

“The Normal American Family” as an Interpretive Structure of Family Life Among Grown Children of Korean and Vietnamese Immigrants

This article examines the ways that children of Korean and Vietnamese immigrants describe growing up in their families and their plans for filial care. Based on an analysis of 73 in-depth interviews, this study finds that respondents repeatedly invoked a monolithic image of the “Normal American Family” as an interpretive framework in giving meaning to their own family life. The Family served as a contrast structure in respondents’ accounts of parents—and Asian parents in general—as overly strict, emotionally distant, and deficient. However, when discussing plans for filial care, respondents relied on favorable images of the close family ties associated with Asian immigrants, such as those depicted in “model minority” stereotypes. In so doing they generated positive descriptions of their families, particularly in contrast to mainstream American families. The findings suggest that narrow and ethnocentric images of the Family promulgated throughout mainstream culture compose an ideological template that can shape the desires, disappointments, and subjective realities of children of immigrant minorities.

Department of Sociology, University of Florida, Box 117330, 3219 Turlington Hall, Gainesville, FL 32611-7330 (pyke@soc.ufl.edu).

Key Words: family ideology, immigrant families, intergenerational relations, Korean Americans, Vietnamese Americans.

The use of monolithic images of the “Normal American Family” as a stick against which all families are measured is pervasive in the family wars currently raging in political and scholarly discourses (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). The hotly contested nature of these images—consisting almost exclusively of White middle-class heterosexuals—attests to their importance as resources in national debates. Many scholars express concern that hegemonic images of the Normal American Family are ethnocentric and that they denigrate the styles and beliefs of racial-ethnic, immigrant, gay-lesbian, and single-parent families while encouraging negative self-images among those who do not come from the ideal family type (Bernades, 1993; Dilworth-Anderson, Burton, & Turner, 1993; Smith, 1993; Stacey, 1998; Zinn, 1994). Yet we still know little about how the Family ideology shapes the consciousness and expectations of those growing up in the margins of the mainstream. This study examines the accounts that grown children of Korean and Vietnamese immigrants provide of their family life and filial obligations. The findings suggest that public images of the Normal American Family constitute an ideological template that shapes respondents’ familial perspectives and desires as new racial-ethnic Americans.

FAMILY IDEOLOGY AS AN INTERPRETIVE STRUCTURE

Images of the Normal American Family (also referred to as the Family) are pervasive in the dom-

inant culture—part of a “‘large-scale’ public rhetoric” (Holstein & Miller, 1993, p. 152). They are found in the discourse of politicians, social commentators, and moral leaders; in the talk of everyday interactions; and in movies, television shows, and books. Smith (1993, p. 63) describes these ubiquitous images as an “ideological code” that subtly “inserts an implicit evaluation into accounts of ways of living together.” Such images serve as instruments of control, prescribing how families ought to look and behave (Bernades, 1985). Most scholarly concern centers on how this ideology glorifies and presents as normative that family headed by a breadwinning husband with a wife who, even if she works for pay, is devoted primarily to the care of the home and children. The concern is that families of diverse structural forms, most notably divorced and female-headed families, are comparatively viewed as deficient and dysfunctional (Fineman, 1995; Kurz, 1995; Stacey, 1998). Scholars concerned about the impact of such images point to those who blame family structures that deviate from this norm for many of society’s problems and who suggest policies that ignore or punish families that don’t fit the construct (e.g., Blankenhorn, 1995; Popenoe, 1993, 1996).

In addition to prescribing the structure of families, the Family ideal contains notions about the appropriate values, norms, and beliefs that guide the way family members relate to one another. The cultural values of “other” families, such as racial-ethnic families, are largely excluded. For example, prevailing family images emphasize sensitivity, open honest communication, flexibility, and forgiveness (Greeley, 1987). Such traits are less important in many cultures that stress duty, responsibility, obedience, and a commitment to the family collective that supercedes self-interests (Chung, 1992; Freeman, 1989). In further contrast to the traditional family systems of many cultures, contemporary American family ideals stress democratic rather than authoritarian relations, individual autonomy, psychological well-being, and emotional expressiveness (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Bernades, 1985; Cancian, 1987; Coontz, 1992; Skolnick, 1991). Family affection, intimacy, and sentimentality have grown in importance in the United States over time (Coontz, 1992), as evident in new ideals of fatherhood that stress emotional involvement (Coltrane, 1996).

These mainstream family values are evident in the therapeutic ethic, guiding the ways that those

who seek professional advice are counseled and creating particular therapeutic barriers in treating immigrant Asian Americans (Bellah et al., 1985; Cancian, 1987; Tsui and Schultz, 1985). Family values are also widely disseminated and glorified in the popular culture, as in television shows like *Ozzie and Harriet*, *Leave It To Beaver*, *The Brady Bunch*, *Family Ties*, and *The Cosby Show*, many of which are rerun on local stations and cable networks (Coontz, 1992). Parents in these middle-class, mostly White, television families are emotionally nurturing and supportive, understanding, and forgiving (Shaner, 1982; Skill, 1994). Indeed, such shows tend to focus on the successful resolution of relatively minor family problems, which the characters accomplish through open communication and the expression of loving concern. Children in the United States grow up vicariously experiencing life in these television families, including children of immigrants who rely on television to learn about American culture. With 98% of all U.S. households having at least one television set, Rumbaut (1997, p. 949) views TV as an immense “assimilative” force for today’s children of immigrants. Yet, he continues, it remains to be studied how their world views are shaped by such “cultural propaganda.” The images seen on television serve as powerful symbols of the “normal” family or the “good” parent—and they often eclipse our appreciation of diverse family types (Brown & Bryant, 1990; Greenberg, Hines, Buerkel-Rothfuss, & Atkin, 1980). As the authors of one study on media images note, “The seductively realistic portrayals of family life in the media may be the basis for our most common and pervasive conceptions and beliefs about what is natural and what is right” (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980, p. 3). Family scholars have rarely displayed analytic concern about the emphasis on emotional expressiveness and affective sentimentality that pervades much of the Family ideology, probably because the majority—who as middle-class, well-educated Whites live in the heartland of such values—do not regard them as problematic. As a result, this Western value orientation can seep imperceptibly into the interpretive framework of family research (Bernades, 1993; Dilworth-Anderson et al., 1993; Fineman, 1995; Smith, 1993; Thorne & Yalom, 1992).

The theoretical literature on the social construction of experience is an orienting framework for this study (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). According to this view, cultural ideologies and symbols are integral com-

ponents of the way individuals subjectively experience their lives and construct reality. The images we carry in our heads of how family life is supposed to be frame our interpretation of our own domestic relations. This is evident in the different ways that Korean and Korean American children perceived their parents' childrearing behavior in a series of studies. In Korea, children were found to associate parental strictness with warmth and concern and its absence as a sign of neglect (Rohner & Pettengill, 1985). These children were drawing on Korean family ideology, which emphasizes strong parental control and parental responsibility for children's failings. In this interpretive framework, parental strictness is a positive characteristic of family life and signifies love and concern. Children of Korean immigrants living in the United States, on the other hand, viewed their parents' strictness in negative terms and associated it with a lack of warmth—as did American children in general (Pettengill & Rohner, 1985). Korean American children drew on American family ideology, with its emphasis on independence and autonomy, and this cast a negative shadow on their parents' strict practices.

