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The Counseling Psychologist 2001 29: 55

DOI: 10.1177/0011000001291003

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Stereotypes About Chicanas and Chicanos: Implications for Counseling

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A review of the literature on stereotypes about Chicanas/os reveals that people of Mexican descent are perceived predominantly in derogatory terms, with the few positive terms primarily related to the centrality of the family for this ethnic community. This review also indicates that Chicanas/os themselves often endorse these stereotypes. However, the extant literature has not examined the counseling process in relation to consensual, social stereotypes of this ethnic group. This article serves to bridge that gap in the literature. Counselors are strongly encouraged to be cognizant of how stereotypes may affect Chicanas/os, especially in areas related to identity, risky behavior, stereotype threat, education, gender roles, and stigmatization. Counselors are encouraged to increase racial awareness as part of the mental health development of their Chicana/o clients. Counselors are particularly challenged to examine how their own conscious and unconscious stereotypes may affect the counselor-client relationship. Future research directions are also discussed.

Ethnic group stereotypes are among the most powerful forces that affect out-group perception, self-image, and personal identity (Jussim & Fleming, 1996; Kunda, 2000). As such, the societal perception of an ethnic group may affect the mental health of individual group members. In 1922, Walter Lippman described stereotypes as "pictures in our heads." Today, social scientists think of them as mental representations of social categories (Kunda, 2000). More specifically, stereotypes are structured sets of beliefs that contain the perceiver's organized knowledge, beliefs, and expectancies about some human group (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Hamilton & Troler, 1986; Zarate & Smith, 1990). Stereotypes serve both descriptive and prescriptive functions (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) and are often internalized by in-group members as behavioral and attitudinal expectations (Aboud, 1988; Devine, 1989; Helms, 1990; Steele, 1997). There is substantial evidence that people above the age of 4 have knowledge of societal, consensual ethnic and racial group stereotypes, including those of their own and other ethnic/racial groups (Aboud, 1988; Phinney & Rotheram, 1987). These stereotypes become imbedded in the national and individual consciousness, making them very difficult to change (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Negative stereotypes, in particular, have powerful implications for impression formation, intergroup relations,

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THE COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGIST, Vol. 29 No. 1, January 2001 55-90
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collective/group esteem, personal identity, self-efficacy, and self-esteem (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Kunda, 2000; Niemann, 1999; Steele, 1997; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Stereotypes about Chicanas/os have historically remained largely negative, and this negativity may be particularly disorienting to Chicanas/os. As stated by Takaki (1993), "the Chicano experience has been unique, for most of them have lived close to their homeland—a proximity that has helped reinforce their language, identity, and culture" (p. 8). Thus, the conflicting messages between their homeland identities and the comparatively negative U.S. stereotypes may create dissonance and/or confusion (Cross & Maldonado, 1971) and render Chicanas/os increasingly vulnerable to stereotype internalization. Because of their power to affect beliefs, expectations, and perceptions (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Hamilton & Trolier, 1986), these stereotypes have strong implications for the mental health of Chicanas/os, the relationship between counselor and client, and the counseling process. However, the extant literature contains limited discussion of the implications of stereotypes for counseling Chicanas/os.

Consistent with the theme of this Major Contribution, the purpose of this article is to fill a crucial void in the knowledge of issues that may affect Chicanas/os with respect to counseling, as most participants in professional psychology programs report no exposure to information or contact with Chicanas/os (Pope-Davis, Breaux, & Liu, 1997). This article contains a review of the literature on stereotype content and critically examines the influences of stereotypes on the attitudes and behavior of Chicanas/os and counselors. The goals of this article are (a) to provide an overview of the nature of stereotypes about Chicanas/os, (b) to examine unique realities of Mexican-born people in the United States, (c) to discuss implications of counselors' conscious and unconscious stereotypic beliefs for the professional relationship, (d) to address future research implications, and (e) to examine counseling implications of stereotypes along specific domains of Chicanas/os' experiences, including identity, stigmatization, education, risky behavior, and gender roles. These domains were selected due to their pervasive influence over quality of Chicana/o life.

It is important to note that the stereotype literature, like most other literature on Hispanics, does not distinguish between Mexican nationals and Chicanas/os. It also does not distinguish between Hispanics of different ethnic backgrounds. Consequently, most of this literature refers to Hispanics and not specifically to Chicanas/os. However, because Chicanas/os are the largest Hispanic group in the United States (García & Marotta, 1997) and because most of the studies were conducted in locales with heavy populations of Mexican descent, it may be inferred that the group in question was primarily composed of Chicanas/os. This inference is supported by my find-

ing that when non-Mexican descent people were the focal point, the group was named by the specific culture of origin (e.g., Salazar & Marín, 1977, who studied students from Venezuela and Columbia). In this manuscript, I use *Chicanas/os* to refer to people of Mexican descent who were born in the United States. However, due to the nature of the stereotype discussions in this article, I also use U.S.-born and Mexican-born to distinguish between *Chicanas/os* and Mexican nationals.

THE SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING STEREOTYPES

Widely held beliefs about an ethnic/racial group, or societal/consensual stereotypes, are generated and maintained by complex and powerful forces (Niemann & Secord, 1995). These include overly generalized media representations and interpretations by ostensibly “expert” social scientists and laypeople who disregard and/or lack knowledge of the cultural, sociopolitical, and general ecological contexts in which behaviors and attitudes are observed. The discussions and recommendations in this article take a social-ecological approach to understanding stereotypes (McArthur & Baron, 1983; Niemann & Secord, 1995). This approach stipulates that in-group and out-group perceptions of complex, community-wide behaviors and situations form the bases for generation and maintenance of societal stereotypes. Central to treating stereotypes ecologically is the idea that people live in a social world and learn through repeated interactions with its members to perceive and evaluate them in certain ways (Niemann & Secord, 1995). Thompson and Neville (1999) explain that “ecological models are nested-systems models in which individuals are characterized as developing and being influenced by their interactions within and between immediate systems (e.g., school and church) and social structures (e.g., political and economic systems)” (p. 179).

Behaviors that are repeated and perceived as sanctioned by and within a given ethnic community may become part of the ethnic identity of those ethnic community members. Because of their repetitive nature, these behaviors become stereotypes, which are accepted by the ethnic groups and by out-group observers, in large part, because they appear to reflect social reality (Niemann & Secord, 1995). For in-group members and observers, these stereotypes seem to reveal a “kernel of truth,” or to be accurate and seemingly objective reflections of these groups (Lee, Jussim, & McCauley, 1995; Niemann & Secord, 1995; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994).

However, what is less readily apparent is that many of these behaviors and situations are a function of societal oppression and discrimination (Niemann &

Secord, 1995). Chicanas/os suffer from factors beyond their control, such as prejudice, discrimination, and poverty, that situate them such that the results of this oppression appear to be a function of their inherent traits rather than of institutional and individual racism (Sue & Sue, 1999). That is, the structural components of racism in the United States maintain and perpetuate the political and economic domination of European Americans (Thompson & Neville, 1999), contributing to the stereotypes of Chicanas/os as less qualified for positions of power within institutions. In addition, ethnic group stereotypes are often generated and perpetuated by dominant forces that seek to justify the treatment and lower social status of a given group (Aguirre & Baker, 2000; Thompson & Neville, 1999). In other words, these features of social ecology facilitate categorization and provide specific content for stereotyping (Niemann & Secord, 1995).

Therefore, stereotypes may have some verisimilitude in that attributes assigned to Chicanas/os fit the situated actions that they repeatedly exhibit and are seen in. However,

The assigned attributes fit the behavior or conduct that occurs under situated circumstances, but treating these attributes as if they apply in all situations or as if they constitute permanent traits or characteristics of the person category is in most instances unwarranted. (Niemann & Secord, 1995, p. 2)

Examples of these types of situated actions that provide evidence for an ecological view of stereotyping include residential segregation, social and gender roles, tracking of students in school, the overrepresentation of Chicanos in the criminal justice system (Niemann & Secord, 1995), and the overrepresentation of Chicanas/os among the poor socioeconomic class (García & Marotta, 1997). This latter situation allows perceivers to define members of this group as inherently having traits conducive to living in poverty. These negative stereotypes continue to be produced and perpetuated through media, economic policies, educational structure, and power hierarchies (Aguirre & Baker, 2000; Thompson & Neville, 1999). Living in a society where communication with others and with the media frequently reflects stereotypes cannot help but reinforce stereotyping (Niemann & Secord, 1995).

