Chapter 5
Growing Up Between Two Cultures: Young Chinese Americans in New York City

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Abstract This chapter discusses selected themes in the bicultural lives of predominantly working- and lower middle-class Chinese Americans coming of age in New York City, the largest "Chinese city" outside Asia. Findings are partially based on a series of autobiographical essays by, and interviews with, first- and second-generation immigrants. Their self-conceptions and life stories reflect the influence of competing Chinese and American visions of the good life, family relationships, child-rearing strategies, the importance of filial piety (*xiao shun*), gender-based ideologies and body images, and the nature of education. Many of the adolescents and young adults have had to deal with immigration-related challenges such as family separation due to migration, low family incomes, encountering racial-ethnic prejudice and discrimination, and cultural differences between parents and children. The chapter also includes a brief discussion of culturally appropriate mental health services for the Chinese-American community.

Keywords New York Chinatowns · Chinese American adolescents · Autobiographical essays · Cultural childrearing styles · Coping with immigration · Gender roles · Educational achievement · Mental health services · Satellite children

This chapter considers how New York City's Chinese American adolescents and young adults understand their lives and identities in the context of their immigrant families, East Asian and non-Asian friends and peers, schools, colleges, and places of work. Given their bicultural backgrounds, these young people are, to varying extents, influenced by two contrasting cultural approaches to childrearing. These

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reflect competing Chinese and American visions of the good life, its vicissitudes, its recipes for bringing up children, and a variety of prototypical challenges in those children's lives. The interplay between these cultural approaches to childrearing, together with the demands of immigrant life, are of great importance for the life paths and identities of Chinese Americans who may have grown up overseas (first generation immigrants) or in New York (second generation immigrants). To better understand their life paths, the chapter includes discussions of Chinese immigration to New York City; parents' involvement in endless work; satellite children who were born in New York but spent the initial years of their lives with relatives in China; gender roles and gender differences; negative body images; the students' exposure to racial prejudice, discrimination, and violence; and their educational goals and achievements. This is followed by a brief discussion of efforts by mental health experts and community organizations to help New York's Chinese families prosper psychologically and emotionally.

The chapter is partially based on 82 autobiographical essays by, and 72 interviews with, Chinese American adolescents and young adults (Ho & Gielen, 2016). They as well as related research by authors such as Sung (1987) have been used to identify some major preoccupations and themes in the lives of the writers and interviewees. In addition, they provide substantial information about their family backgrounds. A considerable percentage of the respondents' parents and grandparents originally came from rural areas and towns situated in China's southern and coastal regions. Many of them speak little English, have at best a middle school education, and work relentlessly so that their families can survive economically. They fervently hope that their children will succeed educationally, so they can enjoy easier lives than their own ones have been. For such parents, the Big Apple continues its traditional role as the foremost North American entrance place for low-income immigrants who hope their children will succeed in the New World. In addition, the parents include educated and financially better-off professionals, many of whose children attend selective high schools and colleges. Here we pay special attention to working-class and lower middle-class families and their children, including recent immigrants from the Min River Delta of Fujian Province, because less has been written about them than about the children of educated middle-class parents and professionals (Zhao, 2010). Moreover, economic differences between Asian Americans have been increasing considerably in recent decades (Frey, 2018). The Chinese community in New York City includes a greater number of recently arrived, Chinese-only-speaking working-class immigrants than can be found anywhere else in the Western hemisphere. Many of them reside in ethnic enclaves although their middle-class peers are increasingly moving to the city's more multicultural neighborhoods and suburbs. To better understand the context of their lives, we begin by discussing the history and broad contours of Chinese immigrant life in the city.

The Rise of Chinatowns in New York City

A brief overview of the historical developments of Chinatowns in New York City will provide a more comprehensive context for how youth navigate and adapt to their surroundings. The key areas of discussion will focus on the immigration patterns that created Chinatowns, the demographics, family characteristics, predominant language groups and geographic origins of New York's Chinese immigrants, and the creation and rapid expansion of new Chinatowns that occurred after the United States Government passed a revolutionary new immigration law in 1965. In addition, a brief discussion of working conditions and illegal activities in Manhattan Chinatown will be provided.

Migration Patterns and the Expansion and Composition of New York's Chinatowns

The systematic migration of predominantly male Chinese workers from China to the United States and Canada began around 1850, when news about the California Gold Rush reached a country that had been weakened by steep population increases, extensive poverty, the two Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860) between Great Britain and China, and the bloody Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864). Arriving by ship on the West Coast, the Chinese laborers hoped to grow wealthy on "Golden Mountain" and return to China with plenty of money in their pockets. However, only some of them succeeded in realizing their plans. Others became agricultural workers or accepted dangerous and underpaid jobs while helping to build the first transcontinental railway.

When in the 1870s an economic crisis hit the United States, extensive anti-Chinese riots broke out which led to the "Chinese Exclusion Act" (in force in various forms between 1882 and 1943). Fearing for their lives, some of the Chinese laborers escaped to places on the East Coast such as New York City, the Vancouver area in western Canada, and sometimes to Mexico. Following the earlier birth of San Francisco's pioneering Chinatown, in the 1870s a small Chinatown began to emerge in Manhattan around southern Mott Street (Hall, 1998; Zhou, 1992). There, the Chinese laborers arriving from the West Coast joined a few dockworkers, sailors, cooks, and stewards, some of whom had escaped from ships that brought tea, porcelain, silk, and other produce from China. The economic basis of this largely male society included hand laundries, shops, restaurants, boarding houses, peddling wares in the streets, and an occasional brothel. By the year 1920, New York City's Chinese population included 5240 males and 553 females, for a total of 5793 persons (Wong, 1985).

Over the next 30 years, Chinatown slowly expanded into a ten-block area south of Canal Street. In 1945, the country had begun to allow some wives of Chinese-American servicemen to join their husbands, and for these and other reasons the