Although pervasive images of the Normal American Family subtly construct Asian family patterns of interaction as "deviant," countervailing images of Asians as a "model minority" are also widely disseminated. News stories and scholarly accounts that profile the tremendous academic success among some immigrant Asian children or describe the upward economic mobility observed among segments of the Asian immigrant population credit the cultural traditions of collectivist family values, hard work, and a strong emphasis on education. Such images exaggerate the success of Asian immigrants and mask intraethnic diversity (Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore, 1991; Kibria, 1993; Min, 1995; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). Meanwhile, conservative leaders use model minority images as evidence of the need to return to more traditional family structures and values, and they blame the cultural deficiency of other racial minority groups for their lack of similar success, particularly African Americans and Latinos (Kibria, 1993; Min, 1995; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). The model minority construct thus diverts attention from racism and poverty while reaffirming the Family ideology. In the analysis of the accounts that children of immigrants provided of their family life, references to such cultural images and values emerged repeatedly as a mecha-

nism by which respondents gave meaning to their own family lives.

KOREAN AND VIETNAMESE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

This study focuses on children of Vietnamese and Korean immigrants because both groups constitute relatively new ethnic groups in the United States. Few Vietnamese and Koreans immigrated to the United States before 1965. However, from 1981 to 1990, Korea and Vietnam were two of the top five countries from which immigrants arrived (*Statistical Yearbook*, 1995, table 2, pp. 29–30). Thus adaptation to the United States is a relatively new process for large groups of Koreans and Vietnamese, one that is unassisted by earlier generations of coethnic immigrants. The children of these immigrants, located at the crossroads of two cultural worlds, offer a good opportunity to examine the familial perspectives and desires of new racial-ethnic Americans.

Most in-depth study of children of immigrants examines only one ethnic group, which makes it difficult to know which aspects of adaptation are shared with other ethnic groups and which are distinct. Studying only one Asian ethnic group also contributes to a tendency to over-generalize the findings to all Asian ethnic groups. Thus this study was designed to compare two Asian ethnicities so that ethnic differences and similarities could be noted. The author selected Koreans and Vietnamese because, in addition to being new American ethnic groups, their economic status and pathways to immigration differ. Whereas Koreans have immigrated voluntarily, in search of better economic opportunities and educations for their children, most Vietnamese arrived as political refugees or to rejoin family members, some doing so after spending time in Vietnam's prisons or "re-education camps" (Gold, 1993; Hurh, 1998; Kibria, 1993; Min, 1998). Vietnamese immigrants have been, overall, less educated and from more rural and poorer backgrounds than Korean immigrants. Only 12% of first-generation Vietnamese heads of household have a college degree, compared with 45% for Koreans (Oropesa & Landale, 1995). Family socioeconomic status is important to the study of adaptation because it affects the kinds of neighborhoods where immigrant children grow up and attend school (Zhou, 1997). However, equally important are the cultural practices that organize family relationships, including parental values and childrearing practices, and the

expectations that parents have of their children. It is here that ethnic differences among Koreans and Vietnamese appear more subtle.

Due to the relatively short history of massive Asian immigration, Asian American family research has been fragmented and limited. As Uba (1994) points out, most of the research has been descriptive rather than explanatory, has focused on Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans, and has given little attention to between-group differences. Thus the empirical picture of Korean and Vietnamese family systems is incomplete. What we do know is that the philosophical values of Chinese Confucianism have influenced the traditional family systems of Korea and Vietnam. These values emphasize solidarity, hierarchal relations, and filial piety (Kibria, 1993; Hurh, 1998; Min, 1998; Sue & Morishima, 1982). Confucianism provides a firm set of rules about how family members are supposed to behave toward one another (Cha, 1994; Chung, 1992; Kim & Choi, 1994; Min, 1998; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). Priority is placed on family interests over individual desires and needs in order to maintain stability and harmony. Status distinctions guide the way in which members are to interact with one another. Younger members are expected to display respect, deference, and obedience to elders (including to older siblings, especially brothers), and wives are expected to show the same to their husbands and parents-in-law. Children—including adult offspring—are forbidden from expressing dissenting opinions or confronting parents, which is viewed as disrespectful (Chung, 1992; Kibria, 1993; Min, 1998; Pettengill & Rohner, 1985). Emotional expressiveness, including displays of affection, is discouraged, while self-control is emphasized (Hurh, 1998; Uba, 1994). Family ties and roles are central from birth until death, with a strong emphasis on family devotion. In general, parents are expected to rely on their children's support in later life. Confucianism assigns the care and financial support of aging parents to the eldest son and his wife, who are expected to live under the same roof as the parents. Korean and Vietnamese cultures also derive from Confucianism a respect for the well educated, and education is considered the primary means for social mobility. This undergirds the great importance that many Asian parents place on their children's education (Min, 1998; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). The economic hardships of many immigrant parents strengthen their emphasis on the education of their children,

whom they expect to forge success in the United States (Kibria, 1993; Min, 1998).

There are, of course, ethnic differences between Korean and Vietnamese families, as well as differences in the degree to which they conform to traditional family practices. Although the comparative research is scant, Confucianism appears to have a stronger influence on the traditional family system in Korea than in Vietnam. For example, in Vietnamese families there is a greater tendency for siblings to pool resources in providing filial care rather than relying on the elder son alone, which might be related to their poorer economic circumstances. Additionally, Vietnamese women are permitted stronger kinship ties to their family of origin upon marriage than are Korean women, who are expected to live with their in-laws if they marry an elder son (Hurh, 1998; Kibria, 1993).

Although more research is needed that closely examines Asian ethnic differences in family practices, the existing literature reveals patterns of similarities among the family systems of Koreans and Vietnamese that differentiate them from American family patterns. The role prescriptions, family obligations, hierarchal relations, lack of emotional expressiveness, and collectivist values associated with the traditional family systems of Korea and Vietnam contrast sharply with the emphasis on individualism, self-sufficiency, egalitarianism, expressiveness, and self-development in mainstream U.S. culture (Bellah et al., 1985; Canclian, 1987; Chung, 1992; Hurh, 1998; Kim & Choi, 1994; Min, 1998; Pyke & Bengtson, 1996; Tran, 1988; Uba, 1994). Immigrant children tend to quickly adopt American values and standards, creating generational schisms and challenges to parental control and authority. That parent-child conflict and cultural gaps exist in many Asian immigrant families is well documented (Gold, 1993; Freeman, 1989; Kibria, 1993; Min, 1998; Rumbaut, 1994; Zhou & Bankston, 1998; Wolfe, 1997). However, no study to date has closely examined the cultural mechanisms at play in this process. This study begins that task.

METHOD

The data are from an interview study of the family and social experiences of grown children of Korean and Vietnamese immigrants. Respondents were either located at a California university where 47% of all undergraduates are of Asian descent (Maharaj, 1997) or were referred by students from that university. In-depth interviews were

TABLE 1. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Ethnicity	<i>n</i>	Average Age (years)	Foreign Born (%)	Average Age at Immigration (years)
Korean American women	24	21	62	5
Korean American men	10	21	60	7
Vietnamese American women	23	21	96	5
Vietnamese American men	16	22	81	5
Total for sample	73	21	77	5

conducted with 73 respondents consisting of 34 Korean Americans (24 women, 10 men) and 39 Vietnamese Americans (23 women, 16 men). Both parents of each respondent were Korean or Vietnamese, except for one respondent, whose parents were both Sino-Vietnamese. Respondents ranged in age from 18–26 and averaged 21 years. Only one respondent was married, and none had children.

