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# Next generation immigrant negotiation practices

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Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

by

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Thesis

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**Abstract**

Negotiation practices among second-generation (and 1.5) Chinese Americans provide insights into acculturation processes in American society. This study analyzed narrative data from 10 Chinese Americans, 5 males and 5 females interviewed using semi-structured questions. Participants were born in the U.S., or immigrated at a young age, and identified through snowball sampling techniques. Interviews lasted for approximately one hour, were audio taped, and then transcribed. Grounded analysis was used to identify the following themes: 1) Identity Stressors; 2) General Cultural Values; and 3) Gender Norms and the Burden of Culture. Results further advance that the language of Assimilation needs reassessment. Also new tensions arose between second-generation identity and first generations' expectations of second generations. The key feature of this study was the behavior of negotiation, which participants constantly use to identify themselves within their families, communities, as well as the mainstream American society surrounding them. While the majority of female participants were aware of their active usage of negotiation, male participants were less cognizant of this behavior.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .....	ii
Problem Statement and Background.....	1
Purpose of the Study .....	4
Justification and Significance .....	7
Theoretical Background/Literature Review.....	8
Research Questions .....	17
Methodology .....	18
Analysis.....	21
Findings/Discussion .....	22
Conclusion .....	60
Limitations Delimitations of the Study and Future Research.....	68
References.....	71
Appendix A Demographic and Interview Questions .....	82
Appendix B Consent Form .....	85
Appendix C Definitions of Terms.....	86

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

### PROBLEM STATEMENT AND BACKGROUND

It doesn't always dawn on children that they are different. It takes a community, environment, or family to raise them believing it. This reflects my circumstances. Southfield, Michigan, in the 1980s was a place teeming with groups and people from various religions, races, cultures, or ethnic groups. As a small child in this diversity, I didn't initially realize how lucky I was to grow up in such a place, until I began going to a small private school in Detroit. There I learned how special it was to live in a diverse community as my differences quickly and repeatedly were brought to my attention in many ways. The food I ate for lunch, my mannerisms, and my speech all were called into question as I interacted with the other students of my predominantly African American school. While we shared some similarities in pigment, there were many cultural issues that kept arising to separate us. The occasional statement about my mother being a foreigner made me realize that culture played a huge role.

The diversity of the student population and the friends I developed when I began going to high school in Southfield, Michigan, was multi-generational and multi cultural. The students created new identities for themselves and drew upon older labels. They used the term *Boater* or *FOB* (Fresh off the Boat), a term also used among other ethnic groups to describe themselves (Ajrouch, 2004; Zhou, 1997). For instance, Ajrouch (2004) shows how recent Arab immigrant students in Dearborn were considered "boaters." According to second generation Arab Americans peers, the immigrant's behavior, clothes, and speech or accent sounded and looked more foreign, and their identities appeared more closely tied to a different country.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

While existing inside of American society, some U.S.-born Arab Americans have distanced themselves from the Arab American immigrant by categorizing those newer immigrants as boaters (Ajrouch, 2004). It came to denote a negative set of traits in that community. The term *boater* used in Southfield (pronounced with a “d” to replace the “t”) for first generation immigrants, 1.5 immigrants, and second generation immigrants referred to those who displayed ethnic behaviors related to their or their parent’s country of origin as well. It was a form of reclamation in addition to unification under cultural similarities as opposed to a means to separate immigrants from U.S.-born generations and culture, as was its use in Dearborn (Ajrouch, 2004). It was a negotiation tool for those second generation groups in Southfield to create a hybrid identity of parental culture and mainstream.

I began to notice the negotiation tendency in my second-generation American immigrant friends and me. While many of the specific traditions in each culture were different, the essence of many of our experiences similarly illustrated some *Gemeinschaft* type behaviors. “The social group brought into existence by this positive relationship, envisaged as functioning both inwardly and outwardly as a unified living entity, is known by some collective term such as a union, fraternity or association. The relationship itself, and the social bond that stems from it, may be conceived either as having real organic life, and that is the essence of Community [*Gemeinschaft*]... All kinds of social co-existence that are familiar, comfortable and exclusive are to be understood as belonging to *Gemeinschaft*. In *Gemeinschaft* we are united from the moment of our birth with our own folk for better or for worse” (Tönnies, 1887: 63-64).

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

There were many different cultures but similar reactions based on our socialization in our parents' cultures of origin. My classmates and I would sometimes sacrifice something we wanted to do for the greater family or community good, a collectivist cultural thought. These decisions reflected a mix of our various heritages as well as new behaviors we were learning from the mainstream society around us. It became ok to mix and match behaviors to what we deemed appropriate for various situations. Sometimes, mainstream American alternatives were weighed and discussed among friends. There was a constant vacillation between the world around us and the world at home. It was the need to belong everywhere and a longing to create normalcy as we matured. There was also an understanding that the word "normal" was relative to one's socio-economic status, capital, and environment. Throughout this paper this will be referred to as "cultural negotiation."

When one initially moves to a new country, it is sometimes difficult to acclimate or assimilate into a new culture. What if one is born or raised in the United States at a really young age, but his or her parents were not? This is the case of the second generation American immigrants, children of an immigrant, and their 1.5 American immigrant counterparts, who immigrated before the age of 18 with their parents and resided in the U.S. for at least five years (Rumbaut, 1994; U.S. Census Bureau in 2011). In 2000, the U.S. Census stated that 1 out of 5 children in the U.S. is the child of immigrants. National origins are more likely to be from Asia and Latin America than from Europe. Some studies claim that second generation children assimilate into mainstream American culture (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Rumbaut, 1994), but newer

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

theories suggest different paths other than “straight line” assimilation as previous second generation groups may have done before them. Many European groups were able to “straight line” assimilate into mainstream American society by losing language, shedding other cultural traditions, and eventually achieving upward mobility as they were accepted into the white category (Zhou, 1997). Modern second generation American immigrants do not always have opportunities to assimilate into dominant society, often because of classifications into the U.S. racial hierarchy system (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006; Ajrouch and Kusow, 2007). Immigrants from Asia represent one of the largest and fastest growing immigrant groups in the U.S. (U.S. Census, 2002). This study will contribute to the emerging literature on assimilation patterns amongst new immigrants by focusing specifically on patterns of cultural negotiation in second generation Chinese American immigrants.

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to better understand and document the behavior of children of the Chinese American immigrant population in Michigan and to discover patterns in the types of negotiation behaviors performed, so they can acculturate to both Chinese and American cultures. This study will provide detailed information about behavior and family interaction not available in data from surveys, the U.S. census data, the American Community Survey, and various quantitative interviews of second generation immigrants in the past (Zhou, 1997). Behavioral dynamics cannot be probed through a survey, as they do not allow the respondents to expound their ideas or give a rationale. Many times study interviews introduce more questions about assimilation and

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

negotiation practices that researchers did not think to ask until later when they analyzed the data. The aim of this project is to work to address such gaps in the literature.

New theories have emerged out of straight line assimilation including the notion of segmented assimilation, meant to accommodate minority cultures emergence in to the mainstream American culture and media (Portes and Zhou, 1993). A previous longitudinal study aimed to research the negotiation behaviors among second generation Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshi, and Nepalese Americans (Bandana Purkayastha, 2005). Bandana Purkayastha challenged the theory that immigrants had to pass many generations to attain the “American dream” or be considered assimilated into American society. She identified some groups that moved directly into suburban life after immigrating to the U.S. whereas some immigrant families live in enclaves, and some do neither. Some families she studied did work lower status, more menial jobs, so they could provide their children the ability to attain the second generation assimilated model minority jobs, but it was not a clear generational progression. Some parents had wealth from their home countries and came over with their traditions as well as a willingness to adopt specific American norms and behaviors.

The current study aims to study assimilation and American dream practices amongst second-generation Chinese American immigrants. The Chinese American population’s experiences and history vary from the South Asians studied by Bandana Purkayastha. Chinese Americans have been in the U.S. since the 1840s, around the time the “old immigrants,” which included the British, French, and Germans, were still arriving (Kwong and Mišćević, 2005). In the 1880s when “new immigrants” arrived,

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

which historically included groups from southern and Eastern Europe like Poland and Italy, more Chinese immigrants arrived in the United States. The Chinese were not granted citizenship due to the Naturalization Act of 1870 (Gyroy, 1998; Kwong and Mišćević, 2005). It was not until the mid 1960s that Chinese immigrants were consistently allowed to apply for citizen status. The Chinese achieved citizen status by way of the overturning of the *People v. Hall* ruling in 1854 by the San Francisco Supreme Court, where they were categorized as inferior to White Americans along with Blacks, Mulattos, and Natives. The court rationalized that the use of Indian in the original statute, which didn't allow them to testify against a white person, included Chinese because at the time Christopher Columbus came to the Americas the whole continent of Asia and the "Mongol race" were considered Indian (Kwong and Mišćević, 2005). Chinese immigrants were unable to vote, voice their concerns, or defend themselves against discriminatory policies such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This policy slowed the number of Chinese allowed to enter the U.S. to almost to a standstill until the Magnuson Act repealed it in 1943, after China became an ally of the U.S. against the Japanese in WWII. The realization of the Chinese as allies of the U.S. government allowed Chinese who had long been living in the United States to finally get on the road toward becoming naturalized citizens and the later overturning of other previous Immigration policies that prevented citizenship for them and new immigrants (Kwong and Mišćević, 2005). After attaining citizenship became feasible, more economic access for some and the ability to choose some parts of American culture they wanted their families to acculturate to or omit arose.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