lopsided gender ratio in New York and elsewhere began to improve. By 1950, 18,404 Chinese were living in this inward-looking and impoverished ethnic enclave as well as elsewhere in the city. The most dramatic demographic changes, however, occurred after the passing of the country's Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments (also called the Hart-Celler Act) in 1965. Because Chinese and other Asian immigrants were now welcomed, Manhattan's Chinatown began to expand rapidly. With the arrival of more and more women, advanced students, refugees, farmers, and professionals from Hong Kong, Vietnam, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and after 1979 from PR China, new Chinatowns began to emerge in Queens and Brooklyn. The well-educated Mandarin- and Taiwanese-speaking, middle-class Taiwanese, for instance, felt little kinship with the Taishanese- and Cantonese-speaking working-class inhabitants of Manhattan Chinatown (Chen, 1992; Kwong, 1996; Ng, 1998), and so they began to settle in "Little Asia." Some of them do not even consider themselves to be Chinese. Little Asia refers to the Flushing area in Queens where many Chinese, Koreans, Indians, Bangladeshis and other Asian immigrants reside. During the 1980s–1990s, numerous middle-class immigrants arrived from Hong Kong because they feared the possible economic and political consequences of that city's return to the Chinese motherland in 1997. A number of families resided in Little Asia or Manhattan, while others returned to Hong Kong after a few years (Sussman, 2011). By 2019, at least 240,000 Chinese of diverse geographic and social-class backgrounds lived in Queens, including Flushing, Elmhurst, Corona and some of the eastern areas. Often speaking both Mandarin and English, many of them work either in Manhattan or locally as professionals. In addition, wealthy overseas Chinese have been investing in New York's real estate, trading companies, and financial institutions to safeguard their money. They frequently send their children to North American educational institutions. The children, in turn, often preferred their new life and became immigrants, many of whom ended up in well-to-do neighborhoods.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, many rural and small town inhabitants of the Min River Delta in Fujian Province began to set their sights on New York City. In Manhattan, they mostly settled in the East Broadway and Eldridge Street areas, which prior to their arrival had been mostly populated by persons of Jewish, European, and Hispanic descent. By 2019, the Fuzhounese (also called Fujianese) formed the single largest, linguistically-geographically distinctive group of Chinese immigrants in the city, with former residents of Changle County being especially prominent (Hymowitz, 2014). Unable or unwilling to pay the high rents of Manhattan Chinatown, many moved to much less expensive housing such as Sunset Park around Eighth Avenue in Brooklyn (Guest, 2011). By 2013, this rapidly evolving "Brooklyn Chinatown" included already more inhabitants than the Cantonese-speaking "Old Manhattan Chinatown" and the Fuzhou-Dialect-speaking "New Manhattan Chinatown" taken together (Hum, 2014). Additional Chinatowns can be found in Brooklyn's semi-suburban, multiethnic areas such as Bensonhurst and Sheepshead Bay. Although estimates differ, it is likely that in 2019, at least 220,000 persons of Chinese descent lived in Brooklyn's larger and smaller Chinatowns (see also Hum, 2014).

By the 1980s, New York City had already grown into the largest Chinese immigrant city outside Asia. In 2019, an estimated 650,000–700,000 persons of Chinese descent resided both in the city's nine big and small Chinatowns and in a broad range of multiethnic neighborhoods. The authors' estimate includes multiracial and Taiwanese persons, but may underestimate those who successfully evaded the census takers (Zhao, 2010). The Asian American Federation (2019a, b), in turn, lists 564,636 persons for 2015, plus 10,847 Taiwanese. However, the estimate does not sufficiently take into account the numerous undocumented persons, those who were physically inaccessible for the census takers, and those who were never at home during the day (Chin, 1999; Yoshikawa, 2011; see also below). Seventy percent of the Chinese American population in 2015 were foreign-born, and altogether they made up about 46% of the city's Asian Americans. Another estimated 230,000 persons of Chinese descent live in the adjacent suburban areas that belong to the Greater New York Metropolitan Area. Moreover, numerous Chinese university students from overseas attend the city's educational institutions such as New York University and Columbia University, but they are not considered here.

The city's Chinese Americans are well represented at both the lower and higher ends of the educational and socioeconomic spectra. In 2015, 22% of all Chinese adults in the city had less than a ninth-grade education, whereas 33% had a bachelor's degree or higher. 23.3% of their children experienced poverty (Asian American Federation, 2019a, b). Sixty-one percent reported limited if any proficiency in English, with the older and poorer residents often being unable to make themselves understood in English.

Outsiders rarely realize just how heterogeneous the city's Chinese communities really are. Its members may speak Taishanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Eastern Min (Fuzhou dialect), Taiwanese, Hakka dialect, Shanghainese, and other highly distinct "dialects" (their spoken versions are more like semi-independent languages), alongside or instead of English. Sub-ethnic tensions, such as those between Cantonese speakers and Eastern Min speakers, are by no means absent. Many immigrants are members of clans and geographically based associations and may either support, oppose or ignore China's present political system. They differ widely in social class, relate in very different ways to their American environment, may have Caucasian spouses or Caucasian adoptive parents, may be barely literate or alternatively have received a doctoral degree from a major university, hold different citizen status even within the same family, and perhaps left China as late as their adulthood years while others have never even visited that country. Having grown up in such diverse ways, they are nevertheless more likely than many other ethnic groups to get involved in entrepreneurial or professional activities, form ethnic-regional social organizations, stay married, and push their children to be educationally successful and upwardly mobile (Hymowitz, 2014; Zhou, 2013).

Working Conditions and Illegal Activities in Chinatown

The Chinatowns of New York are also witnessing many illegal activities. Thus, a considerable number of workers work off the books, are not paid legally required minimum wages by their co-ethnic bosses, and form part of an underground economy (Kwong, 1996). Numerous Fuzhounese as well as other Chinese from places such as Malaysia are smuggled into the country for very high fees by so-called snakeheads (Keefe, 2010), or else they overstay their visitor's visa indefinitely. Not surprisingly, they try to hide from authorities and their true numbers are unknown although they are generally considered to be very high (Chin, 1996, 1999; Finckenauer, 2007; Yoshikawa, 2011). Others are encouraged by certain lawyers to lie to immigration officials in order to be granted political asylum (Semple, Goldstein, & Singer, 2014). Visiting illegal gambling places or houses of prostitution are popular activities for some residents of Chinatown while on Canal Street, immigrants from Wenzhou (Zhejiang Province) and elsewhere are selling fake Rolex watches and Gucci bags that were illegally imported from places such as Hong Kong (Robbins, 2018). In other ways, however, today's Chinatowns are mostly safe places, violent street crime is uncommon, and quite a few of the persons breaking the law are otherwise ordinary residents.

Gang Memberships

From the early 1970s to the mid-1990s, several violent youth gangs such as the Ghost Shadows, the Flying Dragons, and the Vietnamese Born to Kill, fought among each other especially in the Manhattan and Queens Chinatowns. Numerous members were disoriented recent immigrants from places such as Hong Kong, and in their middle to late teenage years. Operating under the control of triads and rival merchants organizations, such as the Hip Sing Tong and the On Leong Tong, they served as enforcers for criminal organizations that controlled the extortion of business owners, gambling activities, heroin trafficking, and places of prostitution (Chin, 1996). Another gang, the Fuk Ching emerged during the mid-1980s (Finckenauer, 2007). It includes Fuzhounese teenagers and young men who have been involved in human smuggling activities. However, while some youth gangs and other law-breaking groups remain active in today's Chinatowns, they are less numerous and far less likely to be involved in the killing of rival gang members when compared to the more violent period between 1975 and 1995. Still, some Chinese immigrant parents fear that their restless son might drop out of his racially divided high school, get involved in a youth gang, join their criminal activities, bring shame upon the family, and thereby nullify his parents' many sacrifices and hopes for him.

Growing Up in a Bicultural World

New York City's Chinese American families live in a demanding bicultural world. The Chinese-only speakers among them are embedded in a mostly Chinese sociocultural milieu, but nevertheless must adapt to the city's physical, economic, and legal conditions as well as their more Americanized children. In contrast to them, second generation immigrants speaking fluent English often consider themselves to be more American than Chinese. Their parents and grandparents mostly do not. Such identity differences are of great importance because they are involving two contrasting though changing cultural visions that are not easy to reconcile. Table 5.1 depicts some of these contrasting visions, which have been partially derived from large-scale research conducted by Hofstede (2018), Bond (see Hofstede & Minkov, 2010), and Gelfand (2018) on normative differences between countries and societies. Given ongoing cultural changes such as the increasing individualization occurring in Chinese society, the differences between the two countries have increased in complexity and sometimes narrowed, but they have not disappeared.