As a result, these stereotypes are then reported by social scientists as inherent attributes of group members, as much of our knowledge of consensual stereotypes about Chicanas/os is rooted in the research of social scientists. These research reports have affected media, political, and everyday representations of Chicanas/os. A review of this literature reveals consistent, enduring, and largely derogatory patterns, coupled with a few positive characteristics

that are primarily related to the centrality of the family in Chicana/o communities (Falicov, 1982).

STEREOTYPES ABOUT CHICANAS/OS

Once stereotypes become imbedded in the social consciousness, they affect how Chicanas/os are perceived. Thus, it is very likely that the early social science research of the mid-20th century set the trends for succeeding, stereotype-consistent, biased research, perceptions, and literature on Chicana/o stereotypes. These researchers, in large part, have ignored the role of cultural differences, situated actions, and societal oppression in their descriptions of Chicanas/os. Instead, their reporting has inferred inherent traits of group members found in these situations.

Humphrey (1945), whose research was based on personal observation of Chicanas/os, described men as respectful, hard-working, musical, and interested in mechanical training; as beer drinkers, dancers, and boxers; and as skilled in “the art of rapidly drawing, opening, and slashing with a pocket knife” (p. 72). He described women as one of two types: either home-centered, submissive, docile, respectful, and usually modest in dress or behavior or as rebellious, “independent, free moving women” (p. 75). Stereotypes became more negative after World War II, when American GIs began returning home. The large Mexican labor force that had been recruited to replace the labor of American soldiers during the Bracero Program (a labor export agreement between the U.S. and Mexico) was no longer valued. Negative characterizations of people of Mexican descent served the institutional and individual purposes of justifying the expatriation of Mexicans who had labored for the United States during the war.

For example, Richards (1950) found that people described Chicanas/os as possessing a low moral standard; as helping to keep wages low; as dirty, filthy, lazy and shiftless, artistic, ignorant, and inferior; and as thieves and spreaders of disease. Comparing Chicanas/os to other U.S. groups (native-born Whites, foreign-born Whites, Chinese, Indians, Jews, Filipinos, Japanese, and African Americans), he found that Mexicans were assigned the highest percentage of negative statements and lowest percentage of positive statements. Richards’ (1950) assessment of attitude scores also found a range from a high of +55 (positive) for native-born Whites to a low of -45 (negative) for Mexicans.

In part due to the influence of these early studies, more recent stereotype research has identified some of the same traits, which also portray a negative image of Chicanas/os. For example, recent portrayals of Chicanas/os

include the following for women: self-belittling, strongly masochistic, self-sacrificing, submissive, docile, bad tempered, long haired, promiscuous, passive/submissive, unintelligent, and overweight; maternal producers of large families, good cooks, and believers in God (Andrade, 1982; Niemann, Jennings, Rozelle, Baxter, & Sullivan, 1994). For men, descriptors include virile, dominating, ambitionless, unmannerly, lower class, poorly groomed, chauvinistic; lacking college education, and alcohol users (Andrade, 1982; Niemann et al., 1994).

Gender-neutral traits of Chicanas/os include immoral, violent, dirty, unintelligent, improvident, irresponsible, and lazy (Cross & Maldonado, 1971); ignorant and cruel (Fairchild & Cozens, 1981); drunken, criminal, deceitful, of low morality, mysterious, unpredictable, and hostile to Anglo Americans (Simmons, 1961); cooperative, educated, unethical, lazy, hard-working, competitive, unfriendly, ethical, uneducated, and family oriented (Triandis, Lisansky, Chang, Marin, & Betancourt, 1982); aggressive, poor, family-oriented, proud, hard-working, lazy, and uneducated (Marín, 1984); of low work ethic and traditional (Jones, 1991); uneducated, very religious, loyal to family, lazy, tradition-loving, quick-tempered, unreliable, ignorant, loud, shy, aggressive, friendly, talkative, faithful, passionate, musical, sentimental, superstitious, and artistic (Carranza, 1993); short, dark-haired, family oriented, and hard-working (Niemann et al., 1994); dependent, mechanical, frank, generous, exploitive, violent, productive, ill-mannered, and institution oriented (Phenice & Griffore, 1994). In the research outlined above, respondents were generally non-Hispanic White college students, with the exception of Triandis et al. (1982), who employed Navy recruits. These stereotypes may be referred to as hetero-group, or out-group stereotypes.

However, stereotype content research with Chicana/o respondents has also produced negative in-group (auto-stereotype) portrayals. For instance, Chicanas/os have described their group as friendly, ambitious, hard-working, educated, family oriented, uneducated, competitive, cooperative, dependent, unfriendly, unambitious, independent, and unethical (Dworkin, 1965); as dirty, short and fat, uneducated, dumb, unable to read, lazy, irresponsible, inferior, and worth little; as trouble makers; as eating tortillas and worth little (Casas, Ponterotto, & Sweeney, 1987). Descriptions of men include hard-working, proud, and family oriented; laborers, believers in God, and alcohol abusers (Niemann et al., 1994). Descriptions of women include attractive, family oriented, proud, and bad tempered; believers in God and good cooks (Niemann et al., 1994).

The evidence that Chicanas/os have internalized negative in-group stereotypes is strong. Triandis et al. (1982) concluded that in 83% of cases, Chicanas/os' auto-stereotypes were not significantly different from Anglo American perceptions of the group. Niemann et al. (1994) employed free

responses rather than checklists to ascertain stereotypes and also found no difference in traits provided by Chicanas/os and out-group members. When data were isolated for Chicana/o respondents (20% of the sample), essentially the same traits were provided and with as relatively high frequency as were provided by the entire group of respondents, the majority of whom were European American (Niemann et al., 1994).

Experimental work also has produced discouragingly negative perceptions of Chicanas/os. For instance, Niemann, Pollak, Rogers, & O'Connor (1998) placed two Chicanos in stereotype-consistent (crime scene) and -inconsistent (library) contexts. One of the men was clearly identifiable as Chicano (as determined by pretesting), whereas the ethnicity of the second man was more ambiguous. Results indicated that across location contexts, both Whites and Chicanos preferred not to affiliate with the man who could be readily categorized as Chicano. Across contexts, the Chicano targets, who were actually neatly dressed, clean-shaven college students, were described in negative, stereotype-consistent terms.

Whereas most of the work cited above has been conducted with student respondents, Mindiola, Rodriguez, and Niemann (1996) studied attitudes of randomly selected non-college members of the Latina/o community in Houston, Texas. The authors asked these respondents to list the first three traits that came to their mind when they thought of Chicanas/os. U.S.-born Chicanas/os listed (in order of frequency): hard-working, family oriented, friendly, uneducated/dropouts, good people, religious, united, and oppressed. Mexican-born respondents listed: considerate, have a cultural identity, diverse, dropouts/uneducated, education oriented, family oriented, friendly, good people, hard-working, honest, hostile, opportunistic, oppressed, poor, religious, Spanish-speaking, and united. U.S.-born respondents said 70% of the terms they listed were positive and 26% negative. Mexican-born respondents reported that 64% of the terms they listed were positive and 26% were negative. It is critical to note that more than one fourth of self-descriptors were negative by the standards of the in-group.

Due to the pervasive nature of stereotypes and the high probability of their internalization and acceptance by in-group and out-group members, there are critical implications of stereotype content and processes for counseling Chicanas/os.

IMPLICATIONS OF STEREOTYPES FOR THE COUNSELING PROCESS

The Chicana/o community is very diverse with respect to almost every conceivable domain, including education levels, income, family structure,

time in the United States, maintenance of traditional gender roles and cultural values, and occupations (García & Marotta, 1997; Zavella, 1997). The impact of stereotypes, however, may lead observers and in-group members to have one prototypical idea of what it means to be Chicana/o in terms of behaviors, attitudes, and position in society (Kunda, 2000). Because these stereotypes are largely negative, it is difficult to tease apart the effects of stereotypes on factors such as identity, stereotype threat, risky behavior, and gender roles from their stigmatizing content. However, due to some of their distinctive consequences, these factors will be discussed separately.

