm. Includes bibliographical references and index. ISBN 9780739141311 (cloth : alk. paper) ISBN 9780739141328 (pbk. : alk. paper) ISBN 97807391-41335 (electronic) 1. Aesthetics. 2. Postmodernism. I. Rundell, John F. II. Title. BH39. H445 2011 111'. 85dc22 2010037457 The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39. 481992. Printed in the United States of America DRAFT DRAFT Contents Acknowledgments Introduction: Parenting in Intercultural Contexts Alberto González and Tina M. Harris Section I: Interpersonal Settings and Intercultural Parenting 1 Digging (in) the Playground: (In)visibility of Difference in the Context of Multicultural Parenting Natalia

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DRAFT Introduction Parenting in Intercultural Contexts Alberto González and Tina M. Harris [B03. 0] [B03. 1] [B03. 2] Okay, so I'm the Hybrid Kid. You know, a "multiculti so don't insult me." My mom is German American so she listens to polka music and my dad is Mexican American so he listens to tejano music. Life sucked for me because either way I grew up listening to accordion music! -Monica González [B03. 3] This book presents compelling research about parents who creatively balance cultural influences within their families. Family communication is a growing area of communication scholarship, and given the everchanging racial and cultural landscape of the United States, the likelihood that family units will continue to be directly impacted by this change is 100 percent. This change is accompanied by communication behaviors and practices that may not occur in less diverse families. The quote above illustrates how family members

sometimes process intercultural family influences. Monica González, currently a college student in Ohio, transformed her experiences growing up with interethnic parents into a standup comedy set. While family units are important, those with racial, ethnic, and cultural diverse face relatively unique challenges that are underresearched in communication scholarship, hence this book. Specifically, these chapters explore the communication challenges faced by parents as they raise children who are bicultural, multicultural, or are adopted from a heritage other than the parents. Also, these chapters report the communication strategies employed by the parents as they create affirming relationships between children and their heritages. Finally, these chapters explore the relationships among parents, culture and new communication technologies. Television series such as *Alberto González* and *Tina M. Harris DRAFT Modern Family* and *AllAmerican Muslim*, along with Google and online comment posts to news articles provide representations of intercultural parenting that reflect and shape relationships between parents and children. We believe that this collection is unique in two fundamental ways. First, most of the authors are parents in intercultural contexts. They have direct experience with the socially prescribed opportunities and constraints that influence family life, which we argue is critical to understanding this very important communicative experience. But also, they have firsthand experience with intercultural improvisation and innovation. They first must navigate the potential tensions created by a largely intolerant society. These couples typically possess a stronger bond because "the couple's love for each other must be strong enough to overcome societal pressures against biracial relationships"

(Dainton, p. 156). The ultimate strategy also requires that they must strategically mediate the comments and evaluations of those who live a monocultural lifestyle. Second, this collection is unique because it brings together research areas that seldom intersect: family communication and intercultural communication. Many important topics have been the focus of family communication research: problem solving in the family, dual career parents and aging (Fitzpatrick & Vangelisti, 1995), the roles of children as communicators in the family (Socha & Yingling, 2010) and the role of ritual and storytelling as family performance (Langellier, 2002). We agree with Sillars (1995) who observed that research on communication and family types "has not had an intercultural focus" (p. 376). The consequence of this is that despite our understanding that families exist within and across cultural spheres, communication scholars tend to approach "the family" as a universal construct. Similarly, scholars of intercultural communication tend to focus on community or national intersections of cultural perspectives and they have not attended to the family as a site of intercultural dialogue. What Shari Kendall (2007) says of linguistics also applies to Communication Studies: "There has been a greater focus on language in the workplaces and other formal institutions than on discourse in this first institution" (p. 3); thus, our book begins to address this unfortunate gap in the literature. Yet another distinct quality of this book is that it is comprised of a collection of studies that brings together two disparate literatures with accessible yet context-driven studies to explain how families integrate multiple cultural heritages and perspectives. Additionally, this collection includes cultural identities that we believe readers will want to learn more about: African

American, Asian Indian, Chinese, Jewish, Latina/o, Muslim, Russian and mixed race identities. In terms of other communication efforts that foray into the area of family communication and culture, one notable text was edited by scholars Socha and Diggs (1999). Their work is critical but limited given its focus on com [B03. 4] [B03. 5] [B03. 6] [B03. 7] DRAFT Introduction munication exploring communication within the traditional racial binary of black/white. This work is very focused yet constrained by traditional racial categories. The exception is the chapter by Mark Orbe (1999) who examines how interracial married couples talk about race to their biracial children. The chapter is also distinctive in that it anticipates a variety of family compositions—biological, adoptive and blended. [B03. 8] Sabourin's (2003) book, *The Contemporary American Family: A Dialectical Perspective on Communication and Relationships*, affirms that, "The nuclear family structure . . . is no longer the standard from which to compare other family forms" (p. 3). Chapter 4 in this book considers "Cultural Diversity in the New American Family." Here, the primary variables are religion, sexual orientation and race. The treatment of religion focuses on Christianity's ambivalence toward diversity and there are brief treatments of Latino/a, Asian, and African American families. This is a helpful book; however, it is primarily a book about how families depart from (and return to) traditional notions of family interaction in the face of divorce, substance abuse and physical abuse. [B03. 9] Floyd and Morman's (2006) excellent book, *Widening the Family Circle: New Research on Family Communication*, examines elements of family structures that have been overlooked in family communication studies: the aunt, siblings-in-law, grandparent-grandchild