Respondents were either born in the United States (second generation) or immigrated prior to the age of 15 (1.5 generation), except for one Vietnamese American woman who immigrated at 17. The foreign born accounted for 77% of the sample and immigrated at an average age of 5 years. The remaining 23% were born in the United States. Most respondents in this sample spent their entire adolescence in the United States, and a majority lived in the United States for most, if not all, of their childhood. Eight percent of the Vietnamese American respondents were born in the United States, compared to 38 percent of Korean American respondents (see Table 1 for gender and ethnic differences). All study participants were college graduates or students and all resided in California, where one-third of U.S. legal immigrants arrive and 45% of the nation's immigrant student population lives (Zhou, 1997). Thus the sample over-represents those who are academically successful. Because the respondents have endured sustained exposure to assimilation pressures from the educational system, higher levels of assimilation were expected in this sample than in the larger immigrant population. As a result, these respondents were perhaps more likely to invoke American cultural ideals in describing their family life than a more representative sample that includ-

ed the less educated and those who immigrated at older ages.

The author gathered the 73 individual interviews analyzed here in the preliminary phase of data collection for a larger on-going project sponsored by the National Science Foundation (#SBR-9810725). The larger study includes a sample of 184 who participated in individual and focus group interviews. Only the initial phase of data collection was designed to prompt respondents' extensive descriptions of family life. The purpose of the larger study is to compare the dynamic complexities and structural contexts of adaptation and ethnic identity among children of immigrants, with special attention to their subjective experiences in mediating different cultural worlds. Because ethnic identity development differs for males and females (Espiritu, 1997; Waters, 1996), I also stratified the sample by gender.

As previously discussed, I stratified the sample by ethnicity, as well, in order to compare the effects of structural and cultural factors on adaptation processes. Despite Korean and Vietnamese distinctions in socioeconomic status, pathways to immigration, and cultural practices, I did not observe ethnic differences relevant to the central focus of this analysis. Although this is surprising, ethnic differences in the specific areas of family life that I was investigating are probably relatively subtle, particularly from the viewpoint of American children of Asian immigrant parents. More specifically, because respondents relied on American family ideology in giving meaning to their domestic relations, their focus was on how immigrant family life differs from the American ideal rather than from other Asian ethnic groups. This can blur ethnic distinctions and serve as a basis for shared personal experiences across ethnic groups. In fact, the rise of an Asian American ethnic identity among Asian-origin individuals is believed to result, in part, from the shared experiences of growing up American in an Asian home (Kibria, 1997).

Gender differences observed in these data focused on the nature of respondents' criticisms of parents, with females complaining that parents grant more freedom and respect to sons. Males also complained of strict parents, but, when asked, acknowledged receiving more respect and freedom than sisters. These observed differences are not central to this analysis and are presented elsewhere (Pyke & Johnson, 1999).

A five-page interview guide with open-ended questions and follow-up probes concerning the fa-

miliar and social experiences of respondents directed the intensive interview process. All respondents were asked what being a child of immigrants was like, how they think immigration affected their family, what their parents were like when the respondent was growing up, what communication was like with their parents, what their parents' marriage was like, how close they feel to their parents, whether they ever felt embarrassed by their parents, whether they ever deceived their parents, what kinds of things their parents would do to get them to obey, whether they have ever disappointed their parents in any way, how they would change their parents if they could change anything about them they wanted, what kinds of assistance they plan to provide for their parents, and how they feel about providing assistance. The author conducted about one-third of the interviews, and several trained student assistants conducted the remainder. The student assistants took a qualitative methods course with the author, in which they learned interviewing skills and conducted practice interviews. They also received extensive training and practice with the interview guide prior to collecting project data. Most trained student interviewers were children of Asian immigrants near in age to the respondents. They were therefore able to establish rapport with respondents, and they typically received candid responses, as revealed by respondents' frequent use of colloquialisms and profanity in interviews. Interviews were conducted in 1996 and 1997 and lasted between 1½ and 3 hours. They were tape-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

This research began with the general goal of learning about the subjective family experiences of children of Asian immigrants. I used a grounded research approach that emphasized an inductive method of generating explanation from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Except for the general assumption that respondents are active agents in the construction of their family experiences, I imposed no *a priori* assumptions, hypotheses, or specific theoretical frames on the research process. This allowed unanticipated data to emerge. Interviews focusing on family dynamics were conducted until a point of saturation was reached, as indicated by the recurring nature of the data and the emergence of clear trends (Ambert, Adler, Adler, & Detzner, 1995; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The overwhelming majority of respondents provided negative descriptions of their parents and upbringing in at least one domain, such as disci-

pline, emotional closeness, or communication; only a small minority provided wholly positive accounts. Despite such intergenerational strain or distance, most respondents were strongly committed to caring for their parents in later life. In order to more closely examine the interview data, and thus to uncover deeper layers of understanding to these prominent patterns, two research assistants coded data into topical categories that corresponded with the questions asked. These coded segments were extracted for ease in theoretical sorting. I then analyzed the data, moving back and forth between emerging theoretical categories of the extracted data and the full interviews in order to check the validity of the findings. Because I am a native-born White American and wanted both to guard against the introduction of personal bias in the analysis and to acquire greater awareness of ethnic meanings, I shared my interpretive understandings of the data with Asian American students and student assistants. I then incorporated their insights into the analysis.

During the analysis, I noted recurring references in one form or another to notions about so-called normal families. Respondents used such references for one purpose only—as a point of contrast to life in their families. Three categorical expressions of this theme emerged in the data: (a) comparisons with television families; (b) comparisons with families of non-Asian friends; and (c) contrasts with specific family behavior or characteristics described as normal or American. I did not anticipate the importance of such family imagery when I devised the interview guide; thus I never asked respondents about family life on TV or among friends, or what they regarded as a normal or ideal family. Rather this theme emerged unexpectedly in the interviews. The unprompted and recurring nature of these references indicates their importance as resources in respondents' construction of their family experiences. In the following discussion, I present a sample of the qualitative data, in the form of quotes, to illustrate the observed patterns (Ambert et al., 1995). Respondents chose the pseudonyms used here.

RESULTS

I examine two ways in which respondents commonly used the typification of American family life as a contrast structure against which behavior in immigrant Asian families was juxtaposed and interpreted (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). When describing relations with their parents, most re-

spondents provided negative accounts of at least one aspect of their relationship, and they criticized their parents for lacking American values that emphasize psychological well-being and expressive love. Recurring references to a narrow Americanized notion of what families ought to look like were woven throughout many such accounts. However, when respondents described the kinds of filial care they planned to provide for their parents, the respondents switched to an interpretive lens that values ethnic family solidarity. In this context, respondents' references to notions of the Normal American Family became a negative point of comparison that cast their own immigrant families, and Asian families in general, in positive terms.