Stigmatization and Ethnic Identity

According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), stereotypes about Chicanas/os serve to inform them of their ethnic group's place in society, especially relative to the dominant U.S. White group. Most research indicates that out-group and college student stereotypes of Chicanas/os are largely negative, with the most frequently provided traits including lazy, uneducated, criminal, and hostile; dropouts and gang members. Positive traits such as hard working, religious, and family oriented are comparatively few. Among non-college student community members, about 25% of stereotypes are considered negative, and these include the same negative traits cited above. The interpretation of seemingly neutral traits, such as bilingual language usage, may also depend on the values of the observer. For instance, many bilingual Chicanas/os have internalized the racist notion that speaking Spanish, or speaking with a Spanish accent, is not consistent with being American.

For people of color, internalization of negative societal stereotypes about one's group may affect personal feelings of stigmatization and can inspire distortions of the self (Thompson & Neville, 1999). For instance, Bernat and Balch (1979) found anti-Chicano bias by Anglo and Chicano children as indicated by their preference for light-skinned, light-haired figures. In their study, 60 Anglo and 60 Chicana/o children, ages 5 to 7, were asked to identify pictures with either a positive or negative evaluative adjective. Both Chicano and Anglo children described Chicanos as ugly, wrong, bad, sad, stupid, selfish, naughty, cruel, mean, unfriendly, dirty, and sick. They described Anglos as kind, friendly, nice, healthy, clean, wonderful, pretty, happy, good, helpful, smart, and right. Results indicated a trend of increasing bias with increasing age (Bernat & Balch, 1979). Given the negative group auto-stereotypes and resultant stigmatization provided by adults discussed earlier (e.g., Casas et al., 1987; Mindiola et al., 1996; Niemann et al., 1994), it is reasonable to conclude that similar implications extend to adults. These implications are consistent with Casas and Pytluk's (1995) contention that ethnic identity is an

important part of self-concept and a product of the socialization process. When negative stereotypes are associated with ethnic identity, individual and group stigmatization may result.

In their Racial/Cultural Identity Development Model, Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1993) discuss several stages of racial identity, each of which has implications for internalized stereotypes. The first stage, labeled Conformity, describes individuals who unequivocally prefer dominant cultural values to those of their own culture. They demonstrate a self-deprecating attitude, have group-deprecating attitudes toward others of the same minority, show a discriminatory attitude toward others of different minorities, and have a group-appreciating attitude in regard to the dominant group. Counselors must be aware that in this early stage of racial identity development, Chicana/o clients who manifest negative perceptions of their in-group may require guidance toward awareness of the extent to which their self-perceptions have been shaped by society.

In the second stage, Dissonance, Chicanas/os may experience conflict with respect to those attitudes, leaving them in a state of ambiguity about the meaning of stereotypes of their ethnic group as compared to their realities. Counselors may facilitate the progression from dissonance toward coherent self-identity by helping Chicana/o clients work through the conflict between negative societal stereotypes and the behaviors of positive role models and community and family members who are a part of their own realities.

In the third stage, Resistance and Immersion, Chicanas/os may endorse minority-held views and reject stereotypes of the dominant society. In this stage, counselors must be aware of the possibility of acting out one identity and/or prototypical idea of the label Chicana/o. They can help Chicanas/os recognize and value the heterogeneity of their group.

Only in the fourth stage, Introspection, and fifth stage, Synergetic Articulation and Awareness, do individuals feel a sense of self-fulfillment with respect to ethnic and cultural identity (Atkinson et al., 1993; Casas & Pytluk, 1995). In these stages, counselors can inoculate clients against the likely continued exposure to negative stereotypes and pressures to conform to one stereotypical and/or traditional definition of Chicana/o identity. Counselors may practice helping clients respond to these situations. Counselors' continued facilitation of positive ethnic identity development at these later stages may contribute to positive mental health, as feelings of stigmatization associated with ethnicity are decreased and clients become aware of and accepting of themselves (Thompson & Neville, 1999).

However, it is likely that clients are not aware that feelings of stigmatization result, at least in part, from societal attitudes. These racist societal ideas may result in erasure or denial of race, internalization of group inferiority beliefs or auto-colonization, false consciousness, and rage (Thompson &

Neville, 1999). In his classic work on the oppressed, Paulo Freire (1970) writes that "their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression" (p. 26). Therefore, it is important that counselors assess clients' degree of consciousness of internalization of negative stereotypes to determine their effect on feelings of self and behavior. According to Helms and Cook (1999), when clients express negative feelings about their group, counselors may ask them to reflect on the origin of these attitudes and then ascertain the extent to which clients are conscious of internalizing negative societal perceptions about their group. For example, counselors may broach the topic by asking how clients feel when politicians talk about the need to "close" the Mexico/U.S. border or when recent legislation negatively affects people of Mexican descent in the United States. As they begin to understand the origins of feelings of stigmatization, counselors and clients will lay the foundations for forming strategies to diffuse these feelings.

One such strategy is to help clients focus on positive aspects of their group identity, including pride in their group's survival of a long history of oppression. Counselors' attention to the possibility of internalized racism may thus enhance an overall sense of self for Chicana/o clients: "It may be easier to countermand such stereotypes when one understands their origins" (Helms & Cook, 1999, p. 97).

Research is needed to explicitly test the relationship between societal stereotypes about Chicanas/os and feelings of stigmatization. Ideally, such research would be longitudinal, to assess these feelings at different generations of experience while residing within the United States. Other research questions that need examination include the extent to which situational contexts affect Chicanas/os' vulnerability to stigmatization resulting from stereotypes and whether positive stereotypes take on greater importance with respect to defining Chicanas/os in the face of negative group stereotypes.

Interaction of Self and Collective Identity

Two of the main components of ethnic identity development that may be shaped or affected by stereotypes are ethnic role behaviors and ethnic feelings and preferences. These include enacted trait-level descriptors and values (Bernal & Knight, 1993) as children engage in behavior that they perceive to be sanctioned and prescribed by their culture. According to Fiske and Taylor (1991) and Kunda (2000), stereotypes often serve as prescriptions for behavior. Thus, it is not surprising that their positive or negative content may affect perceptions of appropriate or culture-centered, ethnic role behavior.

For instance, the traits of family centeredness and religiosity may reflect positively or negatively on group members, depending on the extent to which

individuals' behavior is consistent with the traits. People who deviate from these prescriptive behaviors may be seen as traitors to their communities. Chicanas, for example, are expected to emulate the virtues of the revered cultural symbol, the *Virgen de Guadalupe*. They may therefore be seen as "acting White," or as being *vendidas* (traitors) if they reject the Catholicism of their communities (Castillo, 1994). Consequently, it is not surprising that ethnic identity may itself be shaped by ethnic stereotypes.

Because ethnic feelings and preferences reflect children's feelings about their own ethnic group membership and preferences for in-group members, attitudes in regard to in-group members may be negative if societal stereotypes have been internalized. Indeed, earlier generations of Chicanas/os express more favorable attitudes toward their own group than do later generations (Dworkin, 1965; Knight, Kagan, Nelson, & Gumbiner, 1978). That is, as people make the transition from Mexican to Chicana/o, their in-group perceptions seem to become increasingly negative.

Negative auto-stereotyping, which Thompson and Neville (1999) refer to as auto-colonization, can also produce psychological conflict, placing Chicanas/os in a quandary involving who they are and what their relative value is in the racial-social order (Thompson & Neville, 1999). In addition, as a consequence of internalizing the idea that light or white skin tone is more consistent with beauty than is the more olive skin of Chicanas/os, a feeling of stigmatization related to ethnic identity may be triggered by relatively dark skin color (Hurtado, 1999). Further conflict and guilt may be created for light-skinned Chicanas/os, who may not have to acknowledge their ethnicity or experience the oppressiveness of being Chicana/o in the United States if they can "pass" as European American (Moraga, 1983). This conflict is exacerbated by the knowledge that lighter skin color is associated with societal advantages and privileges (Helms & Cook, 1999).

Counselors must be aware that internalization of negative ethnic group stereotypes, including those associated with darker skin, may underlie a negative self-identity, which may then affect self-efficacy, goals, and beliefs, creating feelings of ambiguity or conflict about one's place in the world. Counselors must also be aware that, due to stereotypes that they are different, that they do not belong, or that they are illegal immigrants, Chicanas/os often feel as if they live in the margins between cultures (Anzaldúa, 1990) and/or as "countryless" people (Castillo, 1994), the devaluing of cultural patterns, such as speaking Spanish, also contributes to this sense of themselves. Helms and Cook (1999) suggest teaching clients about the relevant history of their group as a means of expanding their options and/or helping them build self-protective skills in instances in which they choose to enter potentially hostile environments. The counselor may thus guide clients to understand how prejudicial societal views about their group may shape beliefs and perceptions about

their own identity. Such counseling interventions might include educating clients about how stereotypes, especially those that have no basis in reality as inherent traits of their group, are often perpetuated to justify discrimination against Chicanas/os (Porter, 2000).