relationships and relationships through adoption. In other words, it goes beyond the usual focus on the married couple as parents. This book, however, does not approach families as explicitly embedded in cultural (and crosscultural) meanings and systems. [B03. 10] The research in family communication is robust and innovative. Additional current work from a variety of research programs is cited in the chapters in this volume. [B03. 11] OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS [B03. 12] Our book significantly extends our understanding of these multicultural families by pointedly exploring the influence of culture on family dynamics. The chapters in this volume are organized into two sections. Section 1, " Interpersonal Settings and Intercultural Parenting, " contains six chapters that describe parenting choices and events in face-to-face interactions. Rybas (chapter 1) explores how everyday outings to the playground or restaurant and trips to her son's school often result in being marked as foreign or other. The simple question: " Where are you from? " at the sound of their Russian accents triggers a negotiation of the shared and unshared knowledge and practices between families. Rybas describes how this question and other " performative acts" work to establish positions of power. Rybas wonders how her Alberto González and Tina M. Harris DRAFT son will navigate future moments of interrogation and if he will come to learn how to counteract and take advantage of the potential for resistance in those moments. Shenoy and Kulkarni (chapter 2) note the increasing population of U. S. born children of Asian Indian immigrants. The authors describe the dominant cultural expectations for family: unconditional love, close kinship and emphasis on interdependence, patriarchal authority, and deference among children. The

authors conclude by identifying four “ concerns” that Indian par ents confront when raising their children in the United States Each concern is elaborated by Tara Kulkarni, who is raising her daughter in the New England region of the United States AlemÃ;n and AlemÃ;n (chapter 3) focus on the gendered and “ crosscultural variability” of stories of transgression. The authors examine how storytelling rituals reflect the Mexican American and European American approaches to risk taking and resistance to dominant social prescriptions. Gao and Womack (chapter 4) describe the factors that account for the increasing number of U. S. adoptions of Chinese children. China’s One Child Policy, low legal costs and bureaucratic cooperation have resulted (in the decade preceding 2011) in the adoption of over 66, 000 children, most of them females. The authors report their analysis of 20 in-depth interviews with Atlantaarea parents as these respondents comment on the “ desired identity” for their daughters and describe their strategies for creating this desired identity. In February 2012, unarmed teenager, Trayvon Martin, was killed by a neighborhood watch volunteer. The event in Sanford, Florida made interna tional news and ignited a dialogue on racial profiling and gun ownership laws. On March 23, 2012, President Barack Obama stated, “ When I think about this boy, I think about my own kids. ” In expressing his sympathy to the parents of Martin, Obama concluded, “ If I had a son, he’d look like Trayvon” (Remarks by the President, March 32, 2012). Obama’s reaction to this event reveals that his parenting mode is never far removed from his role as Presi dent. Moffitt (chapter 5) examines the intercultural parenting of the First Parents of the UNITED STATES, Michelle and Barack Obama. Drawing from interviews and Obama’s books Of

Thee I Sing (2010), Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance (2004), Moffitt describes the parenting values of this "transcultural" family. Section 2 contains four chapters on "Media, Social Networking, and Intercultural Parenting." While most reality television programs allow viewers to be shocked or amused by the actions of the participants, other shows have an educational (as well as entertainment) purpose. Set in Dearborn, Michigan, home to the largest Muslim population outside of the Middle East, AllAmerican Muslim followed the lives of several families including the Jaafars, the Amens, the Zabans and the Aoudes. This series offered a view [B03. 13] [B03. 14] [B03. 15] [B03. 16] DRAFT Introduction [B03. 17] [B03. 18] [B03. 19] [B03. 20] not only of the everyday reality of U. S. born Muslims, it revealed the expression, contestation and negotiation of parental values. Employing concepts from diaspora studies, cocultural theory, as well as Qur'anic interpretation, Kahil (chapter 6) examines the how traditional Islamic values are performed in the series, describes how these values are both challenged and upheld, and foreshadows the new mediated reality for successive generations of Muslim American children. Employing autoethnographic narrative, WillisRivera (chapter 7) examines how her bicultural family incorporates technology into their everyday lives to prepare for an important class project, the Festival of Nations. Willis Rivera describes how she and her husband Daniel guide their twin daughters' use of popular mediated programming (on DVDs and television), the internet (Google searches) and social networking (Facebook and YouTube) to deepen cultural connections and to productively construct and reinterpret what it means to be "bicultural." Chao (chapter 8) examines the online responses to Amy

Chua's article, "Why Chinese Mothers are Superior." This article was published in the Wall Street Journal in January 2011. Chua described the "Chinese Mother" not as a marker of nationality, but as an approach to child rearing that emphasized high standards of achievement and near total focus on practice and school work. Analysis of 312 posted comments to the online article reveals interesting findings on variables such as gender, parental involvement and expectations of children's achievements. Fictional television representations of family have changed from idealized versions of the nuclear family to satirical versions of blended families. Thomas Maddox and Blau (chapter 9) argue that the series, *Modern Family* invites audiences to consider options for intercultural parenting. A cross representation of family relationships is analyzed—from committed partners, parent/child, to sibling interactions. Issues surrounding cultural, sexual, and generational differences are explored to identify contemporary themes that impact effective communication among family members. This collection closes with an Epilogue by Ali Erol and Joris Gjata (chapter 10). The authors are soon to be married. The authors acknowledge that, "A Turkish Muslim husband (Ali) and an Albanian Christian wife (Joris) living and working in the United States seem to present a couple with an overwhelming conjuncture of differences and not many similarities." In this chapter, the couple engages in a dialogue about the nature of culture, cultural blending and what the heritage of each implies for the children they plan to raise in the United States.