Viewing Parental Relations Through an Americanized Lens

Respondents were asked to fantasize about how they would change their parents if they could change anything about them that they wanted to change. The three areas of desired change that respondents mentioned most often reveal their adoption of many mainstream American values. They wished for parents who: (a) were less strict and gave them more freedom; (b) were more liberal, more open-minded, more Americanized, and less traditional; (c) were emotionally closer, more communicative, more expressive, and more affectionate. These three areas are interrelated. For example, being more Americanized and less traditional translates into being more lenient and expressive. A small minority of respondents presented a striking contrast to the dominant pattern by describing, in terms both positive and grateful, parents who had liberal attitudes or Americanized values and parenting styles.

The communication most respondents described with parents focused on day-to-day practical concerns, such as whether the child had eaten, and about performance in school and college, a major area of concern among parents. Conversations were often limited to parental directives or lectures. For the most part, respondents were critical of the emotional distance and heavy emphasis on obedience that marked their relations with their parents. Chang-Hee, an 18-year-old who immigrated from Korea at 8, provided a typical case. When asked about communication, she disparaged her parents for not talking more openly, which she attributed to their being Asian. Respondents typically linked parental styles with race and not with

other factors such as age or personality. Like many other respondents, Chang-Hee constructed an account not only of her family relations, but also of Asian families in general.

To tell you the truth, in Asian families you don't have conversations. You just are told to do something and you do it. . . . You never talk about problems, even in the home. You just kind of forget about it and you kind of go on like nothing happened. Problems never really get solved. That's why I think people in my generation, I consider myself 1.5 generation, we have such a hard time because I like to verbalize my emotions. . . . [My parents] never allowed themselves to verbalize their emotions. They've been repressed so much [that] they expect the same out of me, which is the hardest thing to do because I have so many different things to say and I'm just not allowed.

Some respondents volunteered that their parents never asked them about their well-being, even when their distress was apparent. Chang-Hee observed, "If I'm sad, [my mom] doesn't want to hear it. She doesn't want to know why. . . . She's never asked me, 'So what do you feel?'" This lack of expressed interest in children's emotional well-being, along with the mundane level of communication, was especially upsetting to respondents because, interpreted through the lens of American family ideology, it defined their parents as emotionally uncaring and distant.

Several respondents longed for closer, more caring relationships with their parents that included expressive displays of affection. Thanh, a married 22-year-old college student who left Vietnam when she was 6, said, "I'd probably make them more loving and understanding, showing a bit more affection. . . . A lot of times I just want to go up and hug my parents, but no, you don't do that sort of thing."

Research indicates that the desire for greater intimacy is more common among women than men (Cancian, 1987). Thus it was surprising that many male respondents also expressed strong desires for more caring and close talk—especially from their fathers, who were often described as harsh and judgmental. Ralph, 20, a Korean American man born in the United States, said:

My dad, he's not open. He is not the emotional type. So he talks . . . and I would listen and do it. It's a one-way conversation, rather than asking for my opinions. . . . I would think it'd be nicer if he was . . . much more compassionate, caring, because it seems like he doesn't care.

Similarly, Dat, a 22-year-old biology major who left Vietnam when he was 5, said:

I would fantasize about sitting down with my dad and shooting the breeze. Talk about anything and he would smile and he would say, "Okay, that's fine, Dat." Instead of, you know, judge you and tell me I'm a loser. . . .

A definition of love that emphasizes emotional expression and close talk predominates in U.S. culture (Cancian, 1986). Instrumental aspects of love, like practical help, are ignored or devalued in this definition. In Korean and Vietnamese cultures, on the other hand, the predominant definitions of love emphasize instrumental help and support. The great divide between immigrant parents who emphasize instrumental forms of love and children who crave open displays of affection was evident in the following conversation, which occurred between Dat and his father when Dat was 7 or 8 years old. Dat recalled, "I tried saying 'I love you' one time and he looked at me and said, 'Are you American now? You think this is *The Brady Bunch*? You don't love me. You love me when you can support me.'" These different cultural definitions of love contributed to respondents' constructions of immigrant parents as unloving and cold.

The Family as a Contrast Structure in the Negative Accounts of Family Life

Many of the images of normal family life that respondents brought to their descriptions came in the form of references to television families or the families of non-Asian American friends. Although these monolithic images do not reflect the reality of American family life, they nevertheless provided the basis by which respondents learned how to be American, and they served as the interpretive frame of their own family experiences. By contrasting behavior in their immigrant families with mainstream images of normalcy, the respondents interpreted Asian family life as lacking or deficient. Dat referred to images of normal family life in America, as revealed on television and among friends, as the basis for his desire for more affection and closeness with his father:

Sometimes when I had problems in school, all I wanted was my dad to listen to me, of all people. I guess that's the American way and I was raised American. . . . That's what I see on TV and in my friends' family. And I expected him to be that way too. But it didn't happen. . . . I would

like to talk to him or, you know, say "I love you," and he would look at me and say, "Okay." That's my ultimate goal, to say, "I love you." It's real hard. Sometimes when I'm in a good mood, the way I show him love is to put my hands over his shoulders and squeeze it a little bit. That would already irritate him a little. . . . You could tell. He's like, "What the fuck's he doing?" But I do it because I want to show him love somehow. Affection. I'm an affectionate person.

Similarly, Hoa, a 23-year-old Vietnamese American man who immigrated at age 2, referred to television in describing his own family: "We aren't as close as I would like. . . . We aren't as close as the dream family, you know, what you see on TV. Kind of like . . . *Leave It To Beaver*. You know, stuff I grew up on."

Paul, a 21-year-old Korean American born in the United States, also criticizes his father, and Asian fathers in general, in relation to the fathers of friends and those on television:

I think there is somewhat of a culture clash between myself and my parents. They are very set on rules—at least my father is. He is very strict and demanding and very much falls into that typical Asian father standard. I don't like that too much and I think it is because . . . as a child, I was always watching television and watching other friends' fathers. All the relationships seemed so much different from me and my father's relationship. . . . I guess it's pretty cheesy but I can remember watching *The Brady Bunch* reruns and thinking Mike Brady would be a wonderful dad to have. He was always so supportive. He always knew when something was wrong with one of his boys. Whenever one of his sons had a problem, they would have no problem telling their dad anything and the dad would always be nice and give them advice and stuff. Basically I used what I saw on television as a picture of what a typical family should be like in the United States. I only wished that my family could be like that. And friends too—I used to see how my friends in school would be in Little League Baseball and their dad would be like their coaches or go to their games to cheer their sons on and give them support. I could not picture my father to be like that kind of man that I saw on TV, or like my friends' fathers.

Respondents did not refer to non-Asian American friends who had distant, conflict-ridden family relationships. Yet many respondents likely did have contact with such individuals. It appears as though respondents see only in ways permitted by the Family ideology. That is, as Bernades argued, "the image or idol of 'The Family' rather than the reality of people's lives is taken as the object of

attention" (1985, p. 288). Looking at "American" families through this ideological lens determines which families are "seen." Those that do not fit the cultural imagery are not seen or are viewed as atypical. "Atypical" families are not referenced in these accounts, even though, in actuality, they are probably closer to the empirical reality of American family life. Friends whose families do comply, on the other hand, loom large as symbols that verify the existence of the Family ideal.