Some research has addressed Chinese American assimilation into mainstream American culture, but not as much has dealt with their acculturation and negotiation practices (Gordon, 1964; Portes and Rumbaut, 2006; Willinger and Feliciano, 2004; Lloyd and Srole, 1945; Gordon, 1964; Piedra and Engstrom, 2009; Rumbaut, 1997; Waters and Jiménez, 2005). Moreover, even less research has focused on cultural negotiations among second generation Chinese American immigrants. Some literature has documented that the model minority is a stereotype. Some literature contains evidence that particular Chinese Americans have the possibility of attaining economic improvements (Glick and Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Fuligni, 1997; Kao and Tienda, 1995; Kasinitz, 2008; Kroneberg, 2008; Park, 2008). There may be specific behaviors and cultural negotiations that move second generation Chinese Americans to the identity and life that they have (Erikson, 1968). This study will provide information about those negotiations, contributing to acculturation research. It is the aim of this research to acquire and fill in the research gaps on second-generation Chinese Americans' cultural negotiations.

### JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE

Assimilation has always been a topic of interest for researchers, historians, and the U.S. government. It helps create in-group/out-group dynamics, generational differences, and define cultural norms for various groups. In the early stages of its study in the Americas, it was believed to be a very specific process that started at point A and got to point B, as it went through the various generations. As research, time, technology, and understanding of what makes up cultures has progressed, the concept of assimilation

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

has splintered and allowed for various pathways. Some have even come to question the term *assimilation* seeing it as an exclusionary term only befitting specific racial groups. It may be ill equipped to assess immigrant transformations and adaptations, especially when one looks at race, Chinese norms, and cultural practices. As the second generation American immigrant population begins to grow in the U.S., so must the concept of their behaviors, acculturation, and identities.

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND/LITERATURE REVIEW

#### *Assimilation Research*

Early assimilation researchers believed that immigrant groups would assimilate to “American culture” and eventually lose their distinguishing behaviors (Gordon, 1964). However, acculturation did not guarantee assimilation. Gordon (1964) theorized that cultural assimilation was the first step of adaptation into mainstream society. He came up with a number of types of assimilation: civic-cultural or behavioral, behavioral-receptional, attitude-receptional, structural, and identification. His research showed that assimilation of ethnic groups depended upon their acceptance by mainstream society, but acculturation did not have an end. These tenets could also be categorized in the segmented assimilation category. Traditional theories of assimilation imply that there is a center or middle-of-the-road way to become part of the general societal structure or a specific path of assimilation. In some cases this means giving up old cultural norms to adopt a unified culture in order to reap the benefits of American society. The process will naturally progress to the point of sameness, uninterrupted, with no way of reversal

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

(Warner & Srole, 1945; Park, 1928). Segmented assimilation allows for some deviations from that path.

Segmented assimilation states, “There are multiple pathways of incorporation into a country. The path taken and the conditions associated with it affect the experiences of immigrants and their particular assimilation, which may be dissimilar to the prevailing characteristics of the native population” (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Buriel and De Ment, 1997; Rumbaut, 1997; Waters, 1997; Peter, 2008: 52). There are some interpretations of segmented assimilation that fail to take into account Chinese immigrants who did not begin their American employment at the blue-collar level taking on low skill jobs.

Kwong and Mišćević (2005) discuss different waves of Chinese immigrants from college students in the 1940s to modern day scientists. Immigrants coming from China are not all impoverished looking to finally attain the American dream, the kind of Horatio Alger Jr. success stories of the European immigrant’s hard work and determination. These immigrants also have a story. They negotiate American culture, so they can acculturate and develop a sense of identity. How will the cultural negotiation of their children within American society take place? Cultural negotiations are those activities and behaviors used to cope with the cultural environments around second-generation American immigrants. In that negotiation their self-identity is created.

### *Transnationalism and Chinese American History*

Technology has allowed for more globalization and hence for transnationalism to become more intricate. Traveling back and forth to the place of one’s national origins has become more accessible and has allowed for various forms of self-identification to

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

emerge for second-generation youth (Kibria, 2003; Waters, 2003). Kwong and Mišćević (2005) highlight the fact that many Chinese Americans have had transnational identities for over 100 years in the U.S. because of their inability to attain U.S. citizen status until the 1960s (p. 236). In some cases, families invested more time and money into trying to help decide political and social issues in China. With the 1924 Immigration Act, some affluent Chinese students, or those sponsored by various groups, were allowed to come to the U.S. for a short while to study. When they returned home they sometimes took up political positions or engaged in politics. It wasn't until the McCarthy era, when Chinese Americans were suspected of being communist spies and neighbors were told to inform the government of Chinese Americans' actions through the "confession program," that Chinese transnational identities slowed for a while due to fear (p. 343-354). Identity once again changed with increased accessibility and use of the Internet, QQ, Facebook, Skype, MSN, and other social media outlets. According to Levitt and Waters (2002), the ability to physically travel has impacted the ability of some second-generation American immigrants to develop a strong ethnic identity in conjunction with an American identity. Some second-generation American immigrants use their ethnic identity to bond more closely with others from that same ethnic group as well as to separate themselves from those who are not in their ethnic or racial group (Ogbu, 1990).

### *Segmented Assimilation and Selective Behaviors*

Segmented assimilation attempts to address inconsistencies in how some second generation immigrants choose to adapt in a society. Fernández-Kelly (2008: 118) stated, "Segmented assimilation puts emphasis on the way in which immigrant children merge

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

into preexisting groups through sustained social interaction with sectors of the native-born population. In some cases, that progression leads to upward mobility, in others to downward assimilation.” Ogbu (1990) theorized that “cultural inversion” may take place, where certain symbols, behavior, and events associated with another group are considered not appropriate for the in-group, and the out-group is mainstream American culture. It isn’t that downward assimilation automatically takes place. On occasion, the progress the cultural group makes may be seen as positive by mainstream American culture even though it was cultivated through a mentality of separation. A prime example would be the stereotype of the model minority. Kwong and Mišćević (2005) state that some Chinese American parents adopt specific American values in their acculturation process, but reject American values when it comes to education and raising their children (p. xvi). These behaviors and beliefs by some first generation parents have also been followed in the South Asian American community (Purkayastha, 2005). Parents determine which behaviors and American values they will highlight based on what they believe will give their children the most capital. Some traditional behaviors in Chinese American culture have been practiced by the Chinese since the Zhou dynasty, when Confucius developed his theories and practices of filial piety. Filial piety tells children how to behave within their family roles and how parents should deal with children. There are obligations to family that come before all else in Confucius’s *Book of Rights* (Ni, 2002). Although most Chinese Americans have never read the book, it has not prevented the practices and philosophies from existing in their modern families.

### *Race and the Concept of Assimilation*

Some second generation American immigrants end up feeling part of both the mainstream culture and their parent's ethnic group. Some second generation American immigrants attempt to follow more of the "straight line" assimilation in their path to self-identification by viewing themselves as solely Americans according to Waters (2005). Zhou and Bankston (1994) have identified this as rebellion, in relation to Vietnamese youth coming into cultural confrontations, by when it is perceived that youth have tried to rid themselves of ethnic ties and immerse themselves in mainstream American culture. The various forms of identification are considered forms of segmented assimilation. A traditional sense of straight-line assimilation was initially conceived using European groups as the basis. It does not encompass race as much as it does ethnicity. Race can complicate the ability to self-identify and transition into mainstream culture, especially if the race does not match one's own. Even if one does attempt to assimilate into mainstream culture, "oppositional identity" can manifest. In Water's (2003) study of second generation Caribbean American black youth, racial discrimination and prejudice were understood concepts that could impact their ability to succeed in mainstream American culture. The process of acculturation for those groups therefore becomes more complicated. Some theorists refer to the feeling of being trapped by race and skin color as the "marginal man" (Zhou and Bankston, 1994; Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937). In the attempt to assimilate, second generation American immigrants of non-European descent can get trapped in the back-and-forth of culture based on physical characteristics alone (Park, 1928).

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

### *Assimilation v. Acculturation and Negotiation*

It is imperative that one keep in mind that second-generation immigrants are natives to the U.S., or if brought here young enough, 1.5 immigrants developmentally are on the same level as other native U.S. children. So why refer to their acculturation process as assimilation (Berry, 2003)? *Negotiation* may be a better-suited term for this process of maneuvering between immigrant lifestyles and mainstream ones.

Children of immigrants can find themselves partaking in cultural negotiations in an effort to acculturate to local American culture and the culture of their parents. *Cultural negotiation* is a term created to address a person's attempt to create a sense of normalcy between multiple cultures by behavior. Code switching can be considered a form of cultural negotiating, but code switching and cultural negotiating are not mutually exclusive. Code switching is not just used in the cases of immigrants. Some Black groups code switch between local jargon and mainstream speech considered more socially acceptable (Green and Walker, 2004). For some, code switching holds a solely linguistic element and is strongly associated with bilingual and bicultural experiences.