DRAFT Section I Interpersonal Settings and Intercultural Parenting DRAFT Chapter One Digging (in) the Playground (In)visibility of Difference in the Context of Multicultural Parenting Natalia Rybas [1. 0] [1. 1] Like many families around

the United States, my family members find themselves in situations of negotiating culture on everyday bases. My husband and I grew up in the South of Russia, and we have resided in the United States for more than 10 years. While in Russia, we belonged to a Russian speaking majority of the predominant ethnicity and to the middle class. The ideas of minority cultures, power difference, and implicit racism never emerged as a topic of discussions. After leaving Russia, the rollercoaster of expatriate life as well as the training as a communication scholar have sensitized my understanding of culture as constitutive of communication that in its turn reinforces and resists cultural systems. Now I write as a mother of a 4 year-old, who will have to learn to navigate the landscapes of his privilege and difference. I also write as an educator, living in North America, who has been afforded multiple opportunities in this society. Due to these opportunities, I have become aware of the instability of cultural signifiers as I am still struggling to understand my cultural space and my role in its construction. Living in the States, I often find myself in situations where I am questioned about my culture: people ask what language we speak, where we come from, and who we are. Such questioning is most complicated when I have to think about the culture of my son: What is he? What are we as a family? How do we stand in relation to other families? Bhabha (1994) helps establish the subject matter of this chapter with the quote " Where do you draw the line between languages? between cultures? between disciplines? between people? " (p. 85). In the case of parenting, these questions suggest the need to find the answers and the practical urgency in critical inquiry. To think about such questions, I frame this project in terms of

discourse, or communicative systems that influence our understanding of culture. I rely on rhetoric as a way of knowing culture and talking about it, and I question the moments of interaction when culture becomes evident as such. This is a very pedagogical process for the adult members of my family, immigrants to the U. S. Mid west, and to my son, a student and a paragon of culture in the making. This process teaches us to read the reading of us as a culture and to sketch negotiation strategies helpful to us as well as people with whom we interact. Following the objective to examine the moments when culture becomes evident, I develop the following parts in this chapter. First, the theoretical preview of the discursive work of culture builds the background of the project. I further reflect on instances of everyday interactions of and about my son and my family to examine how culture and cultural knowledge become visible. The analysis of the ethnographic observations focuses on critical reading of the communication episodes as texts (Warren, 2003) to explore how markers of culture emerge in interaction. I conclude the chapter with a reflection about the search for a strategy to negotiate cultures in the context of multicultural families.

THE WORKING OF CULTURE AT THE PLAYGROUND

This chapter examines the construction of culture “ at the playground”-a loosely defined public context where parents come to interact with their children as well as other parents and children. The metaphor of playground refers to a productive site where adult and younger participants practice, learn, and teach their offspring and each other about human relations. One of the aspects of such learning is culture. Culture is a complex term and can be defined in many ways. Lee (in Collier et. al, 2002) reviews different definitions of the term to argue that

each definition privileges certain interests and is never neutral. To avoid biases, Lee advocates that "culture" signify "the shifting tensions between the shared and the unshared" (p. 229). Such an approach underscores the situatedness, instability, contestedness, and process of what may be referred to as with a variety of terms that reflect culture, such as difference, diversity, race, origin, and background. Because communication is always culturally located and culturally bound, children become cultural and cultured beings while they are interacting with their own parents, other children and their parents, and many other participants of interactions in public places. Cultural positions and histories define how persons think about themselves and about others. One's moving [1. 2] [1. 3] [1. 4] DRAFT Digging (in) the Playground [1. 5] [1. 6] [1. 7] within and between cultural spaces forms communication approaches and discursive relationships with others. Such cultural locations by the merit of assembling specific events, peoples, relationships, and histories imply constructed meanings that map out communication possibilities and limitations. With the focus on playground, I invoke spatial metaphor as an opportunity to think about constructions of identity and rhetorical ways to levy power among children and adults (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995). Thus, playground may become a system of relations and spaces where culture emerges as a marker to define communication strategies. Hall (1996) examines the concept of "identity" to the point of asking "who needs it?" According to Hall, the deconstructive critiques of "identity" by feminist, cultural, and other voices produce the effect of erasing the concept and yet simultaneously permit it to be used. Such operating in between the pushout

and pullin movement suggests that an idea, about identity in Hall's case, cannot be used in one definitive way, but it helps thinking about certain key issues. The concept of " culture" is similar to " identity" in this respect. The multiplicity of approaches to examining and defining culture may suggest a question " who needs it? " with an attempt to remove " culture" from theorizing. However, it is the instability of culture that makes it irreducible because of its political implications and centrality for communication processes. Thus, thinking in terms of " culture" helps define the power relations, communication strategies, and interactional roles. The examination of culture and cultural spaces invoke some important issues such as dislocation, contact, conflict, contradiction, and difference. Lull (2000) notes, " the very concept of culture presumes differences" (p. 234). If this is the case, what becomes marked as differences and as culture if my family participates in public discourses about and of children? Gupta and Ferguson (1992) examine the problems that emerge as soon as cultures are locked in specific geographies, when they come in contact with each other. For example, the authors discuss the differences within localities and social change and transformation in interconnected spaces, life on the border and in colonial regimes. In the case of interacting within the metaphorical space of the playground, I am concerned about what communication strategies are employed by the interaction participants to emphasize, erase, or name culture and persons who carry the markers of culture, and then if such understanding of culture can be negotiated in any way to the benefit of all participants of communication interaction. I approach culture and knowledge about it through the lens of performativity. Madison and Hamera (2006)