For example, the stereotypical image of the dirty Mexican helped to portray the subjugated as inferior and, by implication, deserving of domination and exploitation (Thompson & Neville, 1999). Hossfeld (1994) discussed the immigrant logic used in the Silicon Valley computer industry, which stereotypes Chicanas as particularly capable of monotonous work and as willing to work for low wages, thus contributing to their relatively low socioeconomic status and power within their own communities, as well as within the larger society. In addition, although Chicanas/os have historically been valued as cheap labor, they also have been socially excluded, especially from European American society (Takaki, 1993).

Although it seems evident that increasing clients' awareness of the origins of stigmatized identities may facilitate their movement toward a healthier stage of ethnic identity development, research is needed to specifically assess these effects. It may be that clients will go through distinct stages of reaction to this awareness and that these reactions depend on the level of previous naiveté about these issues. The eventual realization that they have internalized racism may lead to feelings of rage (Thompson & Neville, 1999). Counselors who incorporate this increasing awareness of societal racism in their interventions are in a unique position to begin to ascertain the effects on clients. This assessment may be anecdotal at first, but it may eventually reveal distinctive patterns across clients, such as identification of stages of emotion ranging from rage to sadness to confusion to relief. It is also important to assess the relevance of key demographic factors on this awareness process, including age, generation in the United States, educational attainment, socioeconomic status, occupation, and sex.

Stereotype Threat: Effect of Collective Stigmatization on the Educational Experience

When the content of stereotypes is negative, the targets of those stereotypes may operate in a state of reflective expectancy, believing that others hold general stereotypical expectancies of them (Niemann & Dovidio, 1998a; Pollak & Niemann, 1998; Steele, 1997). Social psychologists have theorized about and researched this phenomenon for almost a century. For instance, Cooley (1902) referred to the looking-glass metaphor of the self, whereby we come to see ourselves in ways that we believe others see us, resulting in a feedback loop in which response and behavior are connected

and become self-perpetuating, self-sealing systems (Kanter, 1977). More recently, Steele (1997) has documented the insidious consequences of internalizing prevailing social attitudes, a situational phenomenon that he calls stereotype threat. He defines stereotype threat as

the event of a negative stereotype about a group to which one belongs becoming self-relevant, usually as a plausible interpretation for something one is doing, for an experience one is having, or for a situation one is in, that has relevance to one's self-definition. It happens when one is in the field of the stereotype . . . such that one can be judged or treated in terms of a racial stereotype. (Steele, 1997, p. 616)

Steele further argues that stereotype threat may be cued by the mere recognition that a negative group stereotype could apply to oneself in a given situation.

The performance of students of color who are stigmatized in academia, such as Chicanas/os and African Americans, may depend on the extent to which stereotypes are cued for them in those situations. Under conditions of stress, such as during exams, African American college students perform worse than White students. This is not necessarily because they are less prepared or less intelligent; it may occur because the negative stereotypes about their groups come to mind when they are feeling vulnerable and insecure in a domain in which negative stereotypes about them prevail (Steele, 1997). On the other hand, there is no difference between African American and European American performance on tests when African Americans are told the test is not about their ability and/or is not racially biased. Steele (1997) concluded that negative stereotypes pose a threat that may undermine minority students' academic successes, a phenomenon that may generalize to domains outside of academia in which negative stereotypes about minorities also prevail. In effect, stereotype threat may lower overall feelings of self-efficacy across various domains.

There may be important implications of stereotype threat for Chicanas/os in the educational system, as only 3.7% of Chicanas and 6.1% of Chicanos graduate from college (Ortiz, 1995). This situation may be exacerbated by educators' documented perceptions of Chicanas/os in stereotypic terms, for example, that they are of low socioeconomic status, bilingual, Roman Catholic, and likely to marry within their own group; that they live in socially segregated communities, have less than 5 years of schooling, and have large numbers of children; that they are modest, proud, present-oriented, dependent on kinsmen and compadres, tolerant of the status quo, and caring about their family (Cross & Maldonado, 1971). These beliefs may contribute to stigmatization as

the Chicana/o child who speaks little English when he enters school is bewildered and feels ashamed of being different. He/she is apt to equate his language problem with being a worthless and sorry sort of person speaking an inferior language. He begins to fear and dislike school as the cause of his misery. (Cross & Maldonado, 1971, p. 29)

In addition, the disparity between demands of Anglo American society and the basic positive values of traditional Chicanas/os tends to create dissonant, confusing conditions in which they must function (Cross & Maldonado, 1971; Vasquez, 1997). Furthermore, some educators are convinced that to succeed, Chicanas/os simply must shed their cultural difference and become anglicized in all ways (Cross & Maldonado, 1971).

As indicated in the earlier discussion of the reflective, looking-glass self, children often see themselves as they believe they are seen, and they may thus internalize stereotypes. School counselors and educators must be aware that students are vulnerable to these stigmatizing feelings, which can be a source of discomfort for Chicanas/os within educational institutions. They must also be aware that teachers and others in positions of authority may perceive and evaluate Chicanas/os in stereotype-consistent terms. The stereotype-consistent, traditionally oriented perception of Chicanas by family, community members, and educators may further exacerbate barriers to their educational pursuits that are experienced by their male counterparts (Vasquez, 1997). To help offset, prevent, or diffuse some of the effects of internalized stigmatization, counselors can emphasize positive elements of community, such as familial solidarity, support, warmth, and acceptance (Cross & Maldonado, 1971). Counselors may also offer workshops for students and educational personnel that facilitate awareness of ethnocentrism and stereotypes and their detrimental effects, both to personal identity and to conscious and unconscious stereotype-consistent perception and evaluation.

It is imperative that those whose concern it is to foster mental health do not hold a negative concept toward the individuals who are stigmatized rather than helped by such terms as "culturally deprived, disadvantaged, alienated, slow learner, inner-city child, marginal group, or slum child. (Cross & Maldonado, 1971, p. 29)

The effects of stereotype threat within the educational system also extend to Chicana/o university faculty (Garza, 1992; Niemann, 1999; Niemann & Dovidio, 1998b). These effects, which include racial tokenism, overt and covert racism, feelings of negative distinctiveness, and stigmatization are often grounded in the undermining attitudes and behavior of fellow faculty members (Niemann, 1999; Pollak & Niemann, 1998). Writing of my first faculty experience in a psychology department, I stated that "I went from

having strong feelings of self-efficacy in the academy to wondering why I had the arrogance to think I could succeed in an academic career” (Niemann, 1999, p. 111). This example illustrates the importance of counselor assessment of this internalized racism; counselors should heed Freire’s (1970) warning, stated earlier. Although I am a social psychologist well-versed in tokenism research, I was unable to recognize the signs of internalized racism in myself while I was working in this racist environment. Professionals in any field perceived by colleagues in stereotype-consistent terms may experience feelings of tokenization, including isolation, overt and covert racism, colleagues’ perceived lack of value for their work, and perceptions that they are undeserving of the position.

Counselors can assist professionals experiencing the interactive forces that contribute to feelings of stigmatization and stereotype threat by (a) discussing how negative framing of hiring associated with affirmative action policy may set the stage for client’s tokenization and stigmatization; (b) addressing how overtly biased people may produce direct, adverse personalized effects; (c) discussing how undermining are those people who do not recognize their negative biases and whose manner of encouragement may in itself be indicative of racism; (d) considering the effects of undermining and producing self-doubt when people who seem not to be biased stand by and let racist behavior occur without attempting to intervene; and (e) exploring how clients may have internalized stereotypes to the extent that they may be undermining their own competence (Niemann, 1999).

Counselors may also increase Chicana/o clients’ awareness of looking-glass selves or mirrors, other than those reflected from racist individuals, communities, and institutions. For instance, counselors may reflect on the redefining of Chicano and “brown power” in a positive light as put forth by activists during the 1960s Chicano civil rights movement to help clients redefine more personally and positively what it means to be Chicano (García, 1997). To develop the type of self-esteem and pride necessary for political action, Chicanas/os have to view themselves in a new light and to shift the blame for their condition from themselves to mainstream society (García, 1997).