Labov (1971), Zhou (1997), Fuligni (1997), and Glick (2007) studied youth negotiation, implying that negotiation stops at youth. Yet it does not necessarily end in youth according to Bandana Purkayastha (2005). For instance, marriage practices can be a form of negotiation. This negotiation is most likely to take place above the age of 18 or at a level of adulthood. Trends can be seen where second generation American immigrants are more likely to marry ethnically similar Asian groups, such as Japanese, who have a similar immigration history in the U.S. (Qian, 2001). Parents encourage their

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

children to marry into groups in which they believe they have more commonalities with them in order to attain more social capital in the Asian American community. This can be very stressful depending on what the second-generation American immigrant's identity deems important in a mate versus what their parents seek (Qian, 2001).

Second generation immigrants use rituals such as weddings and getting married to negotiate what kinds of capital they want to tap into, whom they marry, even whom they invite, and how they celebrate. These all play a role negotiating their self-identities, according to Purkayastha (2005). Second-generation immigrants sometimes choose to engage in a transnational identity by having some parts of their weddings in one country and then the other parts in another. In the case of the South Asian community, a ritual in their parents' home country could include more family member involvement to help attain more acceptance or approval of their marriage and future by other family members. In doing so at the home country, they may receive more recognition and support back in the U.S. if they are situated in a heavily ethnic environment.

### *Social Capital Pros and Cons*

First generation immigrant parents offer their children several forms of capital to help them succeed in other ways (Piedra, 2004; Shields and Behrman, 2004). Social capital can become a hindrance just as much as it is an asset, if parents are encouraging the use of social capital only from their home culture while living in America (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006 and 2001). Sometimes strong adherence to ethnic values and traditions by second generation children can cause downward assimilation below one's parent's class (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Zhou 1997). Downward mobility or assimilation of second

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

generation is also probable if second generation immigrants do not isolate themselves based on what they think is truly ethnic. They do not follow the college track or educational expectations of their families or American society, especially if their parents work menial jobs in order for their children to succeed. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) referred to the class below that they could find themselves in as a “rainbow underclass.” Willinger and Feliciano (2004) found that downward assimilation was not happening as often as the theory would suggest, at least not with second generation Mexican Americans. While the economic downturn of 2008 did cause limits on employment over the last several years, a college education prior to that did not guarantee employment and upward mobility for second-generation immigrants (Willinger and Feliciano, 2004). A glass ceiling exists for ethnic minorities in the U.S., even for those whose families have given the second generation some social capital and upward mobility (Kwong and Mišćević, 2005). Even if second generation immigrants follow the guidelines set by family, some families provide capital that opposes some types of capital expected in mainstream American culture (Zhou, 1994; Piedra, 2004).

In the case of select groups of second generation Chinese Americans, social capital has worked in their economic favor. Capital can play a positive and negative role for the Asian-American community in reference to the stereotype of the “model minority” (Kao, 1995; Glick, 2007), which can include first generation immigrants from a shared ethnicity, even other Asian groups (Qian, 2001). The stereotype of the model minority developed because of the ability of some Asian groups to attain economic or employment success in some of the higher levels of society. They were able to do this

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

despite some of the racial and cultural differences they choose not to change or cannot change, such as physical characteristics. European immigrants did not have to concern themselves with skin tone and eye shape, able to shed parts of their culture such as native languages, music, and ritualistic behaviors in their straight-line assimilation process (Purkayastha, 2005; Kwong and Mišćević, 2005; Park, 2008).

In order for the straight-line assimilation and segmented assimilation theories to take place, they often use scenarios where parents of second-generation immigrants start out at a working class level. There are groups within the Chinese community that may already have economic access to white collar positions. They are what Kwong and Mišćević (2005) refer to as “Up-town Chinese.” They may have a longer legacy in the States or more connections with Chinese American culture before coming to the U.S. They are more likely to attain what level of model minority status they can. Two out of five Chinese-born immigrants have a bachelor’s degree or higher (American Community Survey and U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Even for them, a glass ceiling still exists in the employment sector due to discrimination. The other end of the continuum is the “Down-town Chinese” who tend to be more recent immigrants in the Chinese community with fewer connections, who may end up working in a small business or in menial blue collar jobs such as a sweat shop or restaurant (Kwong and Mišćević, 2005).

### *Chinese American Demographics*

No matter what their social status, the Chinese community is the third largest immigrant population in the U.S. next to Mexicans and Filipinos. In 2006 there were more than 1.6 million foreign-born Chinese living in America (American Community

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

Survey, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). In 2009 there were also over 14 million second-generation American immigrants in the United States. In that same year, over half of that number became naturalized citizens. Michigan is not one of the top two states for Chinese immigration. California is one, with its long history of Chinese working out west on the railroad systems as well as helping to build many areas in that region. New York is the other, but New York has been a magnet for immigration for centuries. Michigan was twelfth in 2009 for the number of foreign-born occupants (American Community Survey 2009; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). In 2009 the largest foreign-born population in Michigan was from Asia, making 45.5% of the foreign born population. Of the 45.5%, 29,752 of the foreign born Asians were from China. In 2009, 11% of children under the age of 18 had one or more immigrant parents, which is an increase from 8.1% in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Second-generation Chinese American immigrants are a force to be reckoned with in Michigan, as are their parents. If these trends continue to in the next few years, it is important that research be done documenting their growth and acculturation, so research is up to date and meaningful for the populations it aims to serve.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addresses the following questions: What kinds of negotiating are second-generation Chinese American immigrants doing? How does cultural negotiating help second-generation Chinese American immigrants develop their own identities? What identities form?

## METHODOLOGY

Landson-Billings and Tate (1995: 57), key critical race theorists, explained “Social reality is constructed by the formulation and exchange of stories.” Stories can be what they called “medicine to heal the wounds caused by racial oppression.” Due to the inductive nature of the topic, a qualitative approach was viewed as being most effective for attaining information from the participants in this study. A sample group of ten subjects was used, consisting of five men and five females. Subjects were ages 18 or older. They were attained through convenience sampling and snowball sampling methods.

Initial subjects were located by a Chinese professor based in Grand Rapids with access to a Chinese American listserv and a Taiwanese professor working in Ypsilanti with connections to the Ann Arbor Chinese American community. Other subjects were attained through Chinese American Churches. Other professors working out of the Ypsilanti area referred students. High school friends yielded other referrals, and family friendships yielded the final referral.

Subjects were interviewed face-to-face in a location convenient for them, via Skype, or telephone for approximately one hour, with questions addressing family history and cultural negotiation practices (see Appendix I). The interviews allowed the participant to expound upon statements and allowed the interviewer to ask follow-up questions to get more specific answers. The interviews were audio recorded using an iPod and/or an alternative audio recording system. The recordings were transferred to CD's. Interviews were transcribed. No names were attached to the interview or the transcripts. All interviews and transcripts were labeled with an interview number.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

Females were assigned a number 1-5 and males 6-10. The recordings and transcripts were stored in a locked drawer of Room 358 of the Eastern Michigan University Student Center. The names were on a separate sheet stored in the office of Dr. Kristine Ajrouch.

The initial interviewees were all female, face-to-face, and were attained rather quickly. All female interviews were completed within a two-week span. The women responded quickly to posts on the Chinese American listserv, e-mails from professors, and friends of the professor based in Ypsilanti. They also responded to e-mails from a high school classmate who referred them to this study. There was such a great response of female participants that a couple of interested females had to be turned away. The opposite was the case with male subjects. Attaining them became an arduous process.

A high school classmate of the researcher referred the first male participant to the study. He participated about a week after the last female subject. He in turn referred another friend. That friend stated that he was interested. After several communications back and forth to meet up for an interview, he stopped responding to all forms of contact. The next attempted male interviewee was a family associate who claimed to be eagerly interested in the research. He was contacted and a telephone meeting was arranged rather quickly. The day of the interview, the subject claimed illness in himself and a child, and said that they went to the ER. This being a reasonable issue, it was agreed that the interview would get rescheduled for a later time. After repeated attempts to contact that interviewee to reschedule, he responded back that he could no longer participate in the study. He stated, however, that he had a referral. Upon receiving that referral, that male was contacted. He said he would take a week or two to let me know his schedule and we

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

would coordinate a time. He was contacted, but after not hearing from him for a week, he informed the researcher that he was now in Alaska. When told he was out of the state, he was notified that interviews could be done over the phone or Skype. All communication on his end ceased at that point.