Table 5.1 Cultural value and religious differences between China and USA

Value dimensions and attitudes toward religion	China	USA
Collectivism vs. individualism (G. Hofstede)	China's collectivistic society favors tightly knit social frameworks, clear rules, social coordination; individuals should subordinate their desires for the common good; the focus should be on "we" rather than the "I"	American society emphasizes individual responsibilities and rights; the focus is on the "I"
Tight vs. loose culture (M. Gelfand)	Its rather tight culture emphasizes powerful social norms and individuals' self-control, but is displaying limited openness	Its loose culture allows for a considerable range of permissible behaviors, but this is also leading to high rates of deviant behaviors
Long-term v. short-term normative orientation (Based on G. Hofstede's interpretation of M. H. Bond's work)	Long-term and pragmatic orientation emphasizes perseverance, common sense, situational approaches to the validity of norms, thrift, educational efforts to prepare for the future	Short-term orientation that is more focused on the present, immediate gratification of needs, selling oneself and one's abilities, and a moralistic emphasis on good vs. evil
Emphasis on power distance and hierarchy (G. Hofstede)	Strong emphasis: Chinese society accepts hierarchical arrangements in which everybody is expected to find a place	Moderate emphasis: American society attempts (within limits) to equalize the distribution of power
Attitudes toward religion	Pragmatic, non-exclusive, may include polytheistic beliefs; many immigrants from PR China are non-religious; communist government is hostile towards religion	Monotheistic religions based on sacred scriptures remain of importance to many families and their conception of ultimate truth

Culture

Chinese society has for many centuries been more collectivistic in nature than American society, which instead has favored a pronounced and intensifying individualism. Collectivistic societies emphasize that individuals should be embedded in social groups, so families attempt to create a "we-identity" rather than an "I-identity" (Bond, 1991). As one of the consequences, Chinese (Xie, 2013) and Chinese American couples have low divorce rates: the overall divorce rate for Chinese Americans is 11% (Pew Research Center, 2017). Because Chinese working-class couples are not necessarily looking for soulmates, they may be willing to enter marriages for mostly practical reasons, as long as the two partners appear to be reasonably compatible (Hung, 2015). In comparison, American society encourages its members to pursue their own dreams, to hold onto their own convictions, and to marry somebody they truly love. Moreover, Chinese society is fairly "tight" rather than "loose" in nature (i.e., it endorses relatively strict social norms together with major sanctions when these norms are violated) (Gelfand, 2018).

Societal Structure

Chinese society has traditionally accepted major power differences between the wealthy and the poor, educated elites and illiterate peasants, teachers and students, parents and children. Although Chairman Mao Zedong attempted to disrupt violently some of these hierarchies in the 1960s and 1970s, many of his efforts were reversed by his successors (Mühlhahn, 2019). In contrast, the American Constitution emphasizes that we are all born equal. Although American society has lived up to this moral claim only in very partial though evolving ways, many Americans attempt to strive for greater equality. This emphasis on equality has influenced present-day relations between parents and their adolescent children to a considerable extent.

Cultural Values

Parents and immigrants arriving in New York during their later teenage years or as adults are likely to be guided by the Chinese values, norms, and customs they had grown up with, and these will at times differ from the ones prevailing in present-day China. In contrast, English-speaking, educated and 1.5 or second generation immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong tend to be more influenced by American-Anglo-Saxon values, social norms, and worldviews (Chen, 1992; Jia, 2004). The two value systems are also helping to shape the childrearing practices of Chinese American parents together with the hybrid identities of their children. Table 5.2 compares, in

Table 5.2 Two cultural approaches to childrearing

Selected aspects of childrearing	Traditional Chinese immigrant culture	American mainstream culture
Parental authority and approach to childrearing; importance of family needs	Emphasis on authority of elders, parents; high control of children; less individual privacy; the needs of the family should take priority over individual needs	Considerable emphasis on children's autonomy; more individual privacy; individual needs may take priority over family needs
Filial piety (*xiao shun*)	Confucian emphasis on child's respect, gratitude, and caring for parents as a central moral virtue	Less emphasis on child's obligations and obedience toward parents
Concern for protecting the reputation of self (*mian zi*) and family	Strong cultural emphasis on protecting one's own face and that of the family	Moderate concern for reputation of self and family
Cultural respect for teachers	Pronounced	Uneven
Gender differences	Sons traditionally favored but clear trend toward supporting and pursuing greater gender equality especially among working mothers	Gender equality increasingly emphasized and becoming more explicit
Emotional style and demonstration of affection	Restrained emotional style, many children are not hugged; parental love expressed through parental sacrifices and dedication	Overt displays of affection; parents should consistently express love for their child
Physical punishment of younger children	Common in traditional childrearing	Rather common but discouraged by "childrearing experts"
Emphasis on children's self-esteem and self-reflexivity	Children's self-esteem should be balanced by a realistic assessment of one's abilities; self-reflexivity and self-criticism are encouraged	Parents and teachers should consistently reinforce children's self-esteem rather than encouraging self-criticism
Modesty vs. aelf-assertiveness	Modesty and humility valued; one's achievements should speak for themselves or else be mentioned indirectly	Emphasis on self-assertiveness and individual accomplishments
Individual effort and hard work	Primary emphasis	Moderate emphasis
Self-control and long-term orientation	Strong emphasis on self-control in the service of long-term and moral goals	Moderate emphasis on both since children should also have fun
Emphasis on nemorization in education and while teaching one's child	Memorization necessary to learn Chinese characters and two highly diverse languages	Deemphasized and believed to undermine children's creativity
Emphasis on creativity	Moderate; hard work more important than creativity and innate talent	High

(continued)

Table 5.2 (continued)

Selected aspects of childrearing	Traditional Chinese immigrant culture	American mainstream culture
Should boys become assertive and aggressive if they are attacked or criticized unfairly?	Mostly not	Mostly yes: boys should be assertive rather than "cowardly"
Early dating and expression of sexual impulses	Early dating of girls considered shameful or at least dubious; dating distracts teenagers from pursuing more important educational and long-term goals	Dating by teenage girls considered acceptable; teenage boys may brag about sexual conquests; sexualized peer group cultures common in high schools
Student involvement in sports	Of limited importance since getting top grades in school is more emphasized and admired	Successful football and basketball players are frequently admired while "nerds" are devalued by peers

ideal-typical form, Chinese and mainstream American approaches to raising one's children.