explain that the performative approach to communication emphasizes reiteration of norms and citationality, drawn from Butler and Derrida. For a feminist critic Butler (1988), gender is sustained only through repetitive enactments of culture. Derrida provides that repetitions become comprehensible because they rely on, or cite, historical knowledge in context (Madison & Hamera, 2006). For example, Warren (2003) considers race as an accomplishment, whereby "race as an identifier of difference is not in the body but rather made through the bodily acts" (p. 29). In his examination of whiteness, Warren addresses specific performative acts through which race recreated and made sense of. Further, Chawla (2011) examines how she has been continuously "raced" to argue that cultural practices of racing, or assigning particular cultural groupings, consistently and affectively reproduce the repressive relations of everyday life (p. 56). Thus, performativity allows thinking of culture as a process, "Performativity becomes all at once a cultural convention, value, and signifier that is inscribed on the body-performed through the body-to mark identities" (Madison & Hamera, p. xviii). In the context of interacting about the family matters, performativity suggests that culture, cultural knowledge, and cultural/cultured identities come into being within specific historical and institutional sites by specific enunciative strategies. If the metaphorical context of a playground creates possibilities for the recreation, reiteration, and citation of the cultural systems, then there is also a possibility for subverting and resisting such systems. Both Chawla (2011) and Warren (2003) consider the acts of performing race as moments of resistance. The monologues and ethnographies interrupt the process of localized acts to

allow opportunities for meaningful critiques and undoing the gender, race, or other specified or unspecified in language markers of difference. Below, I consider 3 cases that produce the act of culturing to find possibilities for reframing identities, experiences, and social relations. In these cases, I refer to my son with a pseudonym that reflects the qualities of his real name.

What Is His Name? Where Are You From? August 2010, a hotel in Fort Lauderdale, FL: It is breakfast time. We go to a hotel cafe to pick up something to eat. The hotel is a worldclass facility with always friendly staff. On our way to the café from the lobby, a smiling male, most likely a concierge, talks to Dima. Dima chooses a shy role this morning and does not respond to the passes of the stranger. We proceed on our business and start with the breakfast. The concierge finds us in one of the café booths and hands Dima a coloring book and a box of crayons. After the exchange, he asks for my son's name. I repeat " Dima" a few times. The question follows: how do you spell it? I respond: DIMA. Another question: Where are you from? I respond: We are from Ohio. And my husband adds: We are from Ohio, but his name is Russian. We are often asked, " where are you from? " in school, at playgrounds, and other public places. Such ritual conversations are frequent whereby our ori [1. 8] [1. 9] [1. 10] [1. 11] DRAFT Digging (in) the Playground [1. 12] [1. 13] [1. 14] gin and name are consistently repeated. In journalistic (e. g., Hopper, 2008), fiction (e. g., Kothari, 2005), and scholarly (e. g., Chawla, 2011) writing, where are you from? is a dreaded question. This seemingly innocent expres sion of curiosity produces an important ideological work of hailing (Althus ser, 1971), or assigning relational positions, defining identities, and drawing " lines of power. The question "

where are you from? " interpellates individuals as concrete subjects related to each other in a particular way. The question primarily delineates space and establishes social positioning. Being questioned " where are you from? " places an interrogator in a position of a host, being at home, who is looking at an Other, who is an outsider, forcing him or her to move, and conceptually, to migrate. The question raises the issues of belonging as well as of the trajectories of moving and staying: Who belongs? Who moves? Moves where? Moves when? Who stays? As such, this address produces the effect of injury by dislocating, as Butler (2004) explains, " to be injured by speech is to suffer a loss of context, that is not to know where you are" (p. 4). For my family having breakfast, the phrase " where are you from? " is an unexpected interruption in the process of our daily routine. I am often reluctant to speak to my son in Russian in public spaces. Such speech often attracts unnecessary gazes and, again, questioning and guessing. If I speak loud enough in Russian for others to hear and fail to understand, I inadvertently place us on display. Inquiries about our location and other aspects of identity push us out of invisibility to the center of attention—to be looked at and examined. Such examination strives to place my son and his parents as a group into specific categories, whereby nationality and ethnicity are applied as the most natural labels. As the categories persist, a way to protect the self is to " walk in the shade" (Chawla, 2011), or to avoid being on display. Thus, I often prefer to lower my voice. We often slip into visibility when we talk amongst ourselves. Since Dima becomes more proficient in speaking yet still has not learned to manage his voice, we usually attract gazes. The questions then serve as strategies to establish particular kinds of

identities and relations. Nakayama and Krizek (2000) argue that certain subject positions occupy an invisible and normalized position of centrality. Thus, the experiences and communication strategies of Others are marked as outside the norm. In other words, the noncentral, nonnormal positions become visible, raced, colored, or cultured. Invisibility produces names and provides labels that mark particular behaviors as “culture.” Althusser (1971) argues that we are pushed into ideological systems by the process of interpellation, which hails individuals into subject positions. Butler (1997) further explains, “by being interpellated within the terms of language that a certain social existence of the body first becomes possible” (p. 5). This line of thinking suggests that being addressed in a particular way constitutes a possible system of relations, which is often defined by geopolitical and local histories. The exchange about my son’s name is similarly typical for the English speaking majority in the U. S. Midwest where we reside or in the South or West where we travel. The general understanding of proper name is that it confers singularity in place and time, yet the historical and social connections of specific names shift such singularity (Butler, 1997). The name Dima we picked for our son carries strong implications for his current and possible future cultural locations as well as histories of his parents and geopolitical situations. According to the U. S. Social Security Administration (2011), for the boys born in 2008, the most popular names are Jacob, Michael, Ethan, Joshua and Daniel. These names were among the 10 most popular in the 5 previous years (2007—2002) and in the following years (2009—2010). This proper name names not only a specific boy but also his parents’ specificities in terms of time and space-by