In comparison to this ideal, even parents who had adopted more American parenting practices fell short. For example, the parents of Mike, 22, who had immigrated to the United States from Vietnam as an infant, were less strict than the parents of most respondents. Nevertheless, Mike said:

My parents were really easy. They let me hang out with my friends, they had no problem with me sleeping over or other people sleeping over. So having friends in high school wasn't hard at all, and going out wasn't a problem at all. It was just, you know, you go over to your friend's house and he just talks to his parents about everything. So I got a little bit jealous. You know, I wished I could talk to my parents about stuff like that but I couldn't.

Sometimes respondents simply made assumptive references to normal or American families, against which they critically juxtaposed Asian immigrant families. Being American meant that one was a member of the Normal American Family and enjoyed family relations that were warm, close, and harmonious. Being Asian, on the other hand, meant living outside such normality. Thuy, a 20-year-old Vietnamese American woman who had immigrated when 13, said:

If I could, I would have a more emotional relationship with my parents. I know they love me, but they never tell me they love me. They also are not very affectionate. This is how I've always grown up. It wasn't really until we came to the United States that I really noticed what a lack of love my parents show. *American* kids are so lucky. They don't know what it's like to not really feel that you can show emotion with your own parents.

Similarly, Cora, 20, a Korean American woman born in the United States, remarked:

I would probably want [my parents] to be more open, more understanding so I could be more open with them, 'cause there's a lot of things that I can't share with them because they're not as open-minded as *American* parents. . . . 'Cause I

have friends and stuff. They talk to their parents about everything, you know?

When asked how he was raised, Josh, 21, a Vietnamese American man who immigrated when 2, responded by calling up a construction of the "good" American Family and the "deficient" Asian Family. He said, "I'm sure that for all *Asian* people, if they think back to [their] childhood, they'll remember a time they got hit. *American* people, they don't get hit."

Respondents repeatedly constructed American families as loving, harmonious, egalitarian, and normal. Using this ideal as their measuring stick, Asian families were constructed as distant, overly strict, uncaring, and not normal. In fact, respondents sometimes used the word "normal" in place of "American." For example, Hoa, who previously contrasted his family with the one depicted in *Leave It To Beaver*, said, "I love my dad but we never got to play catch. He didn't teach me how to play football. All the stuff a *normal* dad does for their kids. We missed out on that." Thomas, 20, a Korean American who arrived in the United States at age 8, said, "I always felt like maybe we are not so normal. Like in the real America, like Brady Bunch normal. . . . I always felt like . . . there was something irregular about me." Similarly, after describing a childhood where she spoke very little to her parents, Van, 24, who immigrated to the United States from Vietnam at 10, began crying and noted, "I guess I didn't have a *normal* childhood." To be a normal parent is to be an American parent. Asian immigrant parents are by this definition deficient. Such constructions ignore diversity within family types, and they selectively bypass the social problems, such as child abuse, that plague many non-Asian American families. It is interesting, for example, that respondents did not refer to the high divorce rate of non-Asian Americans (Sweet & Bumpass, 1987) to construct positive images of family stability among Asian Americans. This may be because, applying an Americanized definition of love, many respondents described their parents' marriage as unloving and some thought their parents ought to divorce.

Respondents relied on the Family not only as an interpretive framework, but also as a contrast structure by which to differentiate Asian and American families. This juxtaposition of American and Asian ignores that most of the respondents and the coethnics they describe are Americans. "American" is used to refer to non-Asian

Americans, particularly Whites. The words "White" and "Caucasian" were sometimes used interchangeably with "American." Indeed, the Normal American Family *is* White. This Eurocentric imagery excludes from view other racial minority families such as African Americans and Latino Americans. It is therefore not surprising that racial-ethnic families were not referenced as American in these interviews. In fact, respondents appeared to use the term "American" as a code word denoting not only cultural differences but also racial differences. For example, Paul, who was born in the United States, noted, "I look Korean but I think I associate myself more with the *American race*." The oppositional constructions of Asian and American families as monolithic and without internal variation imply that these family types are racialized. That is, the differences are constructed as not only cultural but also racially essential and therefore immutable (Omi & Winant, 1994). By defining American as White, respondents revealed the deep-seated notion that, as Asian Americans, they can never truly be American. Such notions dominate in mainstream depictions of Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners. For example, in a speech about foreign donations, Ross Perot read the names of several Asian American political donors and commented, "So far we haven't found an American name" (Nakao, 1996). When respondents centered Whites as a point of reference in these accounts, they reaffirmed the marginalized position of racial-ethnic minorities in the Family ideology and in U.S. culture writ large.

These data illustrate how Eurocentric images of normal family relationships promulgated in the larger society served as an ideological template in the negative accounts that respondents provided of their immigrant parents. However, as described next, when respondents discussed their plans for filial care, they presented positive accounts of their immigrant families.

Maintaining Ethnic Values of Filial Obligation

Respondents were not consistent in their individual constructions of Asian and American families as revealed in their interviews. When discussing future plans for filial care, most respondents positively evaluated their family's collectivist commitment to care. Such an interpretation is supported by model minority stereotypes in mainstream U.S. culture that attribute the success enjoyed by some Asian immigrants to their strong

family values and collectivist practices (Kibria, 1993; Zhou & Bankston, 1998).

The majority of respondents valued and planned to maintain their ethnic tradition of filial care. For example, Josh, who criticized his parents (and Asian parents in general) for using physical forms of punishment, nonetheless plans to care for his parents in their old age. He said, "I'm the oldest son, and in Vietnamese culture the oldest son cares for the parents. That is one of the things that I carry from my culture. I would not put my parents in a [nursing] home. That's terrible." In contrast to White Americans who condition their level of filial commitment on intergenerational compatibility (Pyke, 1999), respondents displayed a strong desire to fulfill their filial obligation and—especially among daughters—were often undeterred by distant and even conflict-ridden relations with parents. For example, after describing a strained relationship with her parents, Kimberly, 20, who came to this country from Vietnam when 7, added, "I would still take care of them whether I could talk to them or not. It doesn't matter as long as I could take care of them." Similarly, in Wolf's study of 22 grown children of Filipino immigrants, respondents who complained of tension and emotional distance with parents nonetheless experienced family ties and responsibilities as a central component of their daily lives and identities (1997).

Most respondents expected to begin financially supporting their parents prior to their elderly years, with parents in their 50s often regarded as old. A few respondents had already begun to help out their parents financially. Many planned on living with parents. Others spoke of living near their parents, often as neighbors, rather than in the same house, as a means of maintaining some autonomy. The tradition of assigning responsibility for the care of parents to the eldest son was not automatically anticipated for many of these families, especially those from Vietnam. Respondents most often indicated that responsibility would be pooled among siblings or would fall exclusively to the daughters. Several said that parents preferred such arrangements, because they felt closer to daughters. Although the tendency for daughters to assume responsibility for aging parents is similar to the pattern of caregiving common in mainstream American families (Pyke & Bengtson, 1996), several respondents noted that such patterns are also emerging among relatives in their ethnic homeland.