The next set of interviewees was attained through a co-worker who attends a Chinese Church. The church has 3 services, one each in English, Mandarin, and Cantonese. The co-worker introduced the interviewer to a male attendee who was willing to be interviewed. During the first interview several churchgoers heard about the research, and volunteered their personal information for contact. One church attendee's girlfriend had him provide his information for contact. She was even more excited about it because he attended school in the Ypsilanti area. Two out of the five males, whose contact information was received that day, actually did interviews. The other three males met at the church never responded to repeated attempts at contact. The male who attended a school in Ypsilanti was actually parking in front of the researcher's home. When he was asked in person about participation, he stated that he was still willing but then didn't respond to non-face-to-face attempts at contact. The second-to-last male subject was attained through a professor working in Ypsilanti, and a potential last interviewee was contacted in the Albion area. He was willing not only to meet, but to meet within 3 days of initial contact. That meeting had to be postponed because the potential subject attended a school where the researcher was employed, so the researcher was required to go through a secondary IRB process. That process was begun, but the last subject was attained before that process was finished, which would have taken at least another month.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

The last subject was successfully attained through a family friend. The family friend had stated months before that she didn't know anyone, but then her spouse volunteered for the study. When some male subjects were told that several males had initially volunteered and not followed through, or were asked why males were not as eagerly volunteering as the female participants, several responded that males were just lazy and probably didn't want to put in the effort. These comments were made by some participants without them personally knowing the other males who had initially reneged. To attain all ten interviews took approximately six and a half months, the last five of those months spent strictly trying to attain male subjects.

All interviewees were living in Michigan at the time. All interviewees received a participant consent form approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee or International Review Board before they began the interview. The participants were notified through repeated written and oral statements basis that at any time during the interview they had the right to choose not to answer a question. If any strong emotions were unintentionally brought up by the questions, participants were referred to a free counseling program in their area or school such as the Eastern Michigan University Counseling Psychological Services (CAPS), Samaritan Counseling Services, the University of Michigan CAPS, Grand Valley State University Counseling Center, Network 180, or Marketplace Ministries. Interview questions are detailed in Appendix I.

## ANALYSIS

Analysis followed the tenets of grounded theory based on the work of Strauss and Corbin (1998). Responses were openly coded to identify any trends or concepts that

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

appeared across interviews. After each interview, the responses were transcribed and a microanalysis of the transcript was performed line by line to develop categories so relationships could be examined. Relational statements were documented. As categories and concepts emerged, theoretical sampling took place to better probe the depths and range and diverse features of the concepts. Theoretical comparisons were made with the emerging concepts. At some point, saturation occurred concerning the number of new concepts that could be discovered in the transcripts. Finally, after the concepts were tested and examined, themes were identified that may contribute to theories.

### FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

The responses to the interview questions and some follow up questions fell under three main themes: Identity Stressors, General Cultural Values, and Gender Norms and the Burden of Culture.

Identity Stressors include Teasing and Bullying situations, where an person attacks or mocks a second generation Chinese American immigrant, and Situational Identity Ambiguity, where second generation immigrants' identities about themselves vacillate depending on complex situations that make them think about ethnicity, culture, race, and where they fit in the community understanding of those things. Identity stressors occur from participants pushing the boundaries of who they consider themselves to be. These stressors can come from non-Chinese American peers and neighbors and Chinese American peers, neighbors, or even teachers. These interactions, good and bad, with their own ethnic groups and other ethnic groups shape the second-generation Chinese Americans' experience in dealing with other external groups. Some of these

interactions create a melting pot perspective of identity and cause second-generation immigrants to shy away from cultural differences or even thinking about them.

Sometimes these experiences help them to embrace differences and process their feelings about their identity and where they see it similar to the diversity salad bowl analogy.

### *Identity Stressors*

*Teasing/bullying.* Some interviewees did experience teasing from peers and teachers in younger grades. People called them names, mocked their language skills, or accused them of behaviors that they attributed to them because of their race and ethnicity.

So in elementary school it was definitely the linguistic part. Then I would say in middle school and high school, well middle school I would say it was more so the way that I looked or the way that other Asian people looked. In middle school there was a boy who made up a song out of all of these Asian kids' names. It was just kind of dumb, but it obviously set us as an outside group. It was kind of ironic because the student was Arab or Middle Eastern (*some light chuckling took place when she said it*). So it wasn't like he was part of the majority group so there was that. And, then in high school it was more of stereotypes, 'Asian students take AP Biology and are nerds' or something like that. (Female interviewee from New York City going to school in Michigan)

I grew up in a more black neighborhood and at the school I think there were only 4 or 5 Asians, including me and my sister. So there were very few of us. I guess I got bullied a little bit back then, but I can't quite remember why. After I moved to Grand Rapids, the school was an all-white school. It was an all-white school, but there was probably 1 black student there. The Asian population there was just pretty much me. Then I don't know, but for some reason when I first got there everybody thought I was cool or something. They always think, 'You know Jackie Chan is he your relative?' or 'Do you know kung fu or something like that?' They always start out asking those questions. I made a lot of friends in the beginning, but they sort of, died down as the years went on as I got into high school and stuff. Most of them always just liked to mimic fake Chinese in front of me, and I got annoyed with stuff like that. I guess some other people thought of me as being different, so they didn't like being around me or something. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan going to school in Michigan)

The language makes a clear distinction between verbal teasing, and physical bullying for some interviewees. There was no emphasis on the emotional difference, as if the hits and the ignorant language were on the same level. The language may have made second-generation immigrants think about a difference they knew was there, but they didn't process it the same way a bully or ignorant observer would.

I just didn't really think about race back in the day until, I guess, until someone ruined it, and made a racist remark, you know, like they go, uh, especially Jews to me they go like, 'Ching, ching, chong' or something like that, and then I'm like what is that supposed to mean. At first, I didn't really take offense because I didn't know what they were talking about. You know, well, they did the slanted eye thing, and I was like, yeah I do have skinnier eyes than them, but, you know, 'what's the big deal' that was me back then. How did I feel? I didn't really feel anything back then. Now, it's, yeah it's offensive. I just try to ignore it, but some people are just ignorant about these things. But, um, yeah, it's just how the world works, but if you are asking how I felt back then, nothing. (Male interviewee from Southfield, Michigan, who went to school in Michigan)

More often than not, second-generation Chinese Americans didn't respond to the negative behavior at the time, but occasionally, if given the choice, they chose to separate themselves from the negative people bothering them. The long-term effects of the negative behavior may not appear to interviewees until later in adulthood.

*Situational identity ambiguity.* Some interviewees see themselves as Chinese sometimes, and sometimes they say they do not process any identity. Identity wasn't a thought to them. They may temporarily lose their identity in everyday life. Ethnic markers such as religious practice, cultural norms, and language influence attachment to one's ethnic identity (Accapadi, 2012; Dhingra, 2010; Kim, 2001, Shankar & Balgopal,

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

2001). That means that less involvement or fewer connections with those markers associated with being Chinese American may cause a second-generation Chinese American immigrant to identify more with groups that may either dominate the location they grew up or cause them to draw closer to their parents' ethnic identity. It may make them feel less or more "Chinese."

Essentially, I forget that I am the culturally different one. I usually forget until I look into the mirror. I'm a Chinese girl. I have these moments when I'm just like, yeah, I'm just the same as everyone else, and no one really makes any differentiation. They do not act different around me or anything like that. I usually wind up forgetting that I'm even different. (Female interviewee from Grand Rapids, Michigan, going to school in Michigan)

They may not realize they are not members of another ethnic group or race, until that group or another group brings it to their attention. The second-generation Chinese American immigrants are not assimilating if they are unaware of a racial ethnic and cultural difference. Someone has to make them aware of their racial difference. The identified difference is not racial (the color of one's skin) but behavioral. Such situations reintroduce the concept of the marginal man (Zhou and Bankston, 1994; Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937). Race is the element that mainstream Americans use to view Asians and Chinese Americans as not American even as second-generation Americans view themselves as another element of the American salad bowl.

I didn't understand that at the time...when I was really young I thought race was broken up into two groups, white and black that's it. I thought I was white because my skin color was lighter than theirs that's all I thought. I didn't think anything different. You know, um, the foods I grew up eating, I ate different types of foods, but I grew up eating American types of foods too like hot dogs, hamburgers, pizza and everything like that, but pizza is not American, but I still eat that type of stuff. So, I mean, I thought nothing different between us you know, and maybe I would say...

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

when I started grade school probably in kindergarten or first grade was when I started realizing that there is a little differentiation between race. It wasn't still a huge deal, but you know, just started noticing. (Male interviewee from Southfield, Michigan, who went to school in Michigan)

Oh I realized it because my teacher was kind of racist, and the elementary school that I went to was the Chinese school on Friday nights. If she found anything out of line, she blamed it on me. I was conscience of it a lot because like I said I had Chinese school on Fridays and then of course we had this teacher who was like, 'Oh yeah someone left this comb in this desk. Here you take it.' You take the hair out, and for some reason she was so dumb that she didn't realize the hair was not black but blond. (Female interviewee from Ann Arbor, Michigan, working in Michigan)

Their identity may shift after a stereotypical expectation of the second-generation Chinese American immigrant is expressed by a member of their own group or an external group. Once called a "quarter-life crisis" by Erikson (1968), this phrase has been adopted by an Asian American colleague of the researcher to describe what happened after going to college. She had originally seen herself as white identified, based on her adopted parental experiences, but she went to a school with a large Asian population, who visually saw her as an Asian American. They treated her as such. What followed were the other steps of her quarter-life crisis. There is a sense of uncertainty as some adolescents transition to adulthood when something causes them to shift how they see themselves.