negating exclusive Englishness of the parents' language imagination and by suggesting the temporary character in a predominantly Englishspeaking location. If a cultural space of home is associated with familiarity and knowledge of routines and cultural patterns, the name Dima does not imply consistency but creates ruptures. As a result, the people who hear the name may not understand it or may not recall it. March 2009, a learning center in Dayton, OH: After a couple of months at daycare's Toddler group (for children up to 2yearsold), I was dropping my son off on my way to work. That morning his group was still pooled together with the other group of older kids (called Discovery Preschool, with 23 yearolds). It is a common practice at learning centers to start a day with children of closer age assembled in the same room. I left Dima with his classmates, and stepped into their regular room to leave his coat and bag in the cubby. While I was checking him in, I noticed that the toddler teacher started moving her students to their appropriate room, yet my son stayed, distracted by something. Another teacher from the Discovery Preschool group, who regularly saw the children in both Toddler and Discovery Pre school groups, was calling the kids by their names but could not recall my son's off the top of her head, and addressing another teacher, she said struggling with her memory lapse ". . . whatever his name is. " This struggle by a teacher at my son's daycare provides an illustration of the work that goes in the construction of culturally marked identity. The disjuncture of a memory lapse for specific name compared to the lack of such loss in regard to the more common names links to the politics of cultural knowledge, that create exclusions uncomfortable for some yet unnoticeable to others. I identify with Chawla's (2011) articulation of

racialization—the moments and processes that “ mark me as a/part, yet keep me enclosed inside both the [1. 15] [1. 16] [1. 17] DRAFT Digging (in) the Playground [1. 18] community and the culture” (p. 54). Chawla refers to the color narratives to understand the ways she belongs to and stays apart from the historical and political agencies constructing the fabric of mundane performances of cul ture. Even though I find it difficult to claim color as the central trope in my stories and experiences, I/we still experience the moments when the mem bers of my family are “ raced” in other ways and slip into cultural categories. The talk about the name is symptomatic of community, which monitors its membership. The essence of giving a name, according to Butler (1997), is to provide linguistic existence and to “ confer singularity in location and time” (p. 29). Because the subject will be named again and again, she or he becomes vulnerable to the possible iterations of one’s name. Mispronuncia tions, misunderstandings, and questions to spell “ Dima” abound. Butler asks “ what if one were to compile all the names that one has ever been called? Would they not present a quandary for identity? Would some of them cancel the effect of the others? Would one find oneself fundamentally dependent upon a competing array of names to derive a sense of oneself? ” (p. 30). This is where the processes of avowal and ascription (Martin & Nakayama, 2011) come into play: The possibilities of developing self depend on the address of others. The name constitutes a subject socially, and the subject may not need to participate actively in this process. Such is often the case with personal names because they are given to children at birth without their participation or consent. This is the discourse that identifies Dima as different: It happens without his

participation beyond his presence and general existence. Butler succinctly puts it " The time of discourse is not the time of the subject" (p. 31). The discourse performed in acts of frequent misunderstandings, mispronunciations, and questionings produce a sense of community where Dima does not belong. Is He Russian? September 2011, YMCA family playland in Dayton, OH: My husband and I are resting after an intense yoga practice, while Dima is climbing the play area, and slides down. After 15 to 20 minutes, I look at the watch and move to start our way home. Dima is at the very top, and I call to him in Russian: " Dima, it's time to go! " Another couple is in the same room watching their two kids play, climbing up and sliding down. The woman notices my call, and she asks about Dima " Is he Russian? " I respond affirmatively. She then shares that she had an experience living in Russia a few years ago when she was on a mission with her church. She reminisces her experiences with people and explains that she craves for borsch. The direct query about nationality and ethnicity is a frequent topic initiated in public spaces. Chawla (2011) writes how she has been questioned whether [1. 19] [1. 20] [1. 21] Natalia Rybas DRAFT she was Italian, Middle Eastern, Egyptian, from Turkey or from Spain, and doubted being Indian. Similarly, we have been asked if we are German, Swedish, or of other European descent. It is not really the suggested choices that are troublesome but the guesswork that seeks certainty. Why does that woman at YMCA need to know if my son is really Russian and why does she recall a cabbage soup from her longtimeagomissionarytriptoRussia? Echoing the stranger, I also ask: Is my son Russian? He probably is-by the virtue of his parents being born in Russia, speaking Russian at home and with other

rare individuals, and by the virtue of occasionally having borsch. However, he is probably not Russian as well-by the virtue of him growing up in Ohio, speaking English with his teachers, friends, and parents, and doing many other things that do not qualify as Russian. Anyway, what does it mean to be Russian? Struggling to find definitive answers to my questions and to make sense of these situations, I rely on Ono (2010) who considers problematic under standing culture in terms of coherent and stable nationstates.

Assigning a particular culture to a boy-in other words, guessing a 3year old as Russian-produces a troubling impression because the speaker addresses ab stractions that inevitably promote stereotyping from the points of Western gaze. Ono explains, Such abstractions can be used to privilege a particular perspective, a vintage point of the Westerner, the citizen of the United States, white European Americans, people with legal and political legitimacy within a firstworld nationstate, those who invent the ground of cultural comparison from a sub jective and limited point of view. (p. 90) [1. 22] [1. 23] Thus, thinking in terms of nationstates is not productive for interpersonal exchange. Can we talk about anything else? Like Chawla (2011) laments idealistic neighborly relations with welcoming cakes to the new families, I lament similar friendly relations with the people we meet in public places. I argue that by exercising the power to name in order to satisfy one's curiosity, a stranger we met at the local YMCA voices her ideas and attitudes about my son's identity and locations he belongs to. These failed attempts to make identity tied to a place suggests that identity escapes locating in physical geography rather it anchors relationships and alludes to power struggles. Asking about Russia, the stranger at the YMCA