*The Importance of Collectivism as an
Expression of Love*

Respondents typically attributed their future caregiving to reciprocity for parental care in the past and a cultural emphasis on filial respect and support. Yet the enthusiasm and strong commitment that pervades their accounts suggests that they are motivated by more than obligation. For example, Vinh, 26, a graduate student who immigrated from Vietnam at age 5, said about his parents:

They are my life. They will never be alone. I will always be with them. When I was growing [up] as a child, my parents were always with me. And I believe . . . when you grow up, you should be with them; meaning, I will take care of them, in my house, everything. Your parents didn't abandon you when you were a kid. They did not abandon you when you [were] pooping in your diaper. Then when they do, I will not abandon them. . . . Whatever it takes to make them comfortable, I will provide it. There is no limit.

Unable to express love via open displays of affection and close talk, filial assistance becomes a very important way for adult children to symbolically demonstrate their affection for their parents and to reaffirm family bonds. Blossom, 21, who immigrated to the United States from Korea when 6, described the symbolic value of the financial assistance her father expects. She said, "Money is not really important, but it's more about our heart that [my dad] looks at. Through money, my dad will know how we feel and how we appreciate him." Remember that Dat's father told him, "You love me when you can support me." Because instrumental assistance is the primary venue for expressing love and affection in these immigrant families, adult children often placed no limits on what they were willing to do. For example, John, 20, who immigrated from Vietnam when 3, remarked "I'm willing to do anything (for my parents), that's how much I care."

Parental financial independence was not always welcomed by those children who gave great weight to their role of parental caregivers. For example, it was very important to Sean, 19, an only child, to care for his Sino-Vietnamese parents. Sean, who planned to become a doctor, commuted from his home to a local university. He said, "I want my parents to stay with me. I want to support them. . . . I'll always have room for my parents. . . . When I get my first paycheck, I want to support them financially." As reflected in the following exchange with the interviewer, Sean

viewed his parents' retirement plan with some hurt.

Sean: They have their own retirement plan, and they keep track of it themselves, so they're all prepared for me to be the disobedient son and run away.

Interviewer: Is that how you feel?

Sean: Yes I do. . . . Or if I don't succeed in life, they'll be taken care of by themselves.

Interviewer: So is that how you see their retirement plan, as a kind of symbol that they're. . . ?

Sean: They're ready for me to mess up.

The emotional centrality of family ties is also apparent in Sean's description of his hurt when his father—who worries that the time Sean spends away from home studying or at his job is pulling him away from the family—occasionally tests his son's commitment by suggesting that he leave the family home and "fly away." With tear-filled eyes, Sean explained:

It hurts me because I've never had that idea to fly away. . . . I don't want to go and that's what hurts me so bad. I mean, I could cry over things like that. And this is a 19-year-old kid that's crying in front of you. How seldom do you get that?

*The Family as a Contrast Structure in the
Positive Accounts of Filial Obligation*

Many respondents distinguished their ethnic collectivist tradition of filial obligation from practices in mainstream American families, which they described as abandoning elderly parents in retirement or nursing homes. The belief that the elderly are abandoned by their families is widespread in U.S. society and very much a part of everyday discourse. Media accounts of nursing home atrocities bolster such views. Yet most eldercare in this country is not provided in formal caregiving settings but by family members (Abel, 1991). Nonetheless, respondents used this tenacious myth as a point of contrast in constructing Asian American families as more instrumentally caring. For example, Thuy, who previously described wanting a "more emotional relationship" with her parents, like "American kids" have, explained:

With the American culture, it's . . . not much frowned upon to put your parents in a home when they grow old. In our culture, it is a definite no-no. To do anything like that would be disrespectful. . . . If they need help, my brother and I will take care of them, just like my mom is taking care of her parents right now.

Similarly, Hien, 21, a Vietnamese American woman who arrived in this country as an infant, noted, "I know a lot of non-Asians have their parents go to the nursing homes . . . but I personally prefer to find a way of trying to keep them at home."

Mike, who wished he could talk to his parents the way his friends do to theirs, plans to care for his Americanized parents even though they have told him they do not want him to. He was not alone in remaining more committed to filial care than his parents required him to be. He said:

They tell me to just succeed for yourself and take care of your own family. But [referring to filial care] that's just how the Vietnamese culture is. Here in America, once your parents are old, you put them in a retirement home. But not in my family. When the parents get old you take care of them. It doesn't matter if they can't walk, if they can't function anymore. You still take care of them.

When discussing relationships with their parents, respondents used the Family as the ideological raw material out of which they negatively constructed their parents as unloving and distant. However, when the topic changed to filial care, respondents switched to an ethnic definition of love that emphasizes instrumental support and that casts a positive and loving light on their families. As Katie, 21, a Korean American woman born in the United States, observed:

When you say that you are close to your parents here in America, I think most people would take that as you are affectionate with your parents, you hang out with them, you can talk to them about anything . . . more of a friendship thing. But Korean families are not like that. . . . They do not get close to their children like that. They are not friends with them. The kids of Korea do not open up with their parents. Their parents are really their *parents* But still, no matter what, they are very close. Here in America . . . Caucasians don't take care of their parents like we do. They just put them in an old people's home and that's it. It's like they say, "You are too old for me. I don't need you anymore and I'm just going to put you here 'cause it's convenient for me and you'd be in the way anyway. . . ." And in that way, Americans are *not* close to their parents. So it really depends on how you define the word "close"—the answer changes. [Note that the words "Caucasian" and "American" are used synonymously here, as previously discussed.]

In describing their plans for parental care, respondents turned their previous construction of Asian and American families on its head. In this

context the Family was constructed as deficient and uncaring, while the families of respondents—and Asian families in general—were described as more instrumentally caring and closer. Respondents' view of American families as uncaring should not be interpreted as a departure from mainstream family ideology. There has been much concern in the public discourse that today's families lack a commitment to the care of their elders and children (e.g., Popenoe, 1993; see Coontz, 1992, pp. 189–191). Indeed, the pervasive criticism that "individualism has gone haywire" in mainstream families—bolstered by references to the solidarity of model minority families—provides ideological support for ethnic traditions of filial care. That is, children of immigrants do not face ideological pressure from the dominant society to alter such practices; rather, they are given an interpretive template by which to view such practices as evidence of love and care in their families. In fact, U.S. legislative attempts to withdraw social services from legal immigrants without citizenship, with the expectation that family sponsors will provide such support, structurally mandate collectivist systems of caregiving in immigrant families (Huber & Espenshade, 1997). In other words, the dominant society ideologically endorses and, in some ways, structurally requires ethnic immigrant practices of filial care. Filial obligation thus serves as a site where children of Korean and Vietnamese immigrants can maintain their ethnic identity and family ties without countervailing pressure from the mainstream.

DISCUSSION

Interweaving respondents' accounts with an analysis of the interpretive structure from which those accounts are constructed suggests that the Family ideology subtly yet powerfully influences the children of immigrants, infiltrating their subjective understandings of and desires for family life. Respondents relied on American family images in two ways. When discussing their relations with parents and their upbringing, respondents used the Family ideology as a standard of normal families and good parents, leading them to view their immigrant parents as unloving, deficient, and not normal. However, when respondents discussed filial care, a complete reversal occurred. Respondents referred to negative images of rampant individualism among mainstream American families, specifically in regard to eldercare, to bolster their positive portrayals of the instrumental

care and filial piety associated with their ethnic families. Thus the Family ideology was called upon in contradictory ways in these accounts—in the denigration of traditional ethnic parenting practices and in the glorification of ethnic practices of filial obligation.