Research is needed to explore the effects of the racist quality of the looking glass that Chicanas/os use as self-reflections, facilitating stereotype threat. Does teaching Chicana/o clients to hold up a Chicana/o mirror consistent with the brown-power and brown pride civil rights movement decrease threat to self and collective stigmatization? Does this more positive mirror increase feelings of competence, efficacy, and self and group agency? Although little evaluation research has been conducted on the effects of ethnic studies programs, these programs are intended, in part, to increase racial consciousness and enhance ethnic/racial identity by holding up to students a

more positive and accurate mirror of contributions and histories of various groups. Such research may, therefore, have implications not only for the counseling process but also for the increase, use, and evaluation of the effects of ethnic studies programs, especially those in Chicana/o studies, not only in university settings, but through primary school educational levels.

Risky Behavior

Due to the prescriptive nature of stereotypes, when a stereotype-consistent behavior is ascribed to an ethnic group, group members may come to believe that group membership entails engaging in that behavior, even when it is risky (Kunda, 2000). "One must choose between identifying with dominant White values in order to 'achieve' or to 'hang ethnic' thereby fulfilling the prophecy and acting out the negative stereotypes" (Porter, 2000, p. 169). Because Chicanos have long been associated with the stereotypic trait of heavy alcohol consumption, this behavioral domain is being currently explored for its relationship to stereotype internalization. Recent stereotype content research (e.g., Niemann et al., 1994; Niemann & Lai, 1999) confirms this stereotype trait about Chicanas/os by in-group and out-group members. For instance, Chicanas/os define drinking behavior for their group as heavy and problematic but as non-problematic for other ethnic/racial groups (Niemann & Jennings, 1995).

In this case, the stereotype has ecological validity and is consistent with the classic social psychological theory that behavior is a function of the person and the environment (Lewin, 1943). That is, with respect to alcohol consumption, Chicanas/os have some of the highest rates in the United States, are more liberal than other Latina/o groups regarding permission to drink enough to feel the effects of alcohol, and drink more and have a prevalence of problems associated with drinking two to eight times higher than other Latina/o groups (Caetano, 1988).

Acceptance of these attitudes may lead to automatic (nonconscious) behavior such that the stereotypes become self-fulfilling prophecies (Bargh, Chen, & Burrows, 1996). Bargh et al. (1996) found that when respondents are primed with a stereotype, they engage in behavior consistent with that stereotype, and people who live in an ethnic community are constantly primed with the stereotype of their group (Niemann & Secord, 1995). Worsening this situation are community billboard advertisements that serve to perpetuate the image of the Chicana/o as an alcohol consumer (Alaniz & Wilkes, 1995). The culture associated with drinking is transmitted through tacit socialization that affects social identity and behavior (Helms, 1990; Oakes et al., 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Based on perceived community support, Chicanos

may engage in heavy drinking because ethnic and gender roles are perceived to prescribe it.

Niemann and Lai's (1999) work with people of Mexican descent in the Pacific Northwest found preliminary confirmation that there is a relationship between stereotype endorsement and problematic drinking behavior. Specifically, they found significant positive correlations between drinking attitudes and endorsement of positive or negative male stereotypes and positive female stereotypes and between drinking behaviors and endorsement of overall and negative male stereotypes and overall positive and negative female stereotypes. Multiple regression analyses revealed that ethnic identity and negative stereotypes (including the trait of being a heavy alcohol consumer) significantly predicted males' drinking quantity. This research is ongoing, but these preliminary results suggest that ethnic identity and stereotype internalization play an important role in Chicana/o drinking behavior. However, the direction of the effect is unclear, as this research does not indicate whether stereotypes precede drinking behavior or whether they serve to justify it. Future planned longitudinal work will address this question.

Other risky behavior may also be tied to ethnic stereotypes. Use of condoms, for example, may not be consistent with Chicano stereotypes of machismo, defined as exaggerated masculine tendencies and attitudes of invulnerability and power, especially over women. As of 1990, 20% of U.S. women with AIDS, and 23% of children with AIDS, were Latina/o (Nyamathi & Vasquez, 1995). Although a large percentage of these cases were related to drug use and needle sharing, the use of unsafe sexual practices most likely adds to these tragic statistics.

For the counseling process, the connection between stereotype endorsement, ethnic identity, and risky behavior must carefully be brought to the awareness of the client. One strategy is for counselors to ascertain the extent to which the client's behavior is consciously associated with ethnic identity. Counselors must also elicit clients' own cultural interpretation of their behavior. The context of the behavior may influence the interpretation of it very differently, from observers to people embedded in that context (Landrine, 1995). The counseling process may then facilitate the client's understanding of unconscious socialization processes that affect the decision to engage in the behavior. In this manner, Chicana/o clients may be assisted to gain more personal mastery over their risky behaviors.

Research is needed to examine the relationship between stereotype internalization and participation in various risky behaviors, including drug and alcohol use. It is critical to examine the extent to which stereotype internalization precedes behavior. Research must also assess the relationship between ethnic identity and stereotype internalization. If a positive relation-

ship between these constructs is found, counselors will then have guidance for redefining culture and ethnicity as a means of reducing risky behavior. Research is also needed to ascertain which referent groups are most important in the norming of behaviors associated with Chicana/o identity.

Gender Roles

Gender roles and stereotypes are often consistent, and both provide prescriptions and expectations for behavior. That is, stereotypes of Chicanas as being submissive to men, good mothers, passive, and self-sacrificing (Niemann et al., 1994; Porter, 2000) are consistent with traditional gender roles for men and women residing within a highly patriarchal structure. From a social ecological perspective, the situating of women in domestic roles, excluding them from positions of authority, power, status, and influence, generates and sustains a stereotype of the traditional woman as unassertive, submissive, passive, dependent, nurturant, and domestic (Niemann & Secord, 1995). The stereotype of men as consistently strong and prideful, as economic providers, heads of their families, and disciplinarians of children (and at times, of their partners), also leads to situating men in the more powerful positions within their families and communities (Castillo, 1994).

Although Chicana gender roles are becoming increasingly diverse, the extent to which they are expected to retain traditional gender roles may depend largely on their economic power (Zavella, 1987). Because the earning power of Chicanas is still lower than that of their male and European American women counterparts, many Chicanas still reside within highly traditional, gender-specific, patriarchal family systems. Unfortunately, Chicanas who do not subscribe to traditional gender roles may be thought of as *vendidas* within their ethnic community (Castillo, 1994; García, 1997). On the other hand, Chicanos who do not engage in traditional definitions of machismo or manhood risk not being perceived as “real men.”

Stereotypes of women may be particularly damaging to women and girls who break out of traditional roles within the Chicana/o community. As documented in Humphrey's (1945) early work, Chicanas may be stereotypically categorized as being either “good, passive, and docile” or “bad/Americanized, independent” women. This dichotomy is consistent with the traditional views of women within the Chicana/o community (Castillo, 1994; Flores-Ortiz, 1993). One role may be consistent with the *marianismo* role, which includes traits such as being self-sacrificing, a good mother, and devoted wife and holding other traditional values (Porter, 2000). There is also some evidence that Chicanas may internalize the expectation that they are nurturers and deny their needs to keep the family intact (Vasquez, 1994). Another role may be more associated with that of *malinche*, which includes traits such as

treachery, promiscuity, and other behaviors considered negative for women in the Chicana/o community (Castillo, 1994).

Within the Mexican community, American women are considered more promiscuous than Mexican women. Therefore, it could be that Mexican women who are acculturating toward becoming Chicanas are cued by the stereotypical trait of promiscuity, which is associated with bad women, and subsequently engage in other behaviors consistent with that role, including ones that are risky. Supporting this argument is research indicating that stereotypes affect expectations and that expectations, in turn, affect Chicanas' behavior (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Gilbert, Mora, & Ferguson, 1994). For example, Chicanas who identify themselves, or who have been identified by community members, as "bad women" may be acting out what they perceive to be a norm for women so categorized. Likewise, females who engage in behaviors that meet others' needs but not their own may be acting out norms for "good" women.