It was just a comment about ... when I was applying to schools and stuff. It was actually a close friend of mine, a friend that lived across the street from me. I don't know if I overheard, or he had mentioned something his parents said about questioning my acceptance to the school [University of Michigan]. I still remember it, so whether it bothers me or not, it just stuck out. That's the point where, whether it was true or not at that point, just the whole 'am I accepted or not' I don't think there's any question that there wasn't any non-acceptance in general. I think they assumed acceptance based on it [his ethnicity]. [It was only]... when I was a little more, ethnically if not racially attuned to things, umm honestly probably

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

in college where I...actually thought about that distinction and what it really means. ...Through high school I am not sure really what's very influential. (Older male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, works as an engineer in Michigan)

This can be especially jarring for some second-generation youth who have some ideas of what a Chinese American should be like, but via stereotypes or new life experiences, things shift. They have to try to determine their own identity for themselves all over again.

I think there are a lot of Chinese or second-generation people who really adapt to American culture and forget their Chinese culture, but I think I am very interested in my Chinese culture. So, I'm more Chinese. If I were to go to China, I have actually been there a few times, I think I would adapt to the environment very well compared to some people. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan going to school in Michigan)

### *General Cultural Values.*

Within the topic of General Cultural Values are Socio-Economic Status (SES), Control, and Determination; Politeness, Confrontation, and Filial Piety; Cultural Capital and the Chinese Community; and Environmental Competence. General cultural values are what interviewees see as important in their personal lives and communities. These values similarly influence family expectations and behaviors. They can come with a bit of pressure attached, and this is where the most negotiation appears to be occurring for second-generation immigrants when it comes to creating their own identity with their parents and broader community.

SES, Control, and Determination were three things that were repeatedly stated by many second-generation Chinese Americans as going hand-in-hand. Control was used by

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

family and the Chinese American community to create determination and persistence to attain or maintain higher levels of socio-economic status. Politeness, confrontation, and filial piety, similar to the previous stressor category also go hand-in-hand for many participants. They are taught by family to be polite in order to avoid confrontation and through politeness they are supposedly being good daughters and sons under the Confucius concept of filial piety, but no one is perfect. The effort to try and maintain that behavior is often stressful and sometimes disliked by second-generation American immigrants.

Cultural Capital and the Chinese Community fall right in line with the other stressors because for the second-generation immigrants who regularly interact with that community, they try and maintain relationships based off of things they and their family can gain or lose if they don't. The second-generation immigrants utilize expected politeness to keep face among elders in the community. Environmental competence can be stressful because the second-generation immigrants are always expected be aware of their surroundings and audience. Some are more aware of racial and ethnic differences depending on where they came from or gender.

*SES, control, & determination.* Control is seen as necessary due to the belief that a strict parenting style, including spanking and guilt, creates a desire to strive harder, have determination, and not quit, according to some interviewees. Students feel obligated by parents to attain certain levels of education.

It seemed like everything was so scheduled where it was never really a moment for me to be a kid. My parents were just like, 'okay you need to

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

do this, and you need to do that', very teacher-like. But, that's also just making sure I 'cultivate my skills as a child' (said sarcastically because her father is a professor of Asian philosophy and Confucius is his favorite philosopher). But, in the long run you thank your parents for that. (Female interviewee from Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Just thinking about the future and how I would like to act with my own family, there are some practices that I would like to adopt, like teaching children determination. So, not letting them quit something just because they find it difficult or un-enjoyable. I think that would be something that I would adopt. (Female interviewee from Long Island, New York, who is attending graduate school in Michigan)

Second-generation Asian Americans feel required to perform certain rituals. They feel their parents' attempts to control them in other ways. They feel forced to follow certain customs even when their parents aren't around.

Another thing is like because I'm the boy of the family, I feel obligated to take care of my sister even though she's older. My dad is very traditional. He always thinks the guy for the family should take care of everything. Since the girl is always married off, the guy is the one who inherits the family, fortune, or whatever. So I tend to be stressed over that because I have to work harder because I know I have to help my family and stuff like that in the future. ...Because I'm the eldest of all my cousins, everyone tends to look up to me a little bit. My dad, whenever there is a problem, always talks to me and tells me I have to do this for them or I have to buy this for them, give them this money for New Years or something. I am the eldest and a guy, his eldest son. I have to be there as him or an image of him, since he's not always around. So, I'm always the one giving the money out and doing stuff in his position. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan going to school in Michigan)

Control of privacy is important for some of the families. Some parents teach their children not to share personal family information or what is considered vital information with outsiders. That takes away your ability to control certain situations, and makes your family vulnerable to attack from within the community and outside of it.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

There's always that pervasive, you know, privacy. It's almost like a wall that you don't want to reveal too much to other people for fear of violating trust. There was always...more probably my mom's side where it's like you got to make sure you're not too open to your friends or to others, strangers so to speak. Whereas other people will tell me 'Oh yeah we're going on vacation.' That's something that if whenever we would go on a vacation, one of the first points they would ever make was, 'Don't tell anyone you're leaving,' and it's like well if they notice, and I won't be here, well just tell them you're going somewhere and you're going to come back later. (Older male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, works as an engineer in Michigan)

That sense of duty to the family can make a second-generation American immigrant feel torn in half sometimes as they try to create their own identity and norms, but they want to obey and respect their family's wishes. Sometimes the expectations are unreasonable in the minds of the second-generation American immigrants, and the need to control by some first generations it felt as stifling their children.

[Interviewee discussing an argument with her mother over a blender] Once she realized that she didn't really have a reason to yell at me she says, 'Well, you just want to break things in the house. You don't really care. You don't really have to pay for them anyway.' And, then I walked out and said, "I'm going back to school." I can't deal with this, it was a smoothie, and I haven't had a smoothie since. So, right now I'm kind of torn between being at home, being the good daughter, and being independent, and being at my own apartment during the summer, and I will visit once a week. But, I'm pretty much staying here. (Female interviewee from Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Some second generations felt that control, determination, and duty were restricted to their descriptions of their own Chinese families, similar to south Asian families who choose to attribute positive work ethic, morals, and values to their ethnic groups (Espiritu, 2001; Purkayastha, 2005). Some interviewees extended it to multiple ethnic groups they hung out with in school. Their interaction with other cultural groups in their

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

neighborhoods allowed them to understand that it may not just be their home that is strict. Some of them discovered other groups' values and behaviors when they went away to a new location for school or work. The scenarios mentioned by interviewees counteract the generalization and grouping that sometimes takes place by other groups (Purkayastha, 2005). Many of Purkayastha's (2005) interviewees as well used the strictness of their parents in contrast to believed freedom of "whites." This is understood to be a generalization by some of the research participants. The generalization of what whiteness is shows that determination becomes an ethnic marker, for many participants, of what being Asian or Chinese is. In negotiating away from this behavior, one is considered less Chinese or less Asian.

We had moved to another town. It was a little bit more Jewish. I think that I did notice some academic expectation. Then again I don't know if I thought about it in ethnic terms because there were plenty of Caucasians in my circle, and also you know I had some parental emphasis, I won't say pressure but just emphasis on doing well academically and at that point [there were also] the stereotypes of Chinese and Asians. But I know through high school there were many Jewish friends that I had that had a lot of academic expectations from their parents. There were many Caucasian students. Then again I don't know if it was an ethnic thing more than the group that I fell in and that was just the ethnic spectrum there. (Older male interviewee from Long Island, New York, who works as a doctor in Michigan)

I mean the people I hang out with tend to also be like [me], I would say I consider myself not the overachiever, but the achieving sort, so in that sense it seems every ones' values seem to be similar. They wanted their kids to be respectful of people and do well in school. (Female interviewee from New York City who is going to graduate school in Michigan)

In the south there was a lot of respect there, respect your family, it was always 'Yes, Ma'am, No, Ma'am'. Also in the south parents do spank their children. So I thought, oh that was similar to my experience as well.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

[This is about] southerners in general, [but] mostly southerners from South Carolina. (Female interviewee from Long Island, New York, who is doing graduate school in Michigan)

This determination could also be expressed in a feeling of a loss of childhood by the drive to succeed academically, which often resulted in a positive financial gain.

It's my whole life has been like that so far because I tend to be more rebellious and just want to do my own thing which is not very Chinese. Usually if my parents say 'No', they are unwilling to compromise for the most part. I end up doing my own thing, and they can't stop me. They just adapt to me. So that's usually the path I've taken. So you know, when I see they are becoming a little more open minded I try and explain things to them and I try to do more respectful things. I try to call them more often and stuff like that, so in that way I'm still more American. I try to do more of the stuff that they want their daughter to do. I definitely think I'm choosing the best of both cultures. I like all my classical Chinese philosophies, ways of life and stuff like that from China, and I like the American independence kind of thing too, so I think the main problem is when the child adopts more American values than the parents. That's where the problem is. (Female interviewee from New York City who is going to graduate school in Michigan)

The determination taught to them also becomes the way they try to establish their own identity. Determination can become a battleground. Determination becomes a sub-theme of control because some interviewees cannot see determination without it.