Religion

Traditionally, the Chinese have tended to display pragmatic and nonexclusive attitudes toward religion, while endorsing the veneration of their ancestors. At the same time, China's Communist government has opposed religious practices and beliefs. In a nationwide survey of Asian Americans in the U.S., 26% of all Chinese Americans indicated that they were religiously unaffiliated, 42% said they were Christians, and 14% had a Buddhist identity (Pew Research Center, 2012). For a Christian working-class subgroup of Chinese immigrants in New York, attending church has been serving as a kind of "surrogate family" (Cao, 2005), and a considerable number of Chinese American college students have been joining Christian organizations as well (Hall, 2006). In addition, many of their grandmothers and elders pray in Buddhist, Daoist and Christian places of worship for the success of their grandchildren, children, and other family members (Guest, 2003). Although the majority of our respondents indicated that they were not religious, one can find in today's New York City a broad range of religious and spiritual convictions. They include various Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, and Chinese Folk Religion traditions as well as the spiritual Falun Dafa ("Dharma Wheel Practice") organization, which moved to the city after the Chinese Government outlawed the group in 1999. At the same time, church attendance has declined considerably among younger people in the United States (Jones, 2019).

Familial Structure

Although traditional Chinese culture originally favored a patrilineal and patrilocal kinship system, most Chinese families in New York endorse a neolocal-nuclear system (Wong, 1985). This means that upon marriage, husband and wife move to a new household, which tends to strengthen the bond between them. Moreover, sustained efforts have been underway both in China and elsewhere to increase the status of daughters. Given the prevailing very low birthrates in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China, most families there have only 1–2 children, who may or may not include a son. Such situations have been undermining the traditional Confucian preference for sons. Harrell and Santos (2017) and Xie (2013), however, argue that despite such cultural changes, strong gender and generational hierarchies persist in today's Chinese societies. Similarly, several of our female interviewees lamented that their Chinese families continue to display the traditional preference for sons (Ho & Gielen, 2016). They were well aware that gender equality has been increasingly emphasized in American families and the wider world of academia, work, and public media.

Family Values

Traditional Chinese families emphasize that their children should show proper behavior from early on in life, and they are encouraged to exert self-control in the service of familial norms. They are also brought up to display perseverance in the service of long-term goals such as educational and economic advancement, together with pragmatic adaptation to shifting situations (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Parents frequently lead thrifty lives and make considerable sacrifices so that their children will have it better than they themselves. By way of contrast, American society—and in particular its multicultural New York City variety—tolerates a much broader range of lifestyles by encouraging individuals to express themselves in unique ways. Thus, American norms and convictions allow for a greater emphasis on the present, having fun, emphasizing one's abilities and feelings, yet they also favor evaluating personal and public situations in self-chosen moral terms.

As seen in Table 5.2, traditional forms of Chinese immigrant culture emphasize the authority of parents, elders, and teachers who are supposed to be strict and to instruct and control children, grandchildren and students. The children, in turn, are expected to show respect and gratitude toward their parents and to take care of them in later life in line with the traditional Confucian virtue of filial piety (*xiao shun*). The needs of the overall family are expected to take priority over the individual needs of the parents and the children. Children are also taught that what "happens in the family, stays in the family." They are expected to protect both the reputation of their family as well as their own "face" (*mian zi*). By way of comparison, American mainstream culture encourages parents to grant greater autonomy to their

children while considering their needs, preferences, and talents. Some American adolescents lack respect for their teachers while others feel free to discuss various family matters with non-family members.

Parenting

Mainstream American thinking about how best to bring up children is reflected in popular American guides for childrearing (e.g., Faber & Mazlish, 2006). They tend to underline that parents should openly express their love for their children, build up their children's self-esteem, and criticize or punish them only occasionally. The children may be encouraged to mention individual accomplishments in their interactions with others. Mainstream American parents like to believe that in addition to spending some time on their homework, their children are also entitled to enjoy themselves. Similarly, the parents aim to reinforce their children's creativity and unique talents. Thus, they place less emphasis on "mindless" memorization, when compared to Chinese immigrant parents and Chinese teachers in tutorial and Chinese culture schools. Rote learning and sustained effort are required when some immigrant children are taught to remember thousands of Chinese characters in order to understand written Chinese. Quite a few of our respondents, however, disliked the emphasis on memorization and strict discipline in these weekend schools, and so they dropped out of them. While they spoke in Chinese to their parents and grandparents, most second-generation adolescents and young adults could read few if any Chinese characters (Ho & Gielen, 2016).

Parent-Child Relationships

Chinese culture promotes a restrained emotional style in parent-child relationships (Camras, Bakeman, Chen, Norris, & Cain, 2006). For instance, several immigrant adolescents in our sample complained that their parents did not hug them or verbalize their love for them. Many of them had been physically punished in their earlier years. Moreover, the parents often feel that their children's sense of self-esteem should be counter-balanced by expressions and feelings of modesty about their achievements (Du, 2010). They should be able to assess their strengths and limitations in a realistic manner. Such a sense of "realistic humility" and sustained efforts at "self-cultivation" help to restrain excessive displays of assertiveness, but they also contribute to the reputation of Chinese children and adults among their non-Asian peers that they are too reticent, modest, quiet, and unassertive (Zhang, 2010). However, in current Chinese middle-class immigrant families in the U.S., many adolescents favor moderate and flexible rather than high degrees of parental control and strictness (Russell, Crockett, & Chao, 2010). Moreover, Chinese working-class

parents often know too little about the American educational worlds of their adolescent children to provide them with detailed guidance.

Education

Chinese children are frequently told that they should focus above all on education, while striving relentlessly so that they will have a chance at entering a prestigious university. To achieve this goal, many Chinese parents enroll their children in tutorial schools, while emphasizing the priority of homework over watching TV, playing video games, relaxing, and other distractions. Tutorial schools play a significant role in the Chinatowns and are one important reason why many Chinese students do quite well in the educational realm (Zhou, 2013). Data indicate that Asian American high school and college students do study harder than all other groups (University of California – San Diego, 2011). However, a good many Fuzhounese parents in the restaurant industry downplay the importance of education for their children because it does not ensure an immediate income (Hung, 2015).

Child Characteristics

Chinese immigrant parents often tell their sons and daughters that physical aggression and excessive assertiveness are inappropriate. If attacked, children should "swallow their anger" and report the attack to their teachers or other authority figures rather than taking things into their own hands. In contrast, American peer group culture and quite a few parents believe that "real" boys should fight back verbally and if necessary physically, should they be attacked. In addition, dating between teenage girls and teenage boys is a common practice in American high schools, whereas Chinese immigrant parents often consider it dubious or shameful if their daughters date that "early." Instead, they tell them that dating interferes with a steady emphasis on educational achievement, which should be of paramount importance to them (Kim & Ward, 2007). While Chinese students tend to be more sexually conservative than many of their non-Asian counterparts, a good number of Chinese teenage girls do date secretly and hide it from their families (Kao & Martyn, 2014). Still, Chinese American women are much less likely to give birth out of wedlock (11% of all births in the year 2010 when compared to 37% for all other racial-ethnic groups) (Pew Research Center, 2013). Chinese parents also downplay the importance of sports activities in their children's lives, whereas such activities play an important role in the lives of many African American, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic Caucasian high school and college students. Consequently, Chinese high school boys may be under peer pressure to develop a masculine identity based on participation in sports and other nonacademic activities (Qin, 2009).