playland was prying into the idea of home, which attains a special meaning for immigrants. Home has a symbolic meaning as it implies emotional, relational, and political spheres which contribute to the formation of identity (Chen, 2010; Kinefuchi, 2010). Chen argues that the discussions about home provide a reflexive context to understand self and others: "identity is inexorably bound up with what we do, how we make sense of what we do, and how we make choices of what we [1. 24] DRAFT Digging (in) the Playground do" (p. 489). Referring to Russia as a home, zooms to only distant aspects of the past, and routs around many aspects of Dima's life. Yes, the connection to Russia is undeniable, yet it is only a part of what makes who Dima is today. Chen suggests that identity emerges in historic moments out of an equal choices. Thus claiming being only Russian for my son would eliminate not only the multiplicity of his life turning moments but also ignore the regional and other cultural politics inside Russia and inside the United States [1. 25] [1. 26] Can I/You Teach You/Us Some Russian? March 2012, a learning center in Dayton, OH: When I was picking up my son from the daycare, I noticed a few labels in Russian on the furniture. From the conversation, I learned that a teacher created the labels for Dima. I noticed that even though the labels were in Russian, these words did not correspond to what we actually say. I tried to explain the meaning of what was on the labels. The next morning, from the quick talk with the teacher, I realized that the previous night I made the teachers uncomfortable with my comments about wrong words. I suggested that I type the labels if the teachers provide the list of the English words. In a couple of days, I sent the translations back. My initial reaction was extremely cautious and reserved. The Learning Cen

ter my son attends has been providing a very supportive atmosphere. We have not been troubled by requests to explain the " culture, " the teachers and students at the center can proficiently pronounce my son's name, and overall it has been a rewarding experience for my family in terms of education and care. The labels on the furniture looked daunting though: I envisioned Dima interrogated about how words would sound in Russian and fielding decontextualized requests to translate phrases from English into Russian. What is at stake in this situation is the already established relations that my son and my family have developed with his teachers, classmates, and the Center's administration. We value the membership in this early childhood education community and intend to support my son's success. A few days later, the teacher in Dima's class showed me a Russian Dictionary in Pictures, her eyes sparking with excitement and her voice highly enthusiastic. A wide smile was on her face lit with delight. She explained that the School bought this book because of Dima, and when he got hold of the book he spent at least 30 minutes just " reading" and looking at the pictures. The teacher also described that Dima was trying to read " Dima" on the labels placed on furniture in the classroom. According to the teacher, my son was happy and very interested in the new book and the labels. A couple of [1. 27] [1. 28] Natalia Rybas DRAFT weeks later, I also prepared a collection of songs and stories in Russian to be played in class. The discomfort with the labels emerges from the dialectical ambiguities: On the one hand, the teachers want to take proactive steps to teach the children, and on the other hand, the labels, the books, and the songs produce difference of particular sorts. First, placing labels is a common practice in education environment to

teach reading skills. Such technique seems useful for all children of any language. Second, the labels in two languages may help children to learn other than their native tongue. Multilingualism is a desirable trait valued in many contexts of contemporary life: business, government, and education. Jones (2012), a professor of education, comments on the value of knowing more than one language, " Fluency in another language takes us beyond mere tolerance of " otherness" and requires us to engage with alternative worldviews as a matter of course. " However, an ability to speak more than one language is relatively rare in common encounters in the American Midwest. An exposure to another language may be advantageous for children at the Center. What is the effect of including words in foreign language into the every day of toddlers who do not speak such language and one Other who is learning it in a different way? Will these labels and the phrases serve the same effect and function to Dima and the other members of his group? Such questioning takes me to the article by Thurlow (2010), who discusses how language can speak the difference. Considering British television vacation shows, Thurlow argues that brief encounters with a foreign language pro mote tourist discourse through a tokenistic depiction of the language. In the context of the daycare, the episodic presentation of the foreign language carries similar connotation. For now, the chance to know the words was offered to all members of the childcare group. In a few days after introducing the new idea of learning Dima's language, some of the more quick learning kids would shout out " dosvidaniya" (goodbye in Russian) at the end of the day. Such reduction to labels and phrases represents the language in " its most instrumental form rather than a mode

of relationship, of interpersonal, or intercultural exchange" (Thurlow, p. 235). The trope of entertainment, traced by Thurlow in the analysis of vacation programming, crept into the school's newsletter reporting that the children had fun learning some Russian. The easy going way of learning provides the perfect opportunity to master not only separate words and phrases but also the colonial mentality in the atmosphere of the playground, when a representative of the Other may be used to model the foreign, and the participants of the game can practice interacting with the exotic Other. From the literature on bringing up multilingual children, I learn that mixing languages serves certain communicative functions. For example, speaking [1. 29] [1. 30] [1. 31] DRAFT Digging (in) the Playground [1. 32] [1. 33] users of at least 2 languages may use one or the other to describe things that do not exist in another language or to fill in a vocabulary gap (Wang, 2008). Genesee (2006) suggests that speakers may mix languages to add emphasis to the meanings, to add to the emotional expression, to quote somebody else verbatim, to express protest, or to tell stories. Thurlow (2010) argues the joking nongrammatical use of foreign phrases serves to establish the power relations, elevating and constituting AngloAmerican identities. This focus on communicative functions should make the idea of spoken language beyond the internet translation of separate words or phrases whereby the language serves as one of the ways to express and produce belonging to a group, establishing the meaning of events, and developing identity for all members of the communicative interaction. The considerations of potential pitfalls of the language lessons have become a turning point for us as parents and scholars who wish to protect our child and who are engaged in