It is important to understand that behavior considered generally acceptable for women in mainstream society may be inconsistent with traditional gender roles for Chicanas, which include marriage and family but not pursuit of higher education. In a recent study of professional Chicanas/os (Gándara, 1995), respondents indicated that both their mothers and fathers believed that college was "very important" for men at higher levels than for women, whereas the belief that college was "not very important" was higher for women than for men. In the Chicana/o community, education is valued for men as a mechanism for improving themselves so they can have a better job, make more money, and be economically responsible for their families (Mirán & Enríquez, 1979; Niemann, Romero, & Arbona, 2000). Because men are traditionally responsible for the economic support of families, women are not perceived to need a higher education. Women pursuing higher education may, therefore, experience a dilemma between their goals for educational achievement and relationships, a dilemma referred to as the "double bind for the high-achieving Chicana" (González, 1988, p. 367).

The perception of the double bind and the potentially negative consequences seems to be related to a strong ethnic identity; preference for endogamy; a belief that, due to traditional gender roles, higher education is a threat to endogamy; and a belief that higher education will lead to alienation from ethnic communities (Gándara, 1995; González, 1988; Niemann et al., 2000). González (1988) suggests that the outcome of this double bind for Chicanas in college is psychological distress, which is not surprising if women expect negative consequences for not pursuing or for delaying pursuit of traditional gender roles.

Women who do pursue a college degree may have to compromise traditional, "good woman" traits of cooperativeness and self-sacrifice to be inde-

pendent, competitive, and self-assertive, traits considered necessary to achieve in higher education (Miránde & Enríquez, 1979; Vasquez, 1997). For instance, Buriel and Saénz (1980) found that what distinguished college-bound from non-college bound women was the ability to perform masculine behaviors. However, such non-normative behaviors may alienate women from their traditional, working-class ethnic communities.

Stereotype-consistent gender roles and behaviors may also serve to justify domestic violence of Chicanas and prevent them from obtaining help (Flores-Ortiz, 1993; Rodríguez, 1997). For example, abusers use violence to punish Chicanas for not living up to their narrow expectations and to deter them from participating in roles outside the definition of traditional, good wife-mother (Rodríguez, 1997). Rodríguez argues that the stereotype of the passive Chicana defined primarily as wife and mother contributes to domestic violence; if a woman attempts to get help, she is labeled a *vendida*. As such, these stereotypes serve to norm Chicanas' behavior (Rodríguez, 1997).

Liberation from these limited norms and expectations may require counseling that explores the "good woman-bad woman" dichotomy and "real man," macho definitions, providing Chicanas/os with more options for personal identity and behavior. However, counselors and clients must be aware that by deviating from gender-role expectations, females risk being seen as traitors to the culture, and men may be perceived as "wearing a woman's skirts." Counselors may need to encourage their clients to reach out to men and women in the community who have moved away from the norm but have still found respect and acceptance within the community. These people can be vital sources of support for Chicanas/os negotiating nontraditional gender roles. This suggestion is consistent with Flores-Ortiz's (1993) culturally based model for conceptualization and treatment, which includes unfreezing stereotype-consistent cultural patterns. Flores-Ortiz recommends that the overarching goal of treatment is to redefine culture: that is, do not blame or idealize culture, but challenge it in respectful ways that unfreeze cultural, stereotype-consistent traditional beliefs that are distorted to normalize domestic abuse. Comas-Díaz (1994) also argues that the understanding of the systemic context is a prerequisite for such a decolonization process, an approach consistent with social ecology.

Finally, in their work with Chicanas, counselors must be aware that these women often consider the term *feminist* to be typically associated with European American women, and they may not readily embrace it themselves (Castillo, 1994). Other terms that indicate a feminist consciousness may be used, such as *conscientización* (Castillo, 1994), and *conscientizacáo* (Comas-Díaz, 1994). These terms refer to a Chicana feminist consciousness and to therapeutic decolonizing and empowering with respect to ethnicity, race, and gender.

Future research is needed to understand the relationship between a feminist consciousness, embracing culture/gender-consistent behaviors and values, and Chicanas' incorporation of ethnic identity as important aspects of the self. With respect to Chicanos, research is needed to examine the relationship between their definitions of manhood, including machismo, and expectations about behaviors of women within their families and ethnic communities. The relationship between domestic violence and traditional as well as contemporary definitions of gender roles must also be examined.

U.S.-Versus Mexican-Born

When Mexican nationals first enter the United States, their identity is still Mexican. This identity changes as they decide to stay in the United States and make their lives here. As they acculturate, identity begins to shift from Mexican to Chicana/o. Stereotypes may, therefore, have different effects on U.S.-born Chicanas/os and Mexican-born residents of the United States as they develop their ethnic identities. In this case, the terms *Mexican* and *Chicano* refer to national affiliations and identities with Mexico and the United States, respectively.

According to Hurtado, Gurin, and Peng (1994), the identity struggle may be more difficult for immigrants than for Chicanas/os, making immigrants particularly vulnerable to internalization of stereotypes about Chicanas/os. Fernandez-Kelly and Schauffler (1994) state that "immigrants learn how they fit in the larger society through the contacts they establish in familiar environments. . . . Iterative processes of symbolic and factual association and detachment shape immigrants' self-definitions" (p. 682). Immigrants make the transition from Mexican to Chicana/o as they acculturate, which implies that they learn the social norms of the host community culture, including behaviors and expectations associated with particular roles. Thus, the social, consensual stereotypes of Chicanas/os in the United States may quickly become trademarks of ethnic identity for acculturating Mexican immigrants. That is, new arrivals to the United States from Mexico may learn that part of the social role of being Chicana/o includes engaging in behaviors consistent with societal stereotypes about Chicanas/os. Such learning would be predicted by social learning theory (Bandura, 1986) and social ecological theory (Niemann & Secord, 1995). As such, adapting their behavior to a particular community-recognized role may predict that highly acculturated U.S. Mexicans will engage in more stereotype-consistent behaviors than low acculturated U.S. Mexicans.

Conversely, Mexican-born residents of the United States have not been exposed to the many decades of consistent oppression and stigmatized status in the United States, as have U.S.-born Chicanas/os. As such, the U.S.-born

and Mexican-born individuals may have different models of success and survival in the United States. Ogbu (1990) argued that members of involuntary minority groups, such as those groups incorporated into the United States through colonization (e.g., African Americans, American Indians, Chicanas/os, Hawaiian and Alaskan natives) may adopt a cultural model that includes information about how to succeed and/or survive in a hostile environment. This model may include adopting stereotype-consistent behaviors. It also may be the case, however, that Mexican-born individuals who have not yet had an opportunity to adopt such a cultural model will have more positive in-group stereotypes than their U.S.-born counterparts and will maintain those positive behaviors associated with their stereotypes. Therefore, it is important for counselors to be aware that length of time in the United States may affect direction and intensity of in-group stereotypes, both of which may affect self-perception and behavior.

Counselors also must be aware that many Mexican-born people experience almost complete lack of acceptance in the United States. For example, first-generation Mexican-born respondents to focus-group interviews about identity expressed the view that a politician will propose to get all Mexican immigrants out of the country to get the votes but then, of course, cannot follow through because their labor is desperately needed in the United States. Respondents echoed such sentiments as

Where would they be without us? Who would do all this dirty work for practically nothing? They'll never be able to do without us and they know it, but it sounds good, it gets votes, and Anglos end up hating us even more because we're still here, even after all the promises from politicians. (Niemann, Romero, Arredondo, & Rodriguez, 1999, p. 54)

These respondents also perceived workplace inequalities (e.g., they reported that Mexicans must work harder than Anglos for the same paycheck or other reward).

These respondents also reported much discrimination toward them from Chicanas/os. They recounted that some Chicanas/os call them "wetbacks" and treat them worse than Anglos treat them in many situations (Niemann et al., 1999). Respondents talked about the hurt of this kind of discrimination "from our own kind" and discussed their lack of understanding of how some Chicanas/os could treat Mexicans in the United States so poorly. Respondents also reported that one of the biggest barriers between Mexicans and Chicanas/os is that some speak Spanish, some do not, and some pretend not to speak Spanish (Niemann et al., 1999). These immigrants may, therefore, feel particularly isolated.

Counselors can help alleviate this isolation by having ready a list of bilingual referrals for clients who can benefit from and who request assistance in obtaining U.S. citizenship, education, protection from domestic violence, and other social services. Counselors also must help clients process and untangle the relationship between their situation in the United States vis à vis power and perceptions (their own as well as those of the out-group) of belongingness in the United States.