So growing up their parental style is 'our expression of love to you is our sacrifice by how we would provide, not materially, but in that sense try to provide as easy a path for you to be academically and then ultimately (I guess in their eyes) successful in life.' I can say that most parents of a similar situation or Chinese background as myself ... are not very emotionally attached to their children from an affection standpoint. It's distinctive from perhaps an outside Asians I would say, just knowing some of my non-Asian friends. How I would even be as a parent to my kids it's completely different. (Older male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, works as an engineer in Michigan)

One thing that I can think of with my own race, if they are brought up very traditionally, especially if they are Chinese, they tend to be very

conservative. I'm not very conservative. I have [a] motorcycle. I enjoy life. You only have one life, and you live it. And, I see them as more conservative, and they are like, save money, save money, save money for the future. Yeah, okay yes, to a certain extent though. Don't be so fragile, you know what I'm saying. (Male interviewee from Southfield, Michigan, who went to school in Michigan)

*Politeness, confrontation, and filial piety.* Politeness in the Chinese American community becomes a form of coping through the use of expected behaviors. It is a tool used to maintain filial piety or duty to one's parents. Some say that politeness is a means to avoid confrontation. Politeness emerges sometimes when people would like to be confrontational but use it as an alternative. Politeness reoccurred several times in reference to confrontation. They are not necessarily interchangeable. The topic of politeness is not lack of confrontation. Just because someone is polite does not mean that they shy away from confrontation.

I mean saying certain things, or being indirect, or having white lies. Having all these... I think at least it's very similar with Japan because you kind of have to start reading between the lines whatever. You kind of have to do that in Taiwanese. You have this way of speaking in code. For example when my mom says wash the dishes she doesn't just mean wash the dishes. She means wash the dishes, scrub the counter, and put away the dishes. (Female interviewee from Ann Arbor, Michigan, working in Michigan)

They think I'm not ladylike, so they make me. They keep complaining about how I'm not. I'm kind of more Americanized than my sister and brother who are much older than me. They are like six and eight years older than me. They came here at a later age and I guess more aware of Asian culture and things like that. My sister's really more proper, and she knows the rules. She knows how to greet guests with tea and stuff like that. Call them all by their titles, and know what to say. When my relatives come I get really quiet, and I don't tell them stuff about me ... [So they think][her name] is not polite. Or, she's not, 'her mom doesn't teach her

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

well.' It's the worst comment you can get, 'she doesn't know the rules.' I know the rules; I just don't like to do them sometimes. It's not like we are really close with our extended relatives because you know, I hear my mom talk things about how bad they are sometimes, and how selfish they are. When they visit I don't want to put on a face like, no this is not happening. So I just am polite and say 'Hi,' but I don't go through all those things. You know, 'I really respect you, and think you are great and awesome.' So that was one thing that caused some tension in the family in that my relatives didn't think I was very nice. They would compare me to my cousins who weren't born here, and they can put on a front like that. Just be like speaking a lot of Chinese and asking everybody how they are doing, and giving tea to everybody. They just know how to go with the rules and customs. I just don't want to do it. (Female interviewee from New York City, getting her Ph.D. in Michigan)

The politeness can come off as an artificial act to some participants, but they continue to perform the ritualistic behavior attributed to politeness because it is expected of them.

The confrontation is sometimes waiting under the surface and is avoided until second-generation immigrants leave home.

They kind of want you to anticipate things. They try to keep the hierarchy, the whole elder/younger thing. If I'm going back to the eldest then I have to. I notice when I go back to the home country it kind of gets a little strange because you have to smile and laugh and just be generally pleasant around older folks whom you may not want to be around. It's not like here when you can tell them politely when you're an adult, 'Please don't do that' or whatever. (Female interviewee from Ann Arbor, Michigan, working in Michigan)

I don't think me, myself as an adult am nearly as extreme as [my mother] was and still is to this day. Even when I go back and visit her I always have to ask her to turn up the heat a little bit before I get there. You walk around the house in your winter jacket otherwise. So that is one thing that was very, very just like a hot topic all the time. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

Often confrontation appears in different facets, if politeness is yielding to parental expectations or not saying things to strangers. That kind of resistance can still include

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

conversations that are unpleasant with parents and/or be as simple as ignoring people who have offended you. Confrontation is not limited to just words but includes actions.

[Interviewee and family were insulted by a shop owner.] I felt like the Chinese thing is not too confrontational, whereas the non-Chinese thing was to be confrontational. I was only twelve, so I wasn't about to yell at this guy [shop owner]. I think we just left without buying anything, which is our way of being confrontational. I mean I did think about it, and when I took my World History class in 9<sup>th</sup> grade I learned that Chinese people did have a lot of inventions like gunpowder, and maybe that wasn't that great. I'm sure that somebody would have come up with it anyway. But, there have been a lot of contributions that Chinese culture and Chinese people have made, and it just made me feel more pride, and less like oh our people haven't done anything great. (Female interviewee from Long Island, New York, who is attending graduate school in Michigan)

I guess just being very respectful to elders or just being polite to people is important. They would say you didn't say 'Hi' to aunty this person and that person and stuff like that. You know being me I was just kind of a loner, so I wasn't the kind of person to just run up to people in the first place, so they were always on my back about it. [They would say] 'Oh be friendlier' and stuff like that. And eating, well that's another thing. Make sure you eat all three meals in a day. I guess just basic life skills are important. (Female interviewee from New York City who is attending to graduate school in Michigan)

Confrontation is a means by which second-generation children sometimes try to create their own identity space with parents, and their parents struggle with accepting their right to claim their own identities. It can be a constant struggle for the second-generation immigrants internally of whether the confrontation is worth it, or if they should just follow the Chinese norm of being polite in certain instances.

The families had a lot of issue over it [the marriage ceremony] because my aunt's daughter wanted an Americanized wedding [with a] traditional Christian type of marriage. Also in Chinese weddings instead of giving gifts they always give money, red envelope money. I feel like it is kind of

greedy for Chinese people to do that because when family members have weddings and stuff like that, when they go to the wedding, you always have to give them a red envelope. The reason her daughter was having an Americanized wedding, therefore they would not be getting any of that, but she [the aunt] really wanted it because she would invite her family and stuff to come. They would give the red envelope back. She [the aunt] wanted what she gave out to the other family members. That is kind of Chinese tradition, and then the food. There are a lot of Chinese people who don't like stuff that has butter, mayonnaise, and stuff like that. There was also a dispute over that because they wanted Chinese food and the other family they wanted American food. So, I guess that was a little bit of an issue. In the end they decided to make half/ half. The wedding issue is something that I think I have to look at in the future too in case I marry an American. I think my parents would really want a traditional wedding, but I might like a more modernized American wedding. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan going to school in Michigan)

*Cultural capital and the Chinese community.* Some families move near a stronger Chinese community on purpose. Some parents embrace the Chinese American community in all its facets as a safe group to raise their families in, so their children will learn cultural values, feel more comfortable getting specific types of food, and can speak in a Chinese language such as Mandarin or Cantonese. A language skill can be a valuable ethnic marker. This marker is viewed as a part of capital, and if someone doesn't speak or understand a Chinese language or dialect of some sort, they may see others or themselves as less Chinese, even if they spoke the language or dialect before. The community holds for some the virtues of what they remember old China to be. Similar to the Italian Americans, Orsi (1985) describes who contrast the ideal Italy to the eroded America, some families move far from the Chinese community on purpose so they can benefit economically from the lack of Chinese community. Some families transition from close to the Chinese communities to get away from them.

Parents, on the other hand, you could almost say definitely have cultural bias. Just in the sense of relationships, who you would establish with, there's definitely, whether it was ever openly communicated or not, you could tell with the words they would use or actions. Generally you'd try to keep to yourself. You can only trust family members and then there's generally less trust if you're not Chinese or another person. So, if I were to bring a friend to come over and play and stuff, you know there's just that 'Okay, that's okay,' but there's a boundary you know type of thing. 'Don't tell them [non-Chinese] too much.' 'Don't tell them we'll be away from home because our home might get ransacked or something like that.' So, it's purposely kept you know, private life is private life. (Older male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, works as an engineer in Michigan)

The community or enclave for some Chinese American families is seen as the enforcing group of the family. It creates the ideal culture to contrast with the lack of structure or tradition of the stereotype of the American society (Espritu, 2001; Purkayatha, 2005; Orsi, 1985). Some children are taught to be cautious of the non-Chinese American community.