Findings from this study illustrate how a narrow, ethnocentric family ideology that is widely promulgated throughout the larger culture and quickly internalized by children of immigrants creates an interpretive framework that derogates many of the ethnic practices of immigrant families. As others have argued, the cultural imposition of dominant group values in this form of “controlling images” can lead minorities to internalize negative self-images (Espiritu, 1997). That is, racial-ethnic immigrants can adopt a sense of inferiority and a desire to conform with those values and expectations that are glorified in the mainstream society as normal. Indeed, many respondents explicitly expressed a desire to have families that were like White or so-called American families, and they criticized their own family dynamics for being different. Rather than resist and challenge the ethnocentric family imagery of the mainstream, respondents’ accounts reaffirmed the Normal American Family and the centrality of White native-born Americans in this imagery. This research thus reveals a subtle yet powerful mechanism of internalized oppression by which the racial-ethnic power dynamics in the larger society are reproduced. This is a particularly important finding in that racial-ethnic families will soon constitute a majority in several states, causing scholars to ponder the challenge of such a demographic transformation of the cultural and political hegemony of White native-born Americans (Maharidge, 1996). This study describes an ideological mechanism that could undermine challenges to that hegemony.

This research also uncovered an uncontested site of ethnic pride among the second-generation respondents who drew on mainstream images of elder neglect in their positive interpretation of ethnic filial commitment. As previously discussed, the belief that mainstream American families abandon their elders is tenacious and widespread in the dominant society, despite its empirical inaccuracy. This negative myth has been widely used in popular discourse as an example of the breakdown of American family commitment, and it sometimes serves as a rallying cry for stronger “family values.” Such cries are often accompanied by references to the family solidarity and fil-

ial piety celebrated in the model minority stereotype. Thus the mainstream glorification of ethnic filial obligation, as contrasted with negative images of abandoned White American elders, provided respondents with a positive template for giving meaning to ethnic practices of filial care. The mainstream endorsement of filial obligation marks it as a locale where respondents can maintain family ties and simultaneously produce a positive self-identity in both cultural worlds. This might explain why some respondents were steadfastly committed to filial care despite parental requests to the contrary.

It remains to be seen, however, whether these young adults will be able to carry out their plans of filial obligation. It is likely that many will confront barriers in the form of demanding jobs, childrearing obligations, geographic moves, unsupportive spouses, competing demands from elderly in-laws, and financial difficulties. Furthermore, parents’ access to alternative sources of support such as Social Security and retirement funds could diminish the need for their children’s assistance. Some research already finds that elderly Korean immigrants prefer to live on their own and are moving out of the homes of their immigrant children despite the protests of children, who see it as a public accusation that they did not care for their parents (Hurh, 1998). Although this research examined first-generation immigrant adults and their aging parents, it suggests a rapid breakdown in traditional patterns of coresidential filial care that will likely be reiterated in the next generation. Future research is needed to examine these dynamics among second-generation immigrants, to look at how they will cope with inabilities to fulfill ethnic and model minority expectations of filial obligation, and to assess the impact of any such inabilities on their ethnic identity.

This study makes a unique contribution to the small and largely descriptive literature on Asian immigrant families. Rather than simply reiterating as descriptive data the accounts of family life offered by respondents, I examined the ideological underpinnings of those accounts. In so doing, I uncovered a subtle process by which White hegemonic images of the Family infiltrate the ways that children of immigrants think about their own family lives. Although scholars have often assumed that the prescriptive and moralistic characteristics of the Family are hurtful to those whose families do not comply, the findings presented here provide an empirical description of how such ideology negatively biases the family accounts of

children of immigrants. It must be noted, however, that because the sample in the study was demographically predisposed to higher levels of assimilation, the respondents are probably more likely than a less assimilated sample to view their families through an Americanized lens. This suggests the need for further study of how variations in acculturation levels affect the accounts that children of immigrants provide of their family lives.

A broader sample of families that do not conform with images of the Normal American Family also needs to be investigated. This sample should include native-born racial minorities and children of single parents, as well as immigrants. Studying a broader sample will allow greater understanding of whether narrow cultural notions of a normal family life influence the subjective experience of diverse groups of children growing up in the margins of the mainstream. It is particularly important, as family scholars begin to respond to the burgeoning numbers of ethnically and structurally diverse family forms, that researchers generate culturally sensitive interpretive frameworks that do not automatically and unconsciously perpetuate existing notions that certain family types and practices are inferior. The effort to develop such frameworks requires researchers to examine not only the values and assumptions they bring to their analyses (Dilworth-Anderson et al., 1993), but also the values and assumptions that respondents bring to their accounts. To summarize, this study suggests the need for family researchers to analytically bracket as problematic the ideological structures that shape the empirical accounts of family life we rely upon in our research.

NOTE

I am grateful to Katherine Allen, Susan Blank, Francesca Cancian, Tran Dang, Yen Le Espiritu, Joe Feagin, Jaber Gubrium, Nazli Kibria, Pyong Gap Min, Karen Seccombe, Darin Weinberg, Min Zhou, and the reviewers for their suggestions. I also thank Van-Dzung Nguyen and Mumtaz Mohammedi for their research assistance, the Department of Sociology at University of California-Irvine for its support of this research, and the many students who eagerly participated as research assistants or respondents.

REFERENCES

- Abel, E. K. (1991). *Who cares for the elderly?* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Ambert, A., Adler, P., Adler, P., & Detzner, D. (1995). Understanding and evaluating qualitative research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 57, 879-893.
- Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A.,

- & Tipton, S. (1985). *Habits of the heart*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality*. New York: Doubleday.
- Bernades, J. (1985). "Family ideology": Identification and exploration. *Sociological Review*, 33, 275-297.
- Bernades, J. (1993). Responsibilities in studying post-modern families. *Journal of Family Issues*, 14, 35-49.
- Blankenhorn, D. (1995). *Fatherless America*. New York: Basic Books.
- Brown, D., & Bryant, J. (1990). Effects of television on family values and selected attitudes and behaviors. In J. Bryant (Ed.), *Television and the American family* (pp. 253-274). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Cancian, F. M. (1986). The feminization of love. *Signs*, 11, 692-708.
- Cancian, F. M. (1987). *Love in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Caplan, N., Choy, M. H., & Whitmore, J. K. (1991). *Children of the boat people: A study of educational success*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Cha, J. (1994). Aspects of individualism and collectivism in Korea. In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, Ç. Kagitçibaşı, S. Choi, & G. Yoon (Eds.), *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, methods, and applications* (pp. 157-174). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Chung, D. K. (1992). Asian cultural commonalities: A comparison with mainstream American culture. In S. Furuto, R. Biswas, D. Chung, K. Murase, F. Ross-Sheriff (Eds.), *Social work practice with Asian Americans* (pp. 27-44). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Coltrane, S. (1996). *Family man*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Coontz, S. (1992). *The way we never were*. New York: Basic Books.
- Dilworth-Anderson, P., Burton, L. M., & Turner, W. L. (1993). The importance of values in the study of culturally diverse families. *Family Relations*, 42, 238-242.
- Espiritu, Y. L. (1997). *Asian American women and men*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fineman, M. A. (1995). *The neutered mother, the sexual family, and other twentieth century tragedies*. New York: Routledge.
- Freeman, J. M. (1989). *Hearts of sorrow: Vietnamese-American lives*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorilli, N. (1980). *Media and the family: Images and impact*. Washington, DC: White House Conference on the Family, National Research Forum on Family Issues. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 198 919).
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. New York: Aldine.
- Gold, S. J. (1993). Migration and family adjustment: Continuity and change among Vietnamese in the United States. In H. P. McAdoo (Ed.), *Family ethnicity* (pp. 300-314). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Greeley, A. (1987, May 17). Today's morality play: The sitcom. *New York Times*, p. H1.
- Greenberg, B. S., Hines, M., Buerkel-Rothfuss, N., & Atkin, C. K. (1980). Family role structures and interactions on commercial television. In B. S. Greenberg