the performative critique of intercultural communication. Noncooperative "walking in the shade" (as in Chawla, 2011) is not an option because my son attends the Center every workday—a major part of his active weekly routine happens outside home. While preschool education is relatively optional, future grade school education provides no choices of escaping. Thus, we all have to learn to engage such moments of discomfort when culturing becomes an issue. The only route that we—parents and educators—can take is negotiating possibilities to benefit not only Dima but also other children and teachers in the Center, and, hopefully, other members of the playground context. I keep a close eye to the emotional reactions of my son, his teachers, and other children that emerge on the surface of their interactions. Warren (2003), Chawla (2011), and other researchers note particular kinds of discomfort when cultural categorizations emerge in speech. I observe if Dima is still willing to play with his friends and if he continues coming to his group with the same happy face. I appreciate the books purchased by the Center for the classroom. I seek to gauge the good intentions through his eyes. We have been "living in color" (Chawla & Rodriguez, 2002, p. 699) as we respond to questions about who we are. Now we are exploring the ways to not only confirm the existing structures of cultural knowledge but also to spin the boundaries (Chawla & Rodriguez, p. 704) guarding the mythology of immigrant identities and their families. Inviting the members of the Center to perform culture together with us potentially may build alternative citationality and reiteration into the performative process of cultural knowledge. The critical cultural communication scholars (such as Warren and Chawla) report moments of satisfaction when Otherness of the Other allows a possibility of

change. At my son's daycare, the initial excitement about the Russian words has transformed to the background. I observe the noneventfulness of the music (that I collected) playing at the background when I pick my son from Natalia Rybas DRAFT the daycare. Stories pour about Dima teaching his teacher some words in Russian and correcting her. The anticipation of conflict has subsided, yet the ambivalence about inviting identities drawing from various complications persists, because speaking another person's language does not guarantee mutual understanding (Thurlow, 2010).

CONCLUSION: PLAYGROUND PEDAGOGIES OF CULTURE I am digging in the playground to understand, critique, and renegotiate the moments of culture-ing related to my child. I retell the notable and mundane stories of interactions when certain actions become qualified as culturally different. Because the cases I describe are systematic occurrences, the production of social relations is repeated over and over again. The instances, when we are made to report on my son's homeland, ethnicity and other aspects of culture typically reinscribe his identity into the rigid categories of dominant knowledge about intercultural relations based on nationstate perceptions of cultures. Such focus on intercultural relations objectifies some players at the ground and pushes them to the margins, excluding them from the communal engagement, reaffirming the dominant perceptions of diversity, culture, the exotic, and keeping the passive reception of cultural knowledge intact. I strategize to perform cultural difference by teaching my son about cultural knowledge and possibly engaging others in the process of learning. As proficient speakers of Russian and English, we intended to maintain the implications of borderland, in Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) sense, in our son's

name, language, and general logics of everyday life. Dima's name carries the baggage of his parents' story and produces stories for the bearer of this name. Otherness will accompany him in grade school and further—How is he going to perform it? In some time in the future, he will be able to speak for himself, to others—about his name, his language, and his culture. The choices we as parents make for our son to create the experience on the border allow developing what Gloria Anzaldua calls "conocimiento," which implies an ability to understand not only what is on the surface but what is inside, "when you hear the other, really hear what they are saying, beyond their spoken word" (Lara, 2008, p. 44). Such knowing, according to Anzaldua, comes from specific experiences of living in crisis and finding ways to manage uncomfortable situations that create ruptures in the flow of everyday life. The coming out of the crises recomposes the self, others, and the relations with others. The engagement of digging (in) the playground is pedagogical for it provides opportunities for learning and teaching about my family members, others around us, and myself. The moments of culturing harbor the potential [1. 34] [1. 35] [1. 36] [1. 37] DRAFT Digging (in) the Playground for risk, stress, and anger. I/we can keep walking in the shade, or I/we can start accusing the people who injure us in speech for their ignorance and lack of intercultural consideration. These reactions may lead to conflicts and escalation of misunderstandings. My family needs an alternative route to keep playing on the playgrounds. Outlining an agenda for transforming intercultural relations, Collier (2003) helps acknowledge that the context of dominant ideology defines the ways families experience intercultural relations. The same context serves as a spring board for

transformative possibilities for family members and scholars of intercultural communication. Chawla (2011; Chawla & Rodriguez, 2007) engage the performative practice of telling stories of herself and others to understand the power of racialization and to resist the racial complications. Similarly, other scholars (e. g., Warren, 2003) produce pedagogical interventions within the structures of higher education by creating courses that focus on critical study of whiteness, race, or other culture categories. In situations when we navigate various playgrounds, we take an obligation to make Dima belong to different parts of the world. We strive to position strategically the languages spoken in the family and in the dominant context. I expect that Dima will acquire Midwest American accent in his English and probably in his Russian, which carries a noticeable flavor of the region where his parents grew up. Being fluent in more than one tongue, he will not only know the self but understands others. Engaging others in conversations about culture as well as actively responding to the moments of culturing, we can experiment to create hopeful directions for intercultural communication. DRAFT Chapter Two Cultural Ambiguity, Ethnic Identity, and the Bicultural Experience Asian Indian Parents and Their Americanâ€™ Born Kids Suchitra Shenoy and Tara A. Kulkarni [2. 0] [2. 1] With a population of 2. 8 million registering growth of over 100% since the last census in 2000, Asian Indians are the second largest minority group among all Asians in the United States (U. S. Census, 2010). In fact, in six metropolitan areas—Chicago, Washington, Dallas—Fort Worth, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Detroit—Asian Indians are the largest Asian group. By and large, Asian Indians trace their ethnicity to India and represent multiple religious identities such as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists,