We didn't go to any private schools or any special schools based on ethnicity, religion, or anything else. But we did have some Chinese classes, language classes that our parents enrolled us in so those would be through a church organization. The church my parents went to there was also a community college that I think one of the Chinese schoolteachers rented out on the weekend. So we did have some Chinese after-school language classes that we went to. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

I do have some Chinese abilities left or skills, so I appreciate that. But I remember it was really annoying to go there [Chinese school] on the weekends because it felt like they [my parents] were wasting their money because we don't have a lot of money to begin with. They thought it was so important that I need to go to these. I was like, 'You should just keep your money. It's ok. I don't need to learn. I'll just make sure I can speak to you guys and that's enough.' They were like, 'No, it is very important that you remember your roots and speak your own language, to write, and to read,' and stuff like that. Right now I can't really write and read. Like I know some characters but the type of Chinese school that was offered in New York City is not very advanced. So, a lot of that is lost especially

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

since I stopped going. Once I started high school I stopped going. But I remember it being really annoying especially on the weekends, especially when my friends went there. In the summers, it wasn't so bad. In the summers they do activities as well on top of Chinese school. So instead of classes you also did like other things that were fun. So it was more like a summer program. For after-school and on the weekends it was just annoying because you just went to school, and had to keep going to school. That's all you do is school, school, school, school, school. It was annoying. My parents did that too. (Female interviewee from New York City, doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

The Chinese community appears to be opportune for some second-generation Chinese Americans to learn about some religious practices and cultural norms they may have not known before. Unlike their Filipino and other South Asian counterparts interviewed in similar studies, the traditional Chinese religion didn't appear to be a major means by which the community tried to maintain traditional behavior (Espiritu, 2001; Purkayastha, 2005). This could be due to the purging of many traditions and faiths of China during the Mao Cultural Revolution. The community may be reaching for or attempting to tap into pre-Mao Chinese Traditions, which also creates another generational dynamic, which second-generation Chinese Americans have to negotiate through. Some second-generation Chinese only interact with their same generation level in the Chinese community, unless forced to interact with other generations because of religious or familial obligations.

We have gone to a Chinese [Christian] church because we are comfortable there. I think there is a certain comfort about being around your ethnic group, but a lot of things I don't know if I'm doing it because it is a part of my ethnicity or because it is what I believe. (Older male interviewee from Long Island, New York, who works as a doctor in Michigan)

Actually the household I grew up in was more like both parents worked, and I was raised by my both grandmothers each in separate shifts. So,

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

when you're talking about even their perception of what society was like in a foreign land, I am not sure my grandmothers at that time had a real good grasp of that either. So they tried to instill probably a lot of what they brought over here in terms of their heritage and culture. (Older male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who works as an engineer in Michigan)

I think she [my mother] starts to define it as relationship building. For her that's important. For her trying to use some sort of traditions are important. [mother is the carrier of the customs], like making sure that [we] at least observe customs. Like for example, as a mourner, a child of the dead, she didn't really go to anyone's houses. You are not supposed to do that. You absolutely are not supposed to do that. I don't know. I think it brings bad luck on the family that you are visiting if you do that or something. It actually got interesting because after she got back from the funeral in Taiwan, she asked if it was ok to go to [my] calligraphy class, and she asked if anyone was actually ok for her to go to their houses [for a funeral]. And [I] would be surprised about who would be ok with it and who would not be ok with it. But she had to make sure. My mother thinks his [her husband's] family is not very observant about these things. She had to tell him 'Don't do this. If you want to see someone you have to meet at a place other than their house and stuff like that.' And I was just thinking, well, my mother, she's the one who holds the traditions in our house. So I always think she is just trying to be socially pleasant to everybody, for her I would think that's a tradition. (Female interviewee from Ann Arbor, Michigan, working in Michigan)

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

Well, Asian Americans and Asian-born Asians had somewhat of a rift, at least in my school. We would take different classes. But the Asian kids born in the United States always took the higher classes. Everybody did without fail, but you know what? The kids born in China and Taiwan, who immigrated over at high school age, had this preconceived notion that American schools were lazy and stupid, and they would not be academically challenged, so they would never end up there. Like maybe there was one girl from Mainland China who wound up in my math class in junior year. Of course she completely killed us all, but that is because the teacher was stupid and because she had already learned it before in her school in China. She didn't really need any help. We all just floundered, but even she was like, 'Yeah, that teacher's terrible. I don't know how you can learn anything, you poor kids.' (Female interviewee from Ann Arbor, Michigan, working in Michigan)

Similar to observations reported by Ajrouch (2004) with Arab Americans who utilized the word "boater" to distinguish between the first generation Arab American immigrants and themselves the second and third generations, some second-generation Chinese American immigrants do not feel inclined to engage often with first generation American immigrants. In their understanding of their own identity or how they want to explore it, they choose not to be around the first generation often, same age or not. They may feel that their own generation in the Chinese community has similar experiences to themselves. They are more inclined to hang out with those members of the community as well. In the case of life partners, the majority of participants have kept them within the Chinese community, and the generation level is 1.5 or second generation.

I think that second generations-- We like to hang out with are those that are more Americanized, more than first generations. I think they tend to stick together because they are in a different environment. They like to be around the people who experienced what they did. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan going to school in Michigan)

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

I think most of the ones [Asian Americans] I hung out with were American born just like me, but the funny thing is we would get together and do things that were 'Asian.' Like we would get together and do a hot pot where you put all the meat together in the boiling pot of water, or we'd go and do karaoke, which is again very stereotypically 'Asian.' We'd go and eat at Korean BBQ, then they would do these hip hop dances for Asian cultural shows. So I'm sure there are other groups out there or even my other friends back in Troy saying, 'Hey let's go do a hot pot.' It was almost always very stereotypical, but that's just everyone coming together. Even though we were all American-born, it was like you might as well have been in China some of the stuff we were doing because for whatever reason those were the things people were interested in. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

The choice is explained by some second generations as due to negotiation experiences and choices, not just ethnicity based. Some have other second-generation Asian American friends. The discussion of marrying or dating outside of one's culture, race, and the Chinese community came up with only three interviewees. For the few that did date outside of the community or even processed it, they used their ideas and experiences to compare and contrast ideas about self and their cultural identities.

The interracial dating and marriage experience of some South Asians as described by Purkayastha (2005) were different. Most likely because of the color similarities or broader range in the South Asian American community, Black and Latino relationships were more common than in the Chinese American community. This was only an option if they had a more diverse and broader group of friends like the normal-relative second-generation interviewees of this study.

Interviewees of this study also created hypothetical scenarios about inclusive negotiations they may do between their own Chinese and American identities. As previously stated, in regard to marriage ceremonies and transnational identities, strategic

negotiations took place in the South Asian communities, to the point where some participants had two completely different weddings in different countries to accommodate different expectations of the wedding (Purkayastha, 2005)

One of things that I think my parents did, that was similar to a lot of non-Asian parents, was that they were always open to the idea of me marrying someone from a different culture, race, or ethnicity. There was never ever any discussion that I need to marry somebody Asian or Chinese, so [it's] my perception, at least in the community which I grew up, that was kind of the norm. There wasn't a whole lot of racial divides. Just thinking back to Anthropology 101, I remember the professor saying, 'You know your culture is fully assimilated when there is marriage amongst different races and ethnicities.' So, that's something that stuck out in my mind that even though I think my parents are generally pretty conservative that is one thing that I think they were actually pretty liberal about. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

I remember it being difficult [for four years] when I was dating my [African-American] boyfriend. There were a lot of times he would tell me to think about myself instead of my family. That for example making a decision to go to grad school was more for me and not for my family. It was something I was deciding, 'Should I go to grad school in Michigan and be away from everybody? I would contribute my income to my family, and I would have very little for myself.' My boyfriend would ask me to think about myself and you know at that time it was hard. I don't know if he understood how important my family was to me. It's hard for me to just think about myself without thinking about how it affects my family. I feel guilty that I'm not working, and I'm sort of doing my own thing. They like the fact that I'm still continuing education. They value it highly. That's one of the top reasons they wanted me here. They feel like it is for the good of everybody and me. It was very difficult when he kept telling me to think about [just myself]. Eventually I started to and I became more, I wouldn't say self-centered, but you know I also thought about myself. I felt like my whole thinking was sort of morphed when I came here. I didn't continue with that relationship. Now it's sort of different. I have a new boyfriend who is very, very Chinese and even though he was born here, he's very involved in his whole family, and it makes me think about mine and now I feel a little different again, but not so obvious that you see a really drastic change. It's just little subtle things about how you maybe think. (Female interviewee from New York City, doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

Very few of the participants went back and forth between China and the U.S. repeatedly and, therefore, didn't often see themselves as having a transnational identity. For some, Chinatown was the closest thing to China they would know. It was as if the Chinese community (Chinatown) or enclave was its own sub-society within the U.S. It is more of a representation of first generation Chinese American's idealistic understanding of China as oppose to an actual mini-replica of China itself (Orsi, 1985). Not all of the Chinese communities had a designated space. It was a state-of-mind of the community. That small idealistic representation was able to make some interviewees have a negotiated identity with the greater society and their community. The community held a sense of fakeness for some second generations, especially with regard to older first generations because they have to respect their elder community members and try to not offend the community members through their behaviors even if the second-generation immigrants had been offended by the community members. It is a part of the expectation of filial piety and making sure their families do not lose face in front of members of the community by second-generation immigrants' intentional or unintentional actions. The community plays a vital role in trying to maintain the cultural capital given to the second generation by their parents. The concept of face and cultural capital in this sense are one in the same. It is possible to lose face or capital in the community if one negotiates toward a direction that the community sees as detrimental. Similar patterns can be seen in the Filipino culture (Espiritu, 2001) as well as other parts of the South Asian communities (Purkayastha, 2005) when discussing values of the community and sexual

deviance from what they consider the norm. Sexual deviance is not the major concern within the Chinese American community.

