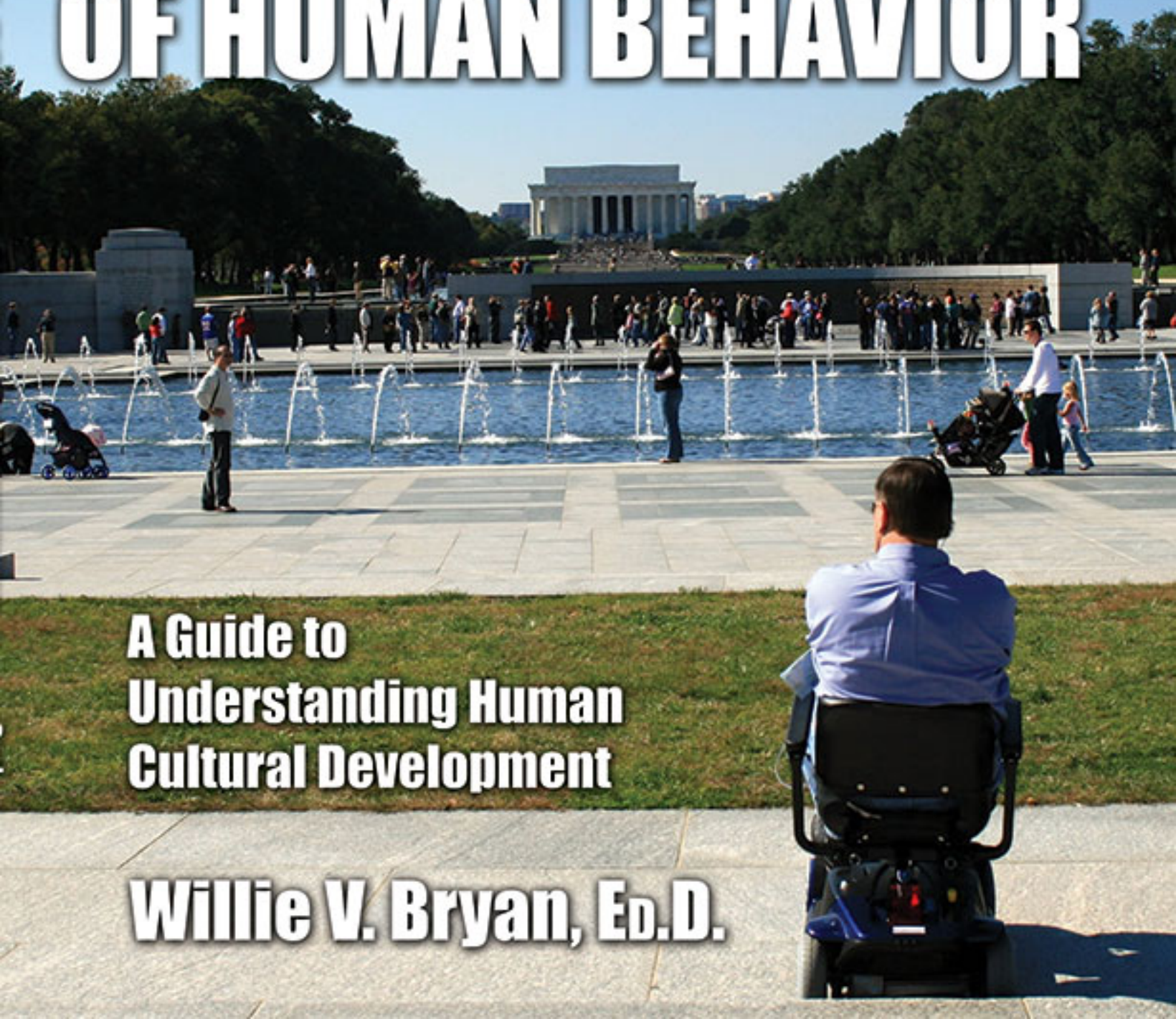


Third Edition

# MULTICULTURAL ASPECTS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

**A Guide to  
Understanding Human  
Cultural Development**

**Willie V. Bryan, Ed.D.**



**MULTICULTURAL ASPECTS  
OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR**

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Willie V. Bryan** is Professor Emeritus, Health promotion Sciences, University of Oklahoma, Health Sciences Center. Dr. Bryan was an administrator and professor at the Health Sciences Center for 32 years. In 1985, he received the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped Book Award for Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities, which he co-authored. Before his services at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center he served as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the state of Oklahoma, and also served as Director of Rehabilitation and Personnel for Goodwill Industries of Oklahoma City. Dr. Bryan has a Master's degree in psychology, emphasis on rehabilitation counseling, another master's degree in education and a doctorate in counseling. He currently is teaching courses on cultural diversity, helping relationships, family counseling and counseling approaches for the Colleges of Liberal Studies and Advanced Programs, University of Oklahoma, Norman Campus.

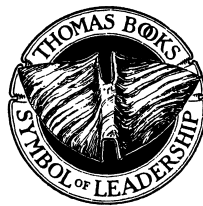
Third Edition

# MULTICULTURAL ASPECTS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

A Guide to Understanding Human Cultural Development

*By*

WILLIE V. BRYAN, Ed.D.



CHARLES C THOMAS • PUBLISHER, LTD.  
*Springfield • Illinois • U.S.A.*

*Published and Distributed Throughout the World by*

CHARLES C THOMAS • PUBLISHER, LTD.  
2600 South First Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62704

This book is protected by copyright. No part of  
it may be reproduced in any manner without written  
permission from the publisher. All rights reserved.

© 2014 by CHARLES C THOMAS • PUBLISHER, LTD.

ISBN 978-0-398-08790-6 (paper)  
ISBN 978-0-398-08791-3 (ebook)

*First Edition, 1999*  