Research is needed to examine the underpinnings of the often-hostile relationship between Mexican nationals in the United States and Chicanas/os. This research must include examination of the role of societal racism against people of Mexican descent in this relationship and the feelings of ethnic pride, stigmatization, and personal identity for U.S.-resident Mexicans and U.S.-born Chicanas/os. Research is also needed to assess the meaning of the shift in identity from Mexican to Chicana/o in terms of behaviors, values, and attitudes.

INCREASING RACIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING AND THERAPY

Chicana/o students taking classes in Chicana/o studies demonstrate more positive beliefs about their in-group compared to students who are less aware of their group's history and current circumstance in this society (Locci & Carranza, 1990). Multicultural counseling and therapy, conceptualized by Rowe, Behrens, and Leach (1995) as involving racial/ethnic identity and racial consciousness, may do for clients what these classes do for students. Again, in applying a social-ecological approach, counselors may engage in an educational role and help clients bridge the gap between stereotype accuracy and social-political, structural forces that serve to generate and maintain consensual stereotypes.

For instance, Chicanas/os as a group are generally less educated than White Americans, a situation that results from several complex factors (McLemore & Romo, 1998). Among these is that, for most of the 19th and 20th centuries, Chicanas/os were not allowed into many public primary and secondary schools or universities (McLemore & Romo, 1998). Also contributing to their relatively lower level of education are employment discrimination and concentrations of Mexicans and Chicanas/os in certain occupations, resulting in migratory employment patterns that often interfere with consistent education (McLemore & Romo, 1998). Furthermore, Chicanas/os are overrepresented among the lowest social classes, which exacerbates the need for economic contribution from all family members, including school-age

children. Language barriers also have interfered in the quality education of this group. In addition, Chicanas/os have been historically tracked into non-college bound school programs and into bilingual education programs, which often serve as proxies to keep these children out of college preparatory tracks. Nevertheless, outside observers and Chicanas/os often perceive only the comparatively lower educational level of this ethnic group and interpret the situation as one of choice, values, and/or genetic inferiority.

Multicultural counseling that increases racial and/or ethnic identity awareness must include, in part, discussion of historical oppression and discrimination as they relate to the status of Chicanas/os today. This discussion may include emphasis on media images and representations that justify negative or differential treatment of Chicanas/os (Dines & Humez, 1995). This awareness may lessen feelings of stigmatization for Chicanas/os and also may help balance the largely negative portrayals and/or lack of historical information Chicana/o clients received in school. This increased awareness also may lead to a more proactive stance with regard to community-related goals, thereby increasing their feelings of self-efficacy and empowerment.

Because family orientation, or *familismo*, is central to Chicana/o values, it is important to include the entire family in the process of increasing racial awareness. For instance, Mexican immigrants may experience exacerbated conflict with their children, who tend to acculturate more rapidly than their parents (Bemak & Chung, 2000). As cultural values are linked to stages of acculturation, children may quickly learn and internalize stereotypes about their ethnic group and, hence, may reject their ethnic identity, Spanish language, food, and core cultural values. Facilitating examination of the role of internalized racism in family dynamics may alleviate tension created by internalized racism. In general, an important rule of thumb consistent with a social-ecological approach is that the family dynamics must be understood in the context in which they occur (Szapocznik et al., 1997). For example, parents' reaction to their children's acquisition of group stereotypes may depend largely on the parents' level of acculturation, time in the United States, legal status, and their own experiences with racism and with members of other ethnic/racial groups.

Counselors must also remember that the concept of family for Chicanas/os includes extended family members and close family friends (Sue & Sue, 1999). As stressed by Falicov (1982), it is important for counselors to be mindful that, although stereotypes about Mexican families assume inherent pathology, such ethnic stereotypes may lead counselors to draw precipitous conclusions and to omit necessary action; Falicov warns that "an emphasis on the behavioral pattern of enmeshment as merely a cultural sty-

listic preference may lead to overlooking instances of dysfunctional enmeshment” (p. 159).

Research is needed to examine the relationship between parent-child and partner relations and internalization of ethnic group stereotypes. The role of acculturation in affecting family dynamics also requires exploration. Examination of the relationship between counselor expectations of Chicana/o family dynamics and treatment of these clients, compared with clients of other ethnic/racial groups, may also lead to increased counseling effectiveness for Chicanas/os.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELORS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF CLIENTS

Personalized psychological reactions are assumed to have major therapeutic implications for counselors and clients (Helms & Cook, 1999). Counselors must, therefore, be particularly cognizant of stereotyping processes, tendencies, and biases and how these may affect the counseling process and relationship.

Categorization refers to the classification of people, objects, or behaviors as instances of particular concepts (Kunda, 2000). This classification enables people to use knowledge about categories to make sense of individual category members (Kunda, 2000). Social scientists regard categorization as a central and necessary part of cognitive functioning (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Ridley & Hill, 1999). Categorization itself, therefore, is not the culprit that leads to biased perception. However, categories trigger stereotypes about that category group (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Kunda, 2000). These stereotypes affect perception and evaluation of the perceived. Merely the presence or thought of a member of that group can trigger the stereotyping process automatically or unconsciously. Seemingly harmless, or neutral (e.g., bilingual language usage) reminders of members of the group can trigger negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, without any awareness on perceivers' part that they have even been reminded of this group (Kunda, 2000). Therefore, counselors may assign meaning to a particular category, for example, Chicanas/os, and automatically or unconsciously apply that stereotypic meaning to clients who are members of that group (Ridley & Hill, 1999). A particularly insidious consequence of stereotypes is that trying to suppress the negative thoughts may make counselors especially likely to entertain or activate that very thought shortly thereafter. This effort results in increased accessibility of the stereotype of Chicanas/os, which may affect counselors'

conscious and unconscious behavior toward members of that group (Kunda, 2000).

In addition, due to their racial stereotypes of Chicanas/os, counselors may be unable to believe in their inherent goodness, have genuine communications with them, or visualize them engaging in healthy lifestyles. These biases affect therapists' expectations for the outcome of therapy with certain clients (Helms & Cook, 1999). Stereotyped, overgeneralized characterizations of Chicanas/os may lead therapists to believe that all members of this group share the same values and experiences. As Sue and Sue (1999) point out, "stereotypes are impervious to logic or experience. All incoming information is distorted to fit our preconceived notions" (p. 73).

Kunda (2000) documents the variety of insidious consequences of stereotypes with implications for counseling. For example, counselors may shift their standards of judgment to fit their stereotypes of Chicanas/os. If they believe that Chicanas are passive, any seemingly assertive act by a Chicana may be interpreted as negatively aggressive or as extraordinary. Mental capacity also effects stereotype activation. Is it possible that when counselors are particularly fatigued, distracted, or pressed for time, they may be especially likely to base their impressions of group members on stereotypes? Furthermore, when behaviors are ambiguous, stereotypes serve to interpret the behavior. For instance, a police officer may interpret the presence of a Chicano in an upper-class neighborhood as someone intending to steal or as a gardener (consistent with stereotypes). The presence of a European American man in the same place may be interpreted as home ownership in the neighborhood. It is important to note that the activation of negative stereotypes can be triggered for both prejudiced and nonprejudiced individuals. Therefore, when counselors become aware of their client's ethnic/racial classification, they should engage in visualization of specific aspects of the person related to race and/or racial stereotyping and in self-exploration to ascertain their reactions to the information (Helms & Cook, 1999).

To date, the most important sources of information that have shaped stereotypes about Chicanas/os have at their core the ethnocentric worldviews and attitudes of mainstream social scientists (e.g., Richards, 1950). These writings play an important role in generating and/or maintaining stereotypes that have conscious and unconscious effects and may shape implicit attitudes. Without realizing it, counselors may have encountered in their training and internalized these negative stereotypes about people of Mexican descent. Schon, Hopkins, and Vojir (1982) suggest that stereotypes are not only enduring but very difficult to change, and they may become increasingly negative, even in the minds of people with a higher education. Thus, this stereotypic knowledge may lead to an ethnocentric and/or racist interpretation of

culture and behavior, which could lead to misdiagnoses and distrust in the counseling relationship.