- (Ed.), *Life on television: Content analyses of U.S. TV drama* (pp. 149–160). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (1997). *The new language of qualitative method*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Holstein, J. A., & Gubrium, J. F. (1995). Deprivatization and the construction of domestic life. *Journal of Marriage and The Family*, 57, 894–908.
- Holstein, J. A., & Miller, G. (1993). Social constructionism and social problems work. In J. A. Holstein & G. Miller (Eds.), *Reconsidering social constructionism* (pp. 151–172). New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Huber, G. A., & Espenshade, T. J. (1997). Neo-isolationism, balanced-budget conservatism, and the fiscal impacts of immigrants. *International Migration Review*, 31, 1031–1054.
- Hutch, W. M. (1998). *The Korean Americans*. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press.
- Kibria, N. (1993). *The family tightrope: The changing lives of Vietnamese Americans*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kibria, N. (1997). The construction of 'Asian American': Reflections on intermarriage and ethnic identity among second-generation Chinese and Korean Americans. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 20, 523–544.
- Kim, U., & Choi, S. (1994). Individualism, collectivism, and child development: A Korean perspective. In P. Greenfield & R. Cocking (Eds.), *Cross-cultural roots of minority child development* (pp. 227–57). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Kurz, D. (1995). *For richer, for poorer*. New York: Routledge.
- Maharaj, D. (1997, July 8). E-mail hate case tests free speech protections. *Los Angeles Times*, pp. A1, A16.
- Maharidge, D. (1996). *The coming white minority: California eruptions and America's future*. New York: New York Times Books.
- Min, P. G. (1995). Major issues relating to Asian American experiences. In P. G. Min (Ed.), *Asian Americans* (pp. 38–57). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Min, P. G. (1998). *Changes and conflicts: Korean immigrant families in New York*. New York: Allyn and Bacon.
- Nakao, A. (1996, November 17). Asians' political image marred: Fund-raising probes' timing "unfortunate." *The San Francisco Examiner*, p. A1.
- Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial formation in the United States*. New York: Routledge.
- Oropesa, R. S., & Landolt, N. S. (1995). *Immigrant legacies: The socioeconomic circumstances of children by ethnicity and generation in the United States*. (Working Paper 95-01R). Population Research Institute, The Pennsylvania State University, State College.
- Pettengill, S. M., & Rohner, R. P. (1985). Korean-American adolescents' perceptions of parental control, parental acceptance-rejection and parent-adolescent conflict. In I. R. Lagunes & Y. H. Poortinga (Eds.), *From a different perspective: Studies of behavior across culture* (pp. 241–249). Berwyn, IL: Swets North America.
- Popenoe, D. (1993). American family decline, 1960–1990: A review and appraisal. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 55, 527–555.
- Popenoe, D. (1996). *Life without father: Compelling new evidence that fatherhood and marriage are indispensable and for the good of the children and society*. New York: Martin Kessler/Free Press.
- Pyke, K. D. (1999). The micropolitics of care in relationships between aging parents and adult children: Individualism, collectivism, and power. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61, 661–672.
- Pyke, K. D., & Bengtson, V. L. (1996). Caring more or less: Individualistic and collectivist systems of family eldercare. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 379–392.
- Pyke, K. D., & Johnson, D. (1999, November). *Between two faces of gender: The incongruity of home and mainstream cultures among sons and daughters of Asian immigrants*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Family Relations, Irvine, CA.
- Rohrer, R. P., & Pettengill, S. M. (1985). Perceived parental acceptance-rejection and parental control among Korean adolescents. *Child Development*, 56, 524–528.
- Rumbaut, R. G. (1994). The crucible within: Ethnic identity, self-esteem and segmented assimilation among children of immigrants. *International Migration Review*, 28, 748–794.
- Rumbaut, R. G. (1997). Assimilation and its discontents: Between rhetoric and reality. *International Migration Review*, 31, 923–960.
- Shaner, J. (1982). Parental empathy and family role interactions as portrayed on commercial television. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 42, 3473A.
- Skill, T. (1994). Family images and family actions as presented in the media: Where we've been and what we've found. In D. Zillmann, J. Bryant, & A. C. Huston (Eds.), *Media, children, and the family* (pp. 37–50). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Skolnick, A. (1991). *Embattled paradise: The American family in an age of uncertainty*. New York: Basic Books.
- Smith, D. E. (1993). The standard North American family: SNAF as an ideological code. *Journal of Family Issues*, 14, 50–65.
- Stacey, J. (1998). The right family values. In K. Hansen & A. Garey (Eds.), *Families in the U.S.* (pp. 859–880). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Sue, S., & Morishima, J. K. (1982). *The mental health of Asian Americans*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sweet, J. A., & Bumpass, L. (1987). *American families and households*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Thorne, B., & Yalom, M. (1992). *Rethinking the family: Some feminist questions*. Boston: Northeastern University.
- Tran, T. V. (1988). The Vietnamese American family. In C. H. Mindel, R. W. Habenstein, & R. Wright, Jr. (Eds.), *Ethnic families in America: Patterns and variations* (pp. 276–299). New York: Elsevier.
- Tsui, P., & Schultz, G. (1985). Failure of rapport: Why psychotherapeutic engagement fails in the treatment of Asian clients. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 55, 561–569.
- Uba, L. (1994). *Asian Americans: Personality patterns, identity, and mental health*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (1997). *Statistical yearbook of the immigration and natural-*

- ization service, 1995. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Waters, M. C. (1996). The intersection of gender, race, and ethnicity in identity development of Caribbean American teens. In M. C. Waters (Ed.), *Urban girls: Resisting stereotypes, creating identities* (pp. 65–81). New York: New York University Press.
- Wolf, D. (1997). Family secrets: Transnational struggles among children of Filipino immigrants. *Sociological Perspectives*, 40, 457–482.
- Zhou, M. (1997). Growing up American: The challenge confronting immigrant children and children of immigrants. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 23, 63–95.
- Zhou, M., & Bankston, III, C. (1998). *Growing up American: How Vietnamese children adapt to life in the United States*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Zinn, M. B. (1994). Feminist rethinking of racial-ethnic families. In M. B. Zinn & B. T. Dill (Eds.), *Women of color in U.S. society* (pp. 303–314). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.