*Second Edition, 2007*  
*Third Edition, 2014*

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2013045956

*With THOMAS BOOKS careful attention is given to all details of manufacturing  
and design. It is the Publisher's desire to present books that are satisfactory as to their  
physical qualities and artistic possibilities and appropriate for their particular use.  
THOMAS BOOKS will be true to those laws of quality that assure a good name  
and good will.*

*Printed in the United States of America*  
*MM-R-3*

#### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Bryan, Willie V.

[Multicultural aspects of disabilities.]

Multicultural aspects of human behavior : a guide to understanding  
human cultural development / by Willie V. Bryan, Ed.D. -- Third edi-  
tion.

Revised edition of the author's Multicultural aspects of disabilities,  
2nd ed.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-398-08790-6 (pbk.) -- ISBN 978-0-398-08791-3 (ebook)

1. Minority people with disabilities--Services for--United States. 2.  
Minority people with disabilities--Rehabilitation--United States. 3.  
Social work with minorities--United States. 4. Social work with people  
with disabilities--United States. 5. Multiculturalism--United States. I.  
Title.

HV1569.3.M55B79 2014  
362.4089'00973--dc23

2013045956

*This edition is dedicated to my grandchildren:  
Donnita, Joseph, Jayden and Kilah, they are my future.*



## ABOUT THE THIRD EDITION

This third edition has a title modification, in that the previous two editions were titled *Multicultural Aspects of Disabilities: A Guide to Understanding and Assisting Minorities in the Rehabilitation Process*. This edition is titled *Multicultural Aspects of Human Behavior: A Guide to Understanding Human Cultural Development*. A reason for the title modification is I want to expand and emphasize cultural impacts with regard to human behavior and in doing so my goal has been to identify factors which impact cultural development and cultural perceptions of various groups of people such as persons with disabilities, ethnic/racial minorities, women and the elderly.

