

Preface

The rapid globalization and proliferation of accessible information provide exciting opportunities to explore cultures with which we may have relatively less familiarity. As psychologists and clinicians, we are interested in understanding the experiences and perspectives that have led to the identity of clients we see in practice. As clinical neuropsychologists, we want to understand the diverse sociocultural factors that impact our clients and our work with them. It is, of course, our ethical obligation to educate ourselves about the socio- and biocultural characteristics of the people with whom we work, but interest in understanding all of the factors that make up a client's life is also an integral part of who we are as scientist-practitioners.

This book aims to provide information critical to understanding variables that are essential to working with people of Asian heritage. In part, it is important to better understand this population because of sheer numbers: Asians comprise the majority of the world's population, as reflected by the fact that six of the ten most populous countries in the world are in Asia (see asiafoundation.org), and Asians are projected to be the majority group in the United States of America by 2050.

This book is generally divided into two halves. The first half (Chaps. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) provides background information about Asians that is essential for any mental health clinician working with this population, not just clinical neuropsychologists. It is our strong belief that clinical neuropsychologists must first be good clinicians. In Chapter 1 ("Overview of Issues Related to Serving Asian and Asian American Clients"), Davis reviews important demographic characteristics of Asians and Asian Americans to provide a context for the remaining chapters. Relevant ethical guidelines, the limits and capabilities of the clinical neuropsychologist, and controversies involving the use of interpreters are discussed by Dugbartey in Chapter 2 ("Ethical Considerations in Neuropsychological Assessment of Asian Heritage Clients"). In Chapter 3 ("Linguistic Factors and Language Assessment of Asians"), Moody, a professor of linguistics, identifies features of English that interfere with nonnative speakers' learning and expression of English. Awareness of such features is critical to properly interpret errors that appear in nonnative speakers' English and

to guard against interpreting them as signs of pathological language processing. Moody provides a brief summary of linguistic theories relevant to understanding language acquisition and, in particular, learning English as a second language. Although rarely addressed in applied neuropsychology texts, we believe that reviewing linguistic theory provides clinical neuropsychologists a more complete understanding of errors they will encounter when interviewing and assessing Asian clients. The religious and philosophical bases of most Asian societies (e.g., Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism) continue to heavily influence social mores, personal identity, and individual and collective worldviews. These issues are explored by Guo and Uhm in Chapter 4 (“Society and Acculturation in Asian American Communities”). In Chapter 5 (“Mental Illness from an Asian American Perspective”), Uhm discusses lay beliefs about mental illness, cultural differences in symptom expression, diagnostic nosology, differences in prevalence rates of mental illnesses, and differences in rates of treatment seeking between Asian and Western cultures. These factors are also essential to understanding the worldview of Asian clients.

The second half of the book is more specifically related to clinical neuropsychology. In Chapter 6 (“Understanding Differences in Cognition Across the Lifespan: Comparing Eastern and Western Cultures”), Zaroff, D’Amato, and Bender survey the literature on cognitive processing (e.g., attention, memory, problem-solving, reasoning, etc.) in Asian populations, examining cross-cultural differences and similarities across the lifespan (e.g., children, adults, and the elderly). The focus of this chapter is on studies using behavioral paradigms rather than measures of brain activation. Brain activation is the focus of Chapter 7 (“Understanding the Neuroscience of Clients with Asian Heritage”). In that chapter, Semrud-Clikeman and Bledsoe summarize the literature in the exciting, and relatively new, field of cultural neuroscience. Reviewing studies of cross-cultural differences in brain morphology and activation, Semrud-Clikeman and Bledsoe identify the impact of cultural background and ethnicity on attention, language, emotional processing, and visual perception. Because the clinical interview is an essential component of neuropsychological assessment and assumes greater importance in situations where standardized tests are lacking, Chapter 8 (“Clinical Interviewing and Qualitative Assessment with Asian Heritage Clients”), written by Lau, is devoted to interviewing and qualitative assessment. This chapter summarizes cultural and social factors that may influence client presentation and collection of collateral information, and strategies for interviewing and qualitative assessment. In Chapter 9 (“Neuropsychological Test Selection with Clients Who Are Asian”), Riccio, Yoon, and McCormick focus more specifically on individual tests and test battery selection. These authors highlight the need to supplement any assessment battery with measures of acculturation and language proficiency, and they provide examples of tests that may be appropriate for inclusion in a clinical neuropsychological assessment with Asians. Riccio, Yoon, and McCormick acknowledge that there are no Asian American–specific normative databases for standard neuropsychological tests or fixed test batteries. They provide information about language-minimized/nonverbal tests as well as measures/fixed batteries that

have been adapted and/or translated in Asia and that may be appropriate depending on the level of acculturation of the client. The book concludes with Chapter 10 by D'Amato, Wang, and Davis ("What Do We Need to Know before Serving Asian and Asian American Clients?") which summarizes and synthesizes the main points from the book. In addition, D'Amato, Wang, and Davis underscore the need for evidence-based multimodal and multimethod assessment and discuss the important topic of meeting standards for admissibility of scientific evidence in legal proceedings.

Our volume provides information about ethical, cultural, social, linguistic, cognitive, neurological, psychiatric, and psychometric considerations that clinical neuropsychologists need in order to make informed decisions about assessment with Asian and Asian American clients. It consolidates a broad but necessary set of topics into one resource and supports the efforts to ensure that clinical neuropsychologists follow guidelines for evidence-based neuropsychological practice. Chapters progress from information about social, ethical, and cultural factors that are important for understanding the client's perspective and presentation (e.g., their role in the family and community, communication patterns, religious/philosophical influences on culture, attitudes toward mental health and mental health professionals, and factors related to acculturation) to information about cognitive and neuropsychological functioning in this population.

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It is our belief that to remain current in our changing world, it is necessary to commit to lifelong learning and we hope this book helps clinical neuropsychologists in that endeavor.

Darwin, Australia
Chicago, IL, USA

J. Mark Davis, Ph.D.
Rik Carl D'Amato, Ph.D.

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