Christians, and Jains, among others. Asian Indians' historic journey to the United States was not without its share of controversies. The first wave of immigrants from colonial India who entered the U. S in the early 1900s as agricultural and railroad workers were an alienated minority, deprived of political and economic rights (Hess, 1974). Strong anti immigration laws against what came to be considered the " Hindu Invasion, " systematically excluded, limited, and denied these immigrants their rights, while making them victims of racial prejudice and residential segregation. Stereotyped as " untrustworthy, immodest, unsanitary, insolent, and lustful" (Hess, 1974, p. 580), they were considered a menace to society and accused of undercutting prevailing wages by offering cheap labor, thereby engendering an " anti-Oriental sentiment" (p. 580). The second wave of immigrants from independent India entered the United States after the 1965 Immigration and Nationalization Act (see, Ludden, 2006, for how the Act changed the face of America) that lifted the discriminatory ban and allowed Indians to legally immigrate into the country. These Indians were comprised mostly of Suchitra Shenoy and Tara A. Kulkarni DRAFT educated professionals and their families. Compared to first wave immigrants who were illiterate or uneducated, did not speak English, and were largely ignorant of American society, this second wave of educated immigrants were Englishspeaking, highly skilled, well educated, and among the urban elite (Dasgupta, 1997; Hess, 1974). In fact, it is believed that 83% of Indians who immigrated between 1966 and 1977 were engineers and physicians (Prashad, 2001). By 2012, nearly half a century after the 1965 Act and 2. 8 million strong, Asian Indians are visible in every walk of life, at least in large cities. According to a

recent Pew Research Center's report on "The Rise of Asian Americans" (Pew Research Center, 2012), Indian Americans lead all other Asian groups in their levels of income and education by a significant margin. All of these accomplishments have perhaps led to the inclusion of Indians as a "model minority," a construct not without its own share of controversies, hidden agendas, and a "concept to blame traditionally disenfranchised communities of color for their economic plight" (Subramanian, 2012, para. 9; also see, Srivastava, 2009). Despite the sentiments this concept evokes among Asian Americans across the board, the growing success of this group has given the community much to celebrate. While victories and accomplishments of Indian-origin politicians such as Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal and North Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, economists and Nobel Laureates such as Amartya Sen, authors like Jhumpa Lahiri, and CEOs like Indra Nooyi of Pepsi, appear more frequently in domestic and international media, achievements of a newer generation of Asian Indians evokes perhaps a greater sense of pride, joy, and renewed hope. On June 15, 2012, when Snigdha Nandipati won the National Spelling Bee, she joined nine other Indian Americans who had previously won this competition that is in its 14th year of existence (Subramanian, 2012). Most often than not, immigrant parents measure their own successful integration into their adopted country vicariously in the achievements of their American born kids who are inevitably labeled by nativeborn Indians as confused. This judgment is popularized by the moniker ABCD or AmericanBorn, Confused Desi. Calling an Americanborn kid an ABCD where colloquially, the D stands for desi or someone of Indian origin, is meant to imply that this generation will be "difficult to parent, will have

confusion and misunderstanding of their cultural identity, and will present a multitude of problems across the individual and family lifecycle development" (Poulsen, 2009, p. 168). To understand how first generation immigrant parents parent their Americanborn second generation kids, one needs to understand the uniqueness of the Indian family structure and value system. The goal of this chapter is to introduce readers to the Indian family and particularly to the Asian Indian immigrant family dynamics in the United States. This chapter also discusses the four common fears these immigrant [2. 2] [2. 3] [2. 4] DRAFT Cultural Ambiguity, Ethnic Identity, and the Bicultural Experience parents encounter when raising their Americanborn bicultural kids transculturally. As authors of this chapter, we are sisters who were born and raised in India and came to the United States in our early 20s; Suchitra when she was 20 years old, and Tara when she was 21. While we can attest to much of the research on Indian families in India, Tara's own experience raising her U. S. born daughter is explained here to give readers a window into empirical reality. We aim to present a theoretical overview developed and substantiated by scholars across disciplines while also presenting how these observations materialize in actuality through the second author's narratives. [2. 5] [2. 6] THE INDIAN FAMILY Even though scholars sometimes struggle to define 'family' (see, Floyd, Mikkelsen & Judd, 2006; Galvin, 2006), viewing an intimately related group of people from a role perspective that is based on "emotional attachment and patterns of interaction" (Floyd et al., 2006, p. 26), a psychosocial definition that argues "that people who perform instrumental tasks, such as providing nurturance, care giving, and support, are family" (p. 27) allows for an inclusive and

subjective interpretation. Such an open construal of 'family' is apt for Indians who derive their primary source of support from their immediate as well as extended families. As Budhwar and Baruch (2003) observe, "Indians are socialized in an environment that values strong family ties and extended family relationships" (p. 702) in addition to providing nurturance and emotional bonding (Sonawat, 2001). One of the hallmarks of Indian culture is the interdependent and unconditional love and support expected from family members. Of course anomalies exist within any structure and the Indian family is not unique in that regard. However, the majority of Indians believe in strong family and kinship ties as essential to their cultural core as Indians. Given that Indian society is hierarchically structured and patriarchal in nature, family roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. While traditional roles assign men as wage earners and women as homemakers, children are expected to be obedient, respectful of elders, conform to familial norms and most importantly, work hard and bring honor to their families through their academic and professional accomplishments (Durvasula & Mylvaganam, 1994). Despite the emergence of nuclear and urban families, Kakar (1981) observes that family bonds among immediate family members and relatives continue to remain strong. Often considered as authoritarian, the primary goal of Indian parenting involves filial piety where children are inculcated with a strong sense of obligation and duty that includes unquestioned acceptance of parents' decisions made for them, a moral code of conduct, and observance of the hierarchical relationship.

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