The Impact of Living in an Immigrant Family: Some Examples

To state that somebody grows up in the Big Apple as a person with a Chinese background suggests varying degrees of exposure to the two aforementioned cultural frameworks and forms of childrearing. Typically, they coexist and interact with a broad range of evolving economic conditions and interpersonal situations that immigrant students encounter as they grow up. Together, the students' diverse immigration histories, the predominant economic, educational, and family situations surrounding them, the students' exposure to Chinese and non-Chinese friends and peers, and the two cultural frameworks and forms of childrearing shape the students' complex, evolving, hybrid, and at times contradictory identities and behavior patterns. As an initial example, a brief summary of an interview with a 21-year-old accounting student is provided.

Being Not Fully Chinese but American, I Am Entitled to My Own Opinions: An Interview with Cornelia Yao (Pseudonym)

Growing up first in Chicago Chinatown and subsequently in New York City, Cornelia heard from her immigrant parents about their previous lives in the Taishan region of South China and later on in Hong Kong. Though Cornelia sees herself as an atheist, her family's religious views include Daoism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Her family is not that strict and traditional, and unlike quite a few of her peers, she has never felt the pressure of being expected to only get A's in school. Cornelia feels happy in the United States, and she believes that most of her family members are too. Her Chinese-speaking mother works as a cook in a Chinese restaurant, and her bilingual dad co-owns a metal business with his brother. However, 2 years ago Cornelia's parents got divorced. She admires her mother greatly and also speaks about the love she has for her father, although he does not appear to reciprocate her feelings. She also discusses anger issues that run on her father's side of the family and the abuse in Chinese families that many are not willing to talk about. Though hidden well, Cornelia admits her aunt has been physically abused, while her mother was abused emotionally.

Having attended Madison High School in Brooklyn around 2004, she deplores the violence she saw there and the lack of safety she felt on her way to school. Though she never did experience a physical attack by a bully, she also describes how in middle and high school some of the Chinese boys would get beaten up, held down with a knife or even robbed. Cornelia believes being a victim of such bullying could largely be attributed to the fact they were Chinese, yet she refuses to judge others based on their ethnicity or nationality. Instead, she focuses on the way the bullies were brought up. Moreover, she worries about her brother who was

negatively influenced by some of his peers, dropped out of Madison High, and for a while joined a Fuzhounese (Fujianese) group that sold drugs.

Cornelia's three best friends in high school were Chinese, shared the same values, and did not follow the prevailing trends at their school. Thus, Cornelia carefully avoided its sex culture as well as smoking and fighting. Now a college student, she spends most of her days hanging out with her Irish boyfriend, friends and family. Nowadays, Cornelia's boyfriend is her biggest support and her best friend. The two of them have been dating for 2 years and Cornelia hopes to marry him. Both of them still attend college, and while her boyfriend is majoring in sociology, Cornelia hopes to become a registered CPA soon. She dreams of being married at age 24 and having her first child by the time she is 25. However, she is most certain that no matter what path she decides to pursue, she will always look up to her amazing mother, for whom she will always be there.

As holds true for our other interviewees, Cornelia's life reflects complex interactions between individual tendencies, the psychosocial impact of her family, her family's economic circumstances, the conditions at her high school, and an array of Chinese and non-Chinese sociocultural influences. Although she is a happy person, she comes from a broken home. Her brother attended the same troubled high school as she did, yet unlike her he dropped out and joined a drug-dealing gang. This suggests that male and female siblings may behave in very different ways in spite of similar family situations. Her brother left school at least in part because several of his Chinese peers had been demeaned and beaten up by non-Chinese classmates. While Cornelia's parents are working class, she together with quite a few of her Chinese peers has been pursuing an accounting career that will support her entry into the middle class. Her best friends in high school were largely Chinese, but at the same time she hopes to marry her Irish boyfriend whose family she clearly appreciates. Altogether, she has been able to develop an integrated bicultural identity (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006). An anxious person, she accomplished this in spite of the racially motivated and scary tensions at her former high school and its neighborhood.

By way of contrast to her positive outlook on life, one may point to Clarence (Pseudonym), a troubled young boy whose Fuzhounese parents had originally been brought into the country by snakeheads. Having to work endless hours in order to pay back the ensuing loans as well as employment problems, they were forced to send the unhappy boy as a satellite child to China for 5 years. Unlike his brother who grew up in New York, he never became attached to his parents but upon his return began to seriously act out. He was, however, to some degree receptive to guidance from his older sister, as she told us in her interview.

Another and more cheerful example concerns Jennifer, who gladdened her originally Taishanese working-class parents when she became the first person in her family to graduate from a MA program. Or perhaps your Chinese family has been living a comfortable middle-class life in Queens and you grow up as their promising only son – but then your upset parents learn accidentally that you are gay, and therefore unlikely to present them with grandchildren. How different such a situation is from that of Julia, an adopted Chinese girl who feels quite at ease when she is

joining her fellow Jews in the synagogue of her adoptive parents. She is one of the more than 10,000 girls from China who have been adopted by mostly White and Jewish New Yorkers and tend to reside in places such as Manhattan's Upper Westside (Bowen, 2014). Or else we may remember the 2002 Chinese valedictorian from the infamous but now closed Lafayette High School in Brooklyn, who was beaten unconscious by a non-Asian peer. He and his friends cursed Chinese people while attacking him. The valedictorian was one of quite a few Chinese male and sometimes female immigrant students who over the years were attacked at "Horror High" and subsequently required hospitalization (Kolben, 2003; Rong, 2003). As these examples demonstrate, Chinese American lives can be quite diverse. Nevertheless, there exist certain situations that many of the immigrant youths are likely to encounter.

Five Situations Shaping the Destinies and Identities of Chinese American Children and Youths

Given the broad range of identities among New York's Chinese immigrant children and youths, one may ask what situations and factors are most likely to influence their self-conceptions, behavior patterns, and destinies. In the following, we discuss the impact of five situations and factors that appeared in various autobiographical essays and interviews. Many writers and interviewees discussed the impact of their family's specific immigration situation on their lives, the influence of gender roles on their self-conceptions, their exposure to racial prejudice and discrimination, and their efforts to succeed academically. Some others reflected on the lives of satellite children. While discussing these situations, the students' interpretations would typically reflect their simultaneous exposure to Chinese family life and to mainstream American practices and ideas they had encountered in school, among their peers, and elsewhere.

Theme 1: The Impact of Immigration Status

Many of the writers and interviewees were strongly influenced by the fact that they had been born overseas, how old they were when they arrived in the United States, and the circumstances that brought them as first and 1.5 generation children to New York. Not rarely, serial migration shaped their early lives in which one family member – often the father – arrived first in New York. After he had found a job and established himself financially, and depending on the family's immigration status, mother and children would follow suit in one of the following years. In some other cases, the transnational father would travel regularly between countries and see his children only occasionally. This often meant that they spoke little or no English

upon arrival while regarding dad as a sort of semi-stranger known to them mostly via video chats. In this context, the term "1.5 generation" refers to children who are born overseas and arrive in the new country prior to their early teenage years.