An important component of multicultural counseling competencies includes counselors' awareness of their own and clients' worldview and attitudes (González, 1997; Leach & Carlton, 1997; Rowe et al., 1995). This awareness is particularly important when examining counselors' own stereotyping potential. Counselors' awareness of the possibility that they may be perceiving Chicana/o clients through stereotyped lenses may motivate them to take a culture-centered, relativistic perspective to interpretation of behavior, as opposed to an absolutist perspective (Pedersen, 1995). A relativist approach in working with Chicanas/os may avoid imposing value judgments, may allow each cultural context to be understood in its own terms, and may help offset some of the unconscious and/or automatic effects of the stereotyping process. Therefore, an effective multicultural training philosophy must include valuing human diversity, or affirmative diversity (Aponte & Aponte, 2000), cultural sensitivity, an understanding of racism and its consequences for mental health (Leach & Carlton, 1997), and an understanding of how the counselor and client worldviews may differ (Sue & Sue, 1999). Such approaches not only help offset stereotyping tendencies, they also may help counselors counter effects of their unconscious racism.

Counselors who consciously or unconsciously perceive Chicanas/os in a stereotype-consistent manner may be aversive racists. Aversive racists outwardly proclaim egalitarian values but express racism in subtle, rationalizable ways such as believing that people are in low-status positions because they have not worked hard (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1996). Aversive racists may engage in subtle, perhaps unconscious behaviors that clients may recognize as racist. For instance, a counselor's facial expressions in reaction to a client's story or discussion about a cultural event may give the client the impression that a particular cultural value or behavior is deemed unacceptable. The counselor may innocently ask questions that give the client the impression that she or he believes negative group stereotypes (e.g., how many of your family members are in jail/alcoholics/drop-outs, etc.?). The possibility of stereotype-consistent judgments in the realm of interpreting projective personality assessments, such as the Rorschach, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), sentence completions, and figure drawings, is particularly great for the aversive racist and/or the culture-insensitive counselor (Dana, 2000).

The relationship between counselors' aversive racism and interpretation of mental health assessments and client dynamics requires extensive investigation. Research is also needed to examine the relationship between counselors' previous experiences with Chicanas/os and effectiveness of the counseling process. Examination of counselors' stereotypes and Chicana/o clients' per-

ception of the effectiveness of the counseling relationship will also contribute to the literature.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Stereotypes and the stereotyping process were part of the psychological literature for the better part of the 20th century. However, in addition to those previously noted, many research questions on this topic remain unexamined and/or unanswered. To begin with, it is critical for research to focus on developing more implicit and readily available assessments of stereotypes and racism. These assessments can be used for counselors, clients, educators, social workers, and other authority figures who make decisions that affect the lives of Chicanas/os. Such assessments also will help empower the Chicana/o community as members can document and then begin to extinguish the effects of internalized stereotypes, both from within and outside of their own ethnic communities.

It is also critical to assess the effects of positively redefining what it means to be Chicana/o with emphasis on stereotype internalization. At the same time, however, this definition must include room for a heterogeneous description of Chicanas/os. Such redefining, especially by mental health practitioners and scholars, will eventually diffuse the persistent, negative stereotypes about this group. This redefinition has important implications for more effective counseling and empowerment of Chicanas/os. Research that extends the implications of stereotypes to facility in adapting to and functioning well in the United States will contribute to the literature across the various domains discussed here, including risky behavior, freezing of cultural traditions and gender roles, and feelings of stigmatization.

The effects of solo status and feelings of tokenization in work contexts must be examined for the consequences to stereotype internalization, definitions of Chicana/o identity, feelings of competency, and job satisfaction. Assessment of the frequency with which stereotypes underlie Chicanas/os' work-related issues is also necessary. Relatedly, college students' defining of Chicana/o ethnicity must also be examined with respect to social-ecological context. For instance, it is likely that there are mediating effects on identity of being in a predominantly White versus a racially integrated college environment. With respect to college students, the effects on stereotype internalization and identity precipitated by Chicana/o studies classes, cultural centers, and affirmative action policies must be examined. Although some research has been conducted on these issues, especially in regard to affirmative action policies (Niemann & Dovidio, 1998a, 1998b), the connection to stereotypes and identity has not been made.

Future research also will need to focus on the relationship between stereotypes and gender-role identities and behaviors in regard to mediating and moderating factors that facilitate and/or diffuse expected gender-role behaviors for Chicanas and Chicanos. Although gender roles of Chicanas have been changing slowly, the same changes have not occurred with respect to traditional expectations of men (Williams, 1988). Since the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, feminist theorists have argued that women can do anything men can do. However, that argument has not been reversed (Castillo, 1994). For example, in assessing the effects of stereotype internalization and perception about gender roles, students have shared with me their confusion, anger, and frustration over the differences between male and female partners regarding expectations about gender-role behaviors. Some student couples report getting along very well while they are on campus. However, trips home, especially to visit the man's family, often result in conflict when women perceive men to behave differently, more traditionally, in the presence of their families. Men often complain that if they engage in behaviors their partners request of them in the presence of family members, for example, help wash the dishes, male and female family members accuse them of "wanting to wear the skirt in the family" or of not having found "a real woman" with whom to partner. Identity issues strongly grounded in stereotype-consistent expectations affect these relationships (Castillo, 1996; Flores-Ortiz, 1993). Therefore, research is also needed to examine the effects of stereotypes on romantic couple/partner relationships.

Another great void in the literature is examination of the relationship between ethnic/racial stereotypes and stereotype-consistent behavior of group members. This research will be most helpful when it documents the mediating effects of engaging in negative-consequence behavior and internalizing negative stereotypes. Research on drug/alcohol use, risky sexual behavior, domestic violence, and sexual assault—all issues that deeply affect the Chicana/o community must be included.

Documentation of the effects of awareness and acknowledgment of a history of Chicanas/os, told from the perspective of Chicana/o scholars and activists, on stereotype internalization is also sorely needed. Moderators of the effects of this variable, including age of exposure, time in the United States for Mexican nationals, gender, generation in the United States, education, and socioeconomic status must be investigated. The effects of stereotype internalization on precipitating and/or exacerbating other mental health issues also require extensive investigation, as the connection between racially based mental health issues and physical health must also be included in this area of research.

With respect to the counseling process, future research is needed to ascertain the frequency with which stereotypes are related to the core counseling

issue a client presents and the frequency with which they become part of the process, even when not initially presented. In addition, research on the effectiveness of counseling interventions that focus on stereotypes and other aspects of racial identity is badly needed. Examination of interventions designed to increase counselors' racial awareness of perceptions of Chicano/a clients and interventions with them is also required.

Finally, the vast majority of literature on stereotypes to date has been conducted in social psychological laboratories. As a consequence, we know little about the generalizability of some of the aforementioned stereotyping processes to applied settings, including counseling, paid labor settings, and education. We also know little about these processes with respect to non-student populations. More research must be conducted in applied settings and contexts. In particular, a great void in the stereotyping literature exists regarding the relationship between social-ecological contexts and generation and maintenance of stereotypes. As researchers move out of the laboratories and into work, school, church, and other community contexts, the knowledge of conscious and unconscious stereotyping processes, tendencies, contents, and their effects on self- and other perceptions will be greatly enhanced.

CONCLUSION

Ethnic group stereotypes have powerful implications for Chicanas/os' self-identity and, consequently, for their mental health and for counselors' perceptions of these clients, with consequences for counseling effectiveness. Counselors' honest examination of their own stereotypes will facilitate their understanding of how stereotypes may affect Chicana/o clients' feelings about themselves, their group, and their behavior. However, this examination, even when coupled with cultural awareness and good intentions, is not enough to prevent stereotype-consistent perception. Counselors must also practice stereotype-inconsistent perception of Chicanas/os. Stereotyping is a habit, which is usually unconscious (Devine, 1989). Like all people, counselors are socialized with stereotypes to the extent that they become a part of their automatic, unconscious thought (Devine, 1989). For the habit to be broken, counselors must practice having stereotype-inconsistent thoughts and rejecting stereotype-consistent thoughts and perceptions. Only then can they form a new habit of consciously seeing and understanding clients through nonracist, nonethnocentric eyes. With enough practice, this new, nonracist habit will become automatic (Devine, 1989). At the same time, however, counselors must be aware of the sociopolitical, institutional, and structural forces that generate and maintain stereotypes. Chicana/o clients must be able to count on counselors to have a level of awareness about these issues, which

they have had neither the opportunity nor luxury to think about but which affect their everyday social realities. In that sense, counseling and psychotherapy may be seen as liberation (Ivey, 1995).

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