In several ways this third edition continues the theme of the first and second editions by providing information with regard to factors that impact the lives of racial/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, women and the elderly in America. The information provides information with regard to how culture is defined as well as some factors which help define various impacts on how culture is developed and how culture impacts our daily life activities. Additionally, this edition provides some historical information which has served as a basis for some cultural changes in the United States of America; I refer to this as cultural evolution.

The updates and addition of new chapters will make the text a more complete discussion of cultural information needed by professional helper as they work with their clients and patients.





## PREFACE

The often used phrase “the world is getting smaller” is very accurate, not because the earth is getting smaller; however, because of the explosion of technology which provides those that can afford and have access to same, to see, hear and learn about people in distant lands. This access of people about which we have in the past known very little has given us opportunities to expand our knowledge of distant lands, different points of view as well as different beliefs and ways of conducting daily life activities. This access in very simple terminology has given us an opportunity to learn about a variety of cultures that may be foreign to us. What we do with this knowledge will, to a large extent, determine how we as individuals progress mentally, emotionally and humanely. Additionally, as a group of people, from a nationalistically point of view how we react to different points of view will be a significant factor in how we progress or not progress as a nation. Stated in more succinct terms cultural diversity has always existed and today many of us are privileged to have the opportunity to observe and learn about a vast number of diversities that exist. The question is what will we do with this increased knowledge of cultural diversity? Will we value diversity and use this diversity to be inclusive and help build a more humane and tolerant world or will we philosophically bury our heads in sand and preach that our ways of thinking and living is the best and everyone else should conform to our ways of living?

There is ample evidence extracted from throughout the world to point out the fact that cultural diversity has not always been valued. South Africa and its system of apartheid; Australia’s treatment of aboriginals; Rwanda, and even the United States’ past treatment of some ethnic and racial minorities are only a few examples of devaluing cultural differences. Perhaps, as a human race, we will never completely divest ourselves of prejudice, and hatred but as intelligent beings we have the capabilities of acceptance and tolerance.

W.V.B.



## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Preface</i> .....	ix
<i>Chapter</i>	
1. CULTURE .....	3
2. UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOR .....	24
3. DISCRIMINATION .....	45
4. RELIGION .....	59
5. DISABILITY .....	92
6. AFRICAN AMERICANS .....	125
7. AMERICAN INDIANS .....	151
8. ASIAN AND PACIFIC AMERICANS .....	168
9. HISPANIC/LATINO AMERICANS .....	191
10. WOMEN .....	211
11. ELDERLY .....	225
12. CULTURAL EVOLUTION .....	239
<i>Name Index</i> .....	257
<i>Subject Index</i> .....	263



**MULTICULTURAL ASPECTS  
OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR**



# Chapter 1

## CULTURE

### Chapter Outline

- Introduction
- What is culture?
- Additional evaluation of culture
- Culture or cultures
- The nature of culture
- Disability culture
- Understanding cultural diversity
- Multiculturalism
- Cultural accommodation
- Acculturation
- Conclusion

### Introduction

For something that is all around us and for something that is part of us, culture is difficult to define and explain. Perhaps part of the difficulty in explaining culture is the fact there are many dimensions of culture. To the artist culture is in the eyes of the beholder. To be more specific, each person looking at a piece of art will see different things and have a different perspective of what is being displayed and the value of what is displayed. Similarly, with regard to music, the public and music critics as well as musicians themselves also have a variety of opinions with regard to various types of music and its value to the overall culture of music. Behavioral scientists view human behavior and attempt to determine what is influencing the behavior so that appropriate actions can be prescribed and/or taken to modify the behavior, that said behavior is congruent and acceptable to the situation or situations one is encountering.