Research studies by Jia (2004) and others have found that once they attend school, most of these children switch to English as their preferred language while speaking less than perfect Chinese at home with their parents and other relatives. Because many of them speak their parents' Chinese dialect "like a 7-year-old" and cannot read Chinese, they experience problems when attempting to explain their inner emotions and preoccupations to them. Similar to second generation immigrants, such as Cornelia, they tend to look at themselves as more American than Chinese, may favor a mixture of Chinese and non-Chinese school friends and dates, and watch American mass media and movies rather than soap operas, *kung fu* movies, and news originating in Hong Kong, China or Taiwan. Only rarely can or do they read the Chinese-language newspapers preferred by their parents. In contrast, those immigrating in their middle teenage years or later tend to favor and be more fluent in the Chinese language and mostly embrace a Chinese identity. High discrepancies in parent-child acculturation and in American orientation, however, are related to adolescents' depressive symptoms and more contact with deviant peers (Ho, 2014).

Theme 2: Satellite Children

A considerable number of children especially in the Fuzhounese (Fujianese) community begin their lives as satellite babies and children. Born in New York to poor immigrant parents fighting for economic survival, such children are American citizens given their place of birth, although most of their parents are not (Yoshikawa, 2011). Many parents have been smuggled into the U. S. by snakeheads and need to pay off extensive debts afterwards. Forced to work numerous hours, they may send their baby back to their Chinese hometown a few months after the baby's birth. The baby will be brought up by grandparents, aunts, or other relatives until an approximate age of 4–6 years of age and then returned to New York. There the Chinese-speaking child enters school in a process of reverse migration (Kwong, 2017).

Although we lack systematic longitudinal data on such children, preliminary studies and autobiographical statements suggest that they may find it difficult to replace their original attachments – to their China-based grandmothers or aunts – with new attachments to their own parents, who are experienced as scary semi-strangers (Bohr, Liu, Chen, & Wang, 2018; Bohr & Tse, 2009; Whitfield, 2014). Feeling disconnected, they may be confused and insecure, have a low frustration threshold, turn rebellious and act out, hesitate to confide their fears to their busy parents, and ask themselves whether their parents truly love them since after all they had sent them overseas (Tan, 2015). Furthermore, many of these parents continue to work very long hours and are only partially available to their attention- and love-starved children.

Theme 3: The Impact of Gender Roles and Identities

Gender plays a central role in Chinese American families, as indicated especially by our female respondents. Comparing themselves to their brothers, they describe a broad range of family situations. For instance, a traditional mother may tell her daughter that "education is of no use to you because you will be a housewife and mother later on," or else ask her to clean up the room of Elder Brother, or insist that she but not her brothers must learn how to cook. Some working-class daughters may also be encouraged to enter an economically advantageous marriage and do so in their early years (Hung, 2015).

Traditionally, daughters were trained to become dutiful and devoted spouses as well as exemplary and self-sacrificing mothers. At the same time, Chinese female immigrant students tend to like school more, get better grades, do more homework, and are less likely to drop out than their male peers (Brandon, 1991; Qin, 2006a). Given this context, a number of other female and male interviewees told us that one or both of their parents are making genuine attempts to abandon traditional forms of gender discrimination. Specifically, embracing unequal conceptions of gender roles appears to be most common among members of the older working-class generation who came of age in rural areas, but less so among educated parents who grew up in big, globalized, relatively open and culturally changing cities such as Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shanghai or Taipei. Moreover, some poor immigrant mothers tell their daughters that they need to be educated and financially independent in case their future husband walks out on them (cf. Louie, 2004, p. 73). Still, girls are kept more at home, are more influenced by family norms, and are supervised more closely so that they will not "get into trouble" (e.g., get pregnant). Boys are granted more independence but sometimes begin to act out and/or develop problems in high school or college (Ho & Gielen, 2016). Parents, however, are reluctant to discuss sexual issues with their sons and daughters (Kim & Ward, 2007).

While Chinese American female adolescents are more likely to be rooted in their ethnic identity than their male peers (Qin, 2009), they also experience more feelings of social anxiety and depression (Ho & Gielen, 2016). In our study, female writers were considerably more likely than male writers and interviewees to mention serious doubts about their body image. For instance, several of them reported that in their earlier years they had wanted to be blond and light-skinned, while having round and blue eyes just like those of their Barbie dolls. In this context, it is interesting to note that skin-whitening creams and facial operations designed to make one's eyes look more striking and Caucasian are quite popular in East Asian countries such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea (Tan, 2012). In traditional China, having dark skin was associated with working in the fields, being poor, and having low status. By way of contrast, some male Chinese and Korean Americans complain that they would like to be taller and physically stronger. Many of them believe that non-Asians frequently see them as nerdy, quiet, submissive, socially awkward, small, skinny, and physically weak rather than as physically attractive, sporty and cool guys (Hwang, 2016; see also Chua & Fujino, 1999). Because of that, they may

find it difficult to secure dates with white girls who may perceive them as insufficiently masculine. Whereas 30–55% of all new marriages of second and especially third generation Chinese American and Korean American women have been with Caucasian men, Chinese and Korean American men are significantly less likely to be married to Caucasian women. Among Asian newlyweds in 2013, 37% of the women and 16% of the men married outside of their race (Wang, 2015). Moreover, most of our interviewees reported that their parents did not want them to bring home potential African American or Hispanic partners. Although some added to this observation that they themselves did not agree with their parents' racial-ethnic attitudes, intermarriage rates between Chinese and African Americans have traditionally been very low (Le, 2009).

Theme 4: The Impact of Racial Prejudice and Discrimination

Similar to several other studies (e.g., Qin, Han, & Chang, 2011), a considerable number of our interviewees and writers reported that they have experienced racial prejudice and discrimination. They were confronted with racial slurs, derogatory uses of Chinese mock-phrases, and gestures indicating slanted eyes. They also had to listen to stereotypical statements such as "you all look alike," "of course you are good in math," or "why do you have such strange eyes." A few of the male students were beaten by members of other ethnic groups who saw them as weak, nerdy or as "perpetual foreigners" based on their accent and/or appearance. In contrast, quite a few of the female teenagers report that non-Asian men addressed sexual remarks, gestures or invitations toward them, comments that they would only rarely hear in Chinese neighborhoods.

A broad range of studies (Benner et al., 2018) have demonstrated that exposure to racial/ethnic discrimination and prejudice tends to have negative effects on adolescents' mental health and well-being. The effects include internalizing symptoms such as feelings of depression, social anxieties, and lowered self-esteem as well as externalizing behaviors such as acting out, substance abuse, engaging in risky sexual behaviors, and dropping out of school (Benner et al., 2018). Internalizing symptoms are especially common among teenage girls while teenage boys are more likely to drop out of school and to act out.

