

**MULTICULTURAL ASPECTS
OF DISABILITIES**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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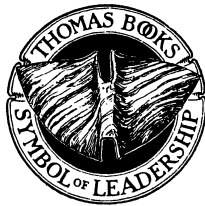
Second Edition

MULTICULTURAL ASPECTS OF DISABILITIES

A Guide to Understanding and Assisting
Minorities in the Rehabilitation Process

By

WILLIE V. BRYAN, Ed.D.



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This edition is dedicated to the Bryan, Lowe and Vickers families, who are not only my extended family, but also they have made significant contributions to my cultural composition.

PREFACE

Through the collaboration of a variety of individuals and organizations, the disability rights movement was given life and because of this partnership, the movement was able to accomplish some remarkable things that have benefited persons with disabilities. Until these various forces joined together, very little outside of U. S. Congressional action was being done to enable persons with disabilities to do anything other than dream about the American dream. Today, although not where we should be, American society is more accessible to persons with disabilities.

The disability rights movement borrowed many of its concepts and techniques from the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s and was successful in adapting them to their needs and forged the previously mentioned partnerships which helped produce remarkable results. It is ironic that the movement that provided the foundation for the disability rights revolution has not been used by the disability community to emphasize and broadcast the needs of racial/ethnic minorities with disabilities. The fact that a significant number of persons with disabilities are persons of color seems to be of very little concern to organizations and agencies working with persons with disabilities. Little, if any, attention is given to the association of race/ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic status. Stated in more succinct terms, very little attention is given to one's cultures. Unfortunately, helping professionals continue to concentrate on disability to the exclusion of culture. This book is an effort to bring to the attention of helping professionals the need to give significant consideration to cultural factors in their efforts to develop effective rehabilitation plans for persons of color with disabilities. This book goes beyond increasing awareness by offering information with regard to intervention strategies.

Disabilities are as old as humankind and those who possess a disability experience ambiguous attitudes and confusing treatment. Part of the reason for confusing treatments received from helping professionals can be attributed to the fact they have failed to consider one valuable variable—the cultural factors influencing the person's behavior. It is hoped that this book will assist helping professionals become better acquainted with the impact that culture has on the client and the impact it will have in the helping process.

W.V.B.

ABOUT THE SECOND EDITION

This second edition continues the theme of providing information with regard to factors that impact the lives of racial/ethnic minorities as well as women and the elderly in America. The information provided helps define cultures of the previously mentioned groups.

The book is divided into four parts: Culture and Multiculturalism, Disability, Disabilities and Multiculturalism, and Helping. In addition to updating information that was presented in the first edition, a new section—Helping—has been added. Part four—Helping provides considerable new information with regard to methods of assisting minorities with disabilities. Chapter 13, The Helping Relationship, is designed to assist the helper become more culturally sensitive with regard to better understanding one's own belief systems and motivation. Additionally, the chapter deals with understanding human behavior. Chapters 14 and 15, Individual Therapies and Family Counseling, provide a discussion of established contemporary therapies; the addition of these chapters reinforces the concept that new therapies do not have to be developed to work with multicultural persons with disabilities. The discussion of these chapters further emphasizes the fact that the helping professional must be aware of the variable of culture in implementing these helping tools.

Another addition is Chapter 3, Religion. It is this author's contention that religion for many persons of color is as important, in some cases more important, as any of the cultural variables that impact behavior. Unfortunately, too often clients' religious beliefs are not considered when assisting them. Therefore, it is vitally important that the helping professional be aware of this fact.

The updates and addition of new chapters will make the text a more complete discussion of cultural information needed by professional helpers in their efforts to assist multicultural persons in the rehabilitation process.

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**MULTICULTURAL ASPECTS
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Part One

CULTURE AND MULTICULTURALISM

Chapter 1

CULTURE

Chapter Outline

- Introduction
- What Is Culture?
- Is there a Disability Culture?
- The Nature of Culture
- Understanding Cultural Diversity
- Multiculturalism
- Cultural Accommodation
- Acculturation
- Conclusion

Chapter Objectives

- Provide an analysis of the concept of culture
- Provide an understanding of cultural diversity
- Provide an analysis of the concept of multiculturalism
- Provide a discussion of acculturation

Introduction

Humans create culture: As discussed in this chapter, culture is not inherited but is developed through a socialization process; therefore, the premise that by classifying persons into ethnic, racial, and religious groups (to mention only three groups) and declaring that they have the same culture, we can explain their existence is false. There are several facts about culture that makes this belief untrue: (1) culture is influenced by proximity; (2) culture is not restricted by race or ethnicity; and (3) culture is mobile.

Regardless of ethnicity or racial background, the local social and environmental atmosphere will have an influence on the person's cultural develop-