Culture impacts everyone's lives by influencing how we perceive events that impact us and how we perceive those around us. With regard to how culture impacts our perceptions of others; the values we apply to our fellow human beings are directly related to our views of the person's worth to the societies we consider as being valuable to us. Our prejudices and how we act out those prejudices are directly related to our learned cultural views. Likewise our views of esteem for our friends and others are also directly related to our learned cultural views. Culture is not something with which we are born, thus we humans create culture. As discussed in this chapter, culture is not inherited but is developed through a socialization process; therefore the premise that by classifying persons into ethnic, racial, religious and occupational groups and declaring that they have the same culture, thus we can explain their existence is not only false also this belief is denying the depths of one's human existence. From a behavioral science point of view there are several facts about culture that makes the previously mentioned beliefs of culture untrue. One, **culture is influenced by proximity**; stated in other terms, factors such as where and how we are reared has a major impact upon our cultural development. Two, **culture is not solely determined by ones race and ethnicity**. There can be no question that one's race and ethnicity has a significant influence upon one's cultural development; however they are only two of many factors influencing one's culture. Regardless of ethnicity or racial background, the local social and environmental atmosphere will have an influence on the person's cultural development. This is not to say that racial or ethnic factors do not impact one's cultural development. However what is being stated is that the local culture, in which the person is involved, will have a profound impact upon one's cultural development. Offered as an example is the fact that native New Yorkers, who are African American, have similar mannerism such as speech patterns, as well as some beliefs and attitudes, as native New Yorkers who are Caucasians. Whereas, African Americans in the southwestern part of the United States have similar speech patterns and some attitudes similar to their Caucasian counterparts in the southwest and these cultural differences often are strikingly different than African Americans in the northeast part of the United States. If a person moves, he takes with him many aspects of his current culture; however over time, being influenced by the new cultural environment, he will gradually adopt the new prevailing culture. Thus **culture is mobile**; to be more specific, when we move around and experience new and different things not only do we carry with us cultural components we have obtained through our various contacts and experiences we also add to our cultural repertoire.

In this chapter I will elaborate on culture from a behavioral scientist's standpoint and explain from that standpoint the composition of culture.

Additionally, I will discuss both positive and negative factors which will impact our cultural development.

### **What Is Culture?**

The collective wisdom of anthropologists and others who attempt to explain human behavior and existence have failed to produce a clear-cut definition of culture. In all probability, because of the very subjective nature of what we consider as culture, a definition which is universally accepted will continue to elude its seekers. A comparison of some accepted cultural definitions tends to verify this point. Some behavioral scientist identify culture in the context of being part of the environment which we humans have made and states that it includes our artifacts as well as laws, myths, and the special ways we view our environment. Others who attempt to capture the essence of culture consider it as the things that various people share in common such as religion, language, and economic status, to mention a few. Fairchild (1970) defines culture as all behavior patterns socially acquired and socially transmitted by means of symbols, including customs, techniques, beliefs, institutions, and material objects. In a somewhat different approach, Triandis (1972) does not attempt to define culture but indicates that it is in our heads. He further states that culture is absorbed by individuals in the process of socialization rather than actively taught and acquired.

These various definitions of culture appropriately illustrate that there are numerous variables contributing to the cultural makeup of an individual or group of individuals. Therefore, the primary lesson to extract from this failed exercise in defining culture is to never generalize about culture. It is very tempting to neatly categorize people into specific cultural groups, such as African American culture, American Indian culture, Hispanic/Latino American culture, Asian American culture, and identify characteristics that appear to be shared by members within each group and proclaim to the world that this constitutes the cultural composition of the group. However, despite that there may be some shared characteristics in cultural groups such as skin color, hair texture, and speech patterns, there are also as many, if not more variations within these groups as there are shared traits.

As always, definitions vary according to the definer's point of view. Let us analyze several other definitions to determine if some common view points can be found. Some social scientists defined culture as the "way of life" of a people, including the sum of their learned behavioral patterns, attitudes and collection of material things. Lee (1989) and Axelson (1993) state that culture is the collective reality of a group of people and remind us that it is from this collective reality that attitudes, behaviors and values are formed and become