Negative, racially inspired, and sometimes violent encounters are most likely to occur in poor, racially mixed neighborhoods and schools (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Not surprisingly, many Chinese-American students in such schools have negative perceptions of their school environment, do not trust their teachers and blame them for not protecting them, feel fearful, frustrated, and angry about being bullied, and dislike their non-Chinese peers. Many are convinced that neither the adults at home nor those in their school understand them (Zhou & Kim, 2003). In contrast, students attending more selective high schools are much less likely to report dangerous and racially charged encounters. The effects of negative encounters with non-Asian peers appear to be most detrimental to an adolescent's mental

health when (s)he is also experiencing serious strains within the family. Moreover, first generation adolescents living in a clearly Chinese environment are better able to cope with negative inter-racial encounters than psychologically more conflicted, second generation students (Zhang, Fang, Wu, & Wieczorek, 2013). Perhaps this is so because they are relying mostly on feedback from the Chinese community rather than believing that as Americans, they should be protected from such violations of cultural ideals and norms. However, New York in the 1980s–1990s was a more violent place both outside and inside the Chinatowns when compared to the decade lasting from 2010 to 2019.

Theme 5: Striving for Academic Excellence

Many Chinese and other Asian students should be, but are not always pleased with their excellent academic performance. For instance, in the school year 2013–2014, Asian students were highly over-represented at New York's free but extremely competitive magnet schools. Admission to these schools is entirely based on a student's performance on the Specialized High School Admission Test. At the famous Stuyvesant High School, 73% of all students were Asians although they made up only 16% of the city's public school population (NYC Department of Education, 2014). Among the Chinese students, about half grew up in poor or quite modest conditions (Qin, Rak, Rana, & Donnellan, 2012). The school admitted less than 5% of all applicants, and within the context of the city it was about as selective as Harvard University has been in a national context. At the Bronx High School of Science, Asians constituted 62% of all students and at the Brooklyn Technical High School it was 61% (NYC Department of Education, 2014). Because African and Hispanic students are vastly underrepresented at these special schools, controversial political efforts during 2017–2019 were seeking to replace the special entrance test with alternative entrance requirements (Wong, 2019). Their readily understandable intent is to ensure more racially and ethnically representative student bodies, but they would do so at the expense of outstanding academic performance.

Relying on phone interviews with male and female persons 25 years and older, Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, and Holdaway (2008) compared the educational attainment of eight ethnic groups residing in the city. Their study included five ethnic groups of second generation immigrants and three groups whose members had been born in the United States. In the Chinese immigrant group, 73% had received at least a BA, but only 1.1% of them reported that they were high school dropouts. While the phone interviews may have underestimated the percentage of high school dropouts across the various groups, the percentage did nevertheless reach a much higher 22.8% among indigenous Puerto Ricans. The educational performance of the Chinese exceeded that of all other groups including well performing Russian Jewish immigrants and native Whites (see also Hsin & Xie, 2014). This result held true although in New York City, 33.9% of all Chinese immigrants 25 years and older had no high school diploma (they typically grew up overseas), while only 11.7% of

them had received a post-graduate degree. Moreover, 25% of the city's Chinese children below the age of 18 grew up in poverty (U.S. Census, 2013 American Community Survey). Reflecting such considerations, Kasinitz et al. summed up their findings by stating that [the Chinese] "children have moved farther than any other group in terms of their distance from their parents' occupation, education levels, and even attitudes" (pp. 16–17). Whether they know it or not, such students are the descendants of the most education-oriented empire in history with its unique Imperial Examination System. That system enabled the sons of obscure peasants and townspeople to join the small elite of the world's most populous country by surpassing everybody else on a grueling series of examinations (Elman, 2013).

Proceeding to more recent times, students at East Asian high schools have been regularly outperforming high school students from the U.S. and many other countries in the international PISA comparisons (e.g., OECD, PISA, 2015 Results). In addition, Chinese (and Indian) high school students have frequently won top spots in the nation-wide Intel Science Talent Search (now Regeneron Science Talent Search) competition and the United States of America Mathematical Olympiad. In the 2016 Intel Science Talent Search, for instance, 11 of the 40 finalists had parents both of whom had been born in China while 14 had parents from India (Anderson, 2017). Because they are over-represented at many of the Ivy League universities, several of these are in effect requiring higher test scores, grades, and (subjective) interview ratings from their Asian American applicants when compared to those from other racial-ethnic groups (Unz, 2012).

Although many Chinese immigrant parents should be well pleased with their children's excellent educational performance, a good number of the youngsters will pay a price for it when the emotional bond and mutual understanding between them and their educationally, culturally, and linguistically dissimilar parents is growing weaker and more superficial over time. For instance, Qin et al. (2012) compared Chinese American and European American students attending a highly selective magnet school in New York. The Chinese American students reported lower levels of psychological adjustment, less family cohesion, and more family conflict than their European American peers. Moreover, among the often poor or semi-poor Chinese American students, the perceived high levels of family conflict and low levels of family cohesion appeared to be causally related to their lower adjustment level (see also Qin, 2006b, 2008). These and other findings suggest a number of intertwined psychological paradoxes: Many of the students are educational stars but report relatively low levels of contentment and psychological adjustment. Although they see their families as conflictual and not very cohesive, they remain aware of the many sacrifices their parents have been making for them. For some of them, growing up is a lonely experience because they see too little of their parents who are at work. While many 1.5 and second-generation immigrants such as Cornelia are in the process of creating happy and successful lives, others, such as her brother, are struggling to reconcile the conflicting expectations and attitudes of their families and peers. In this context, he and many other Asian American children and adults could profit from readily accessible counseling services.

Mental Health Services for Chinese New Yorkers

Given the demanding and stress-inducing circumstances that surround many Chinese and other Asian American families in New York, their ready access to culturally appropriate mental health services should be considered a major priority. According to the Asian American Federation (2017), Asian American adolescent girls reported the highest rates of depression among the major racial/ethnic groups in the United States, together with disproportionately high suicide rates. Among female Chinese immigrants, Americanized second generation immigrants are more at risk for depressive and anxiety disorders than those born in China (Zhang et al., 2013; see also Sue, Cheng, Saad, & Chu, 2012 for a more general overview of Asian American mental health). Moreover, 40% of all Asian seniors are frequently experiencing depression while also being at considerable risk for attempting suicide. However, few Asian Americans report their own emotional difficulties or those of their children to health experts or school officials because of linguistic difficulties, powerful cultural stigma, lack of pertinent knowledge, and financial considerations (Ho, Yeh, McCabe, & McCabe, 2007; Loo, Tong, & True, 1989). Most of them are quite reluctant to discuss negative immigration experiences, domestic violence, gambling addiction, alcohol and drug abuse, work-related stress, experiences of social isolation, tensions with their children, and serious emotional problems with mental health experts (Wong et al., 2013; Kaplin et al., Chap. 17, this volume). They frequently drop out of psychotherapy (Sue, 1977). Undocumented parents of satellite children are especially reluctant to consult social workers and professional experts (Kwong, 2017).

Many Chinese immigrant parents hope to receive socioemotional support and properly articulated, private advice and guidance from people they know. These may include respected family members, friends, and experienced people with whom they interact in the context of community-based and religious organizations. They often prefer subtle and indirect forms of communication that do not embarrass them and protect their "face." While they may be reluctant to share their emotions with others, they tend to react more positively to goal oriented and purposeful social interchanges. Thus, both parents and their youth are likely to respond constructively to those mental health experts who do not inquire at length about their emotional reactions but rather offer them realistic and practical advice leading to improved social relationships. In addition, the treatment of children and youth is more likely to be successful once counselors and therapists succeed in creating positive relationships with the mostly Chinese-speaking parents and other family members. In this context, they may emphasize that the aim of the treatment is to improve the children's adjustment both at home and at school. This, in turn, would be likely to improve their long-term chances for a successful career.

Research evidence suggests that Asian American clients respond more positively to culturally adapted therapies (Hall, Ibaraki, Huang, Marti, & Stice, 2016), favor neighborhood clinics over mainstream clinics, and improve more when they are

treated in such clinics (Griner & Smith, 2006). In addition, some elderly persons are likely to consult traditional Chinese doctors who specialize in herbal medicine, acupuncture, and *qigong* (Lei, Lee, & Askeroth, 2004). They may believe that such doctors can diagnose the physical-mental basis of their problems, together with prescribing the dietary, medicinal, and behavioral changes needed to weaken their impact. Traditional Chinese healing is holistic in nature and emphasizes the strengthening of a person's vital energy called *qi*. Low levels of *qi* are thought to result in somatic symptoms as well as mental weaknesses such as depression. Mental health experts and social workers should consider working together with both modern and traditional doctors and their clients when these are exhibiting serious psychological dysfunctions. Such cooperation works best when the experts and social workers have a working knowledge of the nature of Chinese medicine and are personally familiar with some traditional doctors.

The report of the Asian American Federation (2017) emphasizes that the efforts of New York's Asian community oriented organizations to offer mental health services are chronically underfunded. This makes it difficult for them to provide adequate services to Asian clients. Moreover, Chinese and other Asian communities would benefit from expanded preventive programs that can be integrated into already existing services offered within the community. Such programs should be advertised and explained with the help of ethnic and social media, while gaining the support of educational, mental health, medical, religious, and political community leaders and experts. Examples of such programs include leadership programs for younger people, supportive workshops for parents designed to improve their parenting skills, and social programs for the elderly. Institutions and programs such as the large, nonprofit Hamilton-Madison House and the Mental Health Bridge Program, Charles B. Wang Community Health Center (Nguyen, Shibusawa, & Chen, 2012), both in Manhattan Chinatown, have been employing mental health experts who are supporting behavioral health programs offered in various Chinese dialects. The experts are working together with medical doctors and also train community workers, so that they can recognize serious mental health problems requiring specialized treatment.

A community perspective is also useful when considering the situation of Chinese satellite children (Kwong, 2017). How might it be possible to reduce their numbers over time and to improve their situation within the context of their families and surrounding community? Such efforts should include a combination of much needed psychological research about the practice and its long-term effects, more comprehensive community discussions about the necessity and impact of the practice, the expansion of affordable childcare services, providing skills training to parents, and the investigation of the effectiveness of novel forms of intervention such as art therapy for these children (Tan, 2015). It is clear that mental health experts can play an important role in furthering these goals.

Chinese Immigrant Families in New York City and Elsewhere: A Conclusion

Reflecting the stress-inducing nature of immigration, many of New York's Chinese working-class and lower middle-class families and their children have to deal with various intersecting problems. These include family separations due to migration, low family incomes, overcrowded housing, long hours of work leading to reduced contact between parents and children, major linguistic and cultural differences between parents and children, experiences of racial-ethnic discrimination and prejudice, and identity conflicts. Economic and migration-related family stress can induce increased parental tensions, depression, and anger. These, in turn, may lead to more coercive and less supportive forms of parenting which are likely to have a negative impact on children's happiness and school performance (Benner & Kim, 2010).

Although economically privileged professionals and their children tend to enjoy more comfortable lives than their poorer counterparts, they still may have to confront multicultural challenges and psychological tensions both inside and outside their families. The more astonishing then is the educational success of so many–though of course not all–Chinese students, including those living in New York City, the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. At the same time, poverty, prejudice, and discrimination continue to darken the lives of many Chinese youngsters in the metropolis and elsewhere. While the country has made great progress between the passing of the hostile Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 and today, racial/ethnic equality and fairness remain admirable moral visions that should, but often do not, guide people's behavior.

Although 13–14% of all Chinese Americans in the United States reside in New York City, their situation is neither fully representative for the country as a whole nor for Canada. Take as an example the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, where the second largest number of Chinese Americans live. According to the 2010 Census, in that year 449,538 Chinese Americans (including 45,808 Taiwanese) resided in Los Angeles County, but only 66,782 of them lived in Los Angeles City itself (20 Years Los Angeles Almanac 1998–2018). Spread out much more than their New York-based peers, quite a few of them did reside in so-called "ethnoburbs" (ethnic suburbs) situated in the San Gabriel Valley (Zhou, 2009a). Compared to New York City, their average income and education levels were considerably higher. Moreover, a greater percentage of them reported Taiwanese backgrounds, were exposed to cosmopolitan ideas, had English-speaking children attending good quality suburban schools, and intermingled with members of other Asian groups. However, they only rarely interacted with recent working-class immigrants from Fujian Province (Zhou, 2009b; Zhou & Kim, 2003).

Altogether, the Chinese in New York City are on average poorer, less well educated, and less proficient in their use of the English language than their peers both in the United States and Canada. In particular, many of the city's recent immigrants are beginning their new lives at the bottom of the economic ladder. They hope that

one day in the not-so-distant future, they will be in charge of their own restaurant or shop and perhaps even own a house. Given their linguistic, educational, and cultural handicaps, that is the life that some but not all of them will be able to achieve. Their hopes and ambitions for their children, however, tend to be more wide-ranging.

Although this chapter does not mirror the experiences of the many Chinese professionals and their families in Silicon Valley nor those of certain super-rich Chinese students in Vancouver (Fan, 2016), it does focus on one of the world's foremost global cities. In this capacity, New York remains THE gateway for Chinese immigrants. Increasingly, their daughters and sons are populating the city's schools and universities, such as the 25 institutions making up the very large City University of New York (CUNY) system. For example, in 2017, Asians and Pacific Islanders accounted for an impressive 40.5% of Baruch College's 18,289 undergraduate and graduate students (Baruch College, 2017). Having listened to their parents and peers but also keeping their own practical interests in mind, Chinese students abound in that institution's accounting and business classes both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. They seem to be inspired by a popular Chinese proverb summing up many of their lives: "Remember, a kite raises against, not with the wind."

Although some of these upwardly mobile students may unfortunately encounter a "bamboo ceiling" (= glass ceiling) in their later careers, their academic success will nevertheless gladden the hearts of their parents. Those parents include fathers who are waiters and cooks and mothers who work in nail salons or take care of other people's children in exchange for meager wages. They came to New York with a combination of Chinese and American Dreams in their minds, and it is often their children – not they themselves – who are expected to fulfill those dreams for them. Many tell their children that education is the key to a better life, but because they themselves stand outside New York's educational system and speak limited if any English, they cannot help them in their educational pursuits. Facing these and many other challenges, these youths are pursuing a multiplicity of dreams as they are entering the long and winding road of their adult lives. Our chapter is dedicated to them and the courage so many of them are demonstrating.

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