It's a very paternalistic community in the sense that there is a very 'it takes a village to raise a child' sort of mentality, and I personally don't like that. My mother is ok with other adults kind of just shoving me around, literally. With me I had a touch issue as a kid. I didn't want just anybody touching me, or like people I didn't know coming up to me going like 'here give this to our mom.' Whatever, I just found that annoying. Introduce yourself. I'm like 'Who is this person, and why should I talk to you? Not if you are just going to be rude like that. But in the Chinese world, they're adults and you do what they say. To answer your question, that is why a lot of people probably leave, they are not going to take Chinese classes in college. And, they really shouldn't be expected to. I had a roommate who was like fourteen years old, and she could speak. She couldn't write, and I answered the phone once and it was her mother. She was like 'oh you speak Chinese so well', and I was like 'oh well.' She was like 'I need you to tell my daughter that she needs to be here.' I'm like 'I got to study now.' The problem is that they probably don't speak Chinese in the house, so their language skills just like nose dive, and they just don't understand anything. Later on it really bites them in the ass I think because then they can't really communicate properly with other Chinese people, or in the fact that at least in the way our community is still close knit in a sense. If you can't speak Chinese anymore it tends to, I mean I'm not saying sure it's impressive that you really still speak Chinese. A bunch of people do it, they just don't want anything to do with it, for the most part. Like they can still speak it a little bit, but they don't really care or whatever. (Female interviewee from Ann Arbor, Michigan, working in Michigan)

I remember when I went back to New York just recently. I went to a Chinese restaurant, and we were ordering something, and I was able to say some orders in Chinese, and there was this one order that was *sta pei* string beans or something. I was like, 'Can I have this one?' He picked on me. He said, 'What is that?' I [said], 'Do you really not know what that is or you are just testing me?' He said, 'I'm testing you. Don't you know your Chinese well?' I said, 'I don't remember what these beans are called,' which is what I told him. Things like that, like little things make me feel like I'm losing the language. There are a lot of times when I'm speaking to my mom, and I'm like, 'What is that called?' I have a lot of trouble explaining to her what I do here because a lot of that is not in your everyday language, [it is] manuscripts, researching, participants, and stuff like that. I can see that if I go down more of the path of academia, this is

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

going to be more difficult for me to retain my language, which is very important to me. (Female interviewee from New York City, doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

*Environmental competence.* White communities are normative communities. Repeatedly the participants who grew up in white dominated areas would state that they lived in a normal or safe community. Some second generations see the white world as normative and safe, despite the out-group dynamic and privacy concerns of some of their first generation parents. All things exist on a spectrum, but how far toward the safety and normality of the mainstream white community do some second generations see the American existence? While none said it, there is a subtle implication that outside of the safe, white suburban world is a lack of normality and safety. There is also an implication that, if an area is not dominated by an affluent Caucasian or Jewish community, it isn't a suburb. For Filipino females interviewed by Espiritu (2001), whiteness was clearly also associated with being a normal "American," implying that anything outside of whiteness was not American or not normal. Similar to that ideal is the concept of the forever foreigner (Lowel, 1996), where Asian Americans are viewed as outsiders and not normal Americans. "Foreigners within" (Tuan, 1998) implies not only that others see them as foreigners but that they see themselves as foreigners or abnormal "Americans" or outsiders (Espiritu, 2001).

I grew up in Grand Rapids right in Forest Hills District. So, you know really nice schools and safe neighborhood. So, I was a spoiled little kid. It was primarily white. I think once I went into middle school/high school, it was probably me and five other Asian kids in the entire school but mostly white. I would say we had some Bosnian and a few Black people as well, but it was mostly all white. But it never felt weird, mean, [I never felt like] the Asian one or anything like that. Everyone was pretty much inclusive. (Female interviewee from Grand Rapids, Michigan)

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

So I'm from Long Island, New York, and where I grew up is very Jewish. The biggest minority was Asian, so it was not like so it was only white typical American with white Anglo Saxon Protestant types. The area was pretty affluent. It was dominated by the working professional types. So there are plenty of doctors and lawyers who live in that community. The schools, the make up there was predominantly white but Jewish-American and then it was made up of what is considered minorities in the U.S. And, the students were affluent because the parents were affluent. The school is very good, and I've been described as going to a private school that was actually public because of the opportunities and how much money was put into the education system there. (Female interviewee from Long Island, New York, who is attending graduate school in Michigan)

I was in New York City for two years. Then we moved out the suburbs on Long Island. It was pretty typical suburban. I would say that it was pretty much heavily Caucasian. It [the education system] was pretty good, middle class. I was always pretty comfortable. I didn't really notice the difference in ethnicity too much. I'm not sure why. I just always felt comfortable. (Older male interviewee from Long Island, New York, who works as a doctor in Michigan)

Looking at the language participants use to describe themselves in some of these scenarios, we see that “Asian” or “Chinese” was often used instead of “Chinese American” or “Asian American,” which again created an outsider identity. The word “white” was often used, which was previously categorized as “normal” or “American” (Lipsitz, 1998). That also included the Jewish American ethnic/religious group, which was ascribed the “American” label. That created the dichotomous concept of white versus non-white and a normal versus abnormal (Accapadi, 2012; Espiritu, 2001; Ajrouch, 2004; Purkayastha, 2005).

In contrast to the belief that “white communities are normative communities” was a belief that diverse communities are considered normative. The concept that “diverse communities are relative” emerged amongst other interviewees as a way to process community normality. Interviewees who grew up in communities that were not apparently predominantly

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

white or were mixed communities appear to be able to negotiate and adjust to different communities and do not see one community as more normal or safer than another. They lived in areas that may have been affluent and mixed as well as impoverished and mixed. Low socio-economic status and non-suburban life also didn't become synonymous with danger for some second-generation immigrants. If they moved from a mixed community to a predominantly "white" community, they could adjust in either setting. Some "code-switching" tactics may be used to adjust. In some cases they are able to recognize who is the dominant group and interpret why others not belonging to that group may want to imitate them. These diverse communities are sometimes able to help second generations deal with negotiating the concepts of beauty with self and color. In the interviews conducted by Purkayastha (2005: 50) with Asian Americans, one interviewee's interactions with blacks and Latinos in her community made her adjust her beauty ideals. She discovered accepting her skin and appreciating it.

It was in the Sunset Park area. It is a fairly poor neighborhood, but not like so poor that crime is rampant. It's like still pretty peaceful. It was a pretty mixed community. There were Hispanics, some Chinese people, Muslims, African Americans of course, and some white people. I don't know that's the thing about it. (Female interviewee from New York City, who is going to graduate school in Michigan)

In elementary, after we arrived in Michigan, I grew up in a more black neighborhood. And the school I think there were only 4 or 5 Asians, including me and my sister. So there were very few of us. We participated in a lot of brotherhood programs. Which was like people of different cultures, just introduce ourselves and something of our culture at our schools. After I moved to Grand Rapids, the school was an all white school. It was an all white school, but there was probably 1 black student there. The Asian population there was just pretty much me. Around 3<sup>rd</sup> grade I met quite a few Filipinos and Mexicans. Well at that time because the area was mostly black, everyone tried to act a little black and dress a little black. You know try and fit in and be cool. I think that is when I first came across different ethnicities. I saw people dress up in different ways,

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

always covering their faces and stuff like that. I think I did notice because they kind of stood out. Communication-wise we rarely ever talk. I guess we kind of isolate ourselves to our own groups. Like I stayed with the Chinese students, usually like whites and blacks, but Mexicans they like to group to themselves as well. Usually I didn't have any Mexican friends. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan going to school in Michigan)

I remember in elementary school it was a lot more white people and then you know the white flight. And as my grades progresses as in going through school, you know, I see progressively more African-Americans populating the schools. And so the main thing I noticed is the difference in the amount of race population. There is a shift, definitely a shift. I guess the white people going up north and the black people shifting to around the Detroit metro area. I can't really say [if Southfield is different] because like I said I don't have anything to really compare, it's just home to me and feel every time I come here like when I go on vacation and I come back I'm like, oh, I'm just glad to be home. (Male interviewee from Southfield, Michigan, who went to school in Michigan)

I think that I was too young to notice in terms of ethnic diversity, but there were some Asians in the community. I think Troy specifically is a fairly diverse community, so there were Asians. I definitely remember in high school for example there being a lot of diversity. So for example, I was in orchestra, and there were a lot of Asians in orchestra. Also through church because we went to a Chinese church and through some of those Chinese language classes that I mentioned. We had a lot of friends both at my age and also my parents had friends who also were friends with their parents. So, we had dinner parties and get-togethers at a fairly regular basis with other Asians. But we didn't only hang out with Asians. So it was everybody who used to be in the community whether it was Caucasians, African Americans, or Hispanics. There wasn't any clear divide in that line growing up. There weren't people who we hung out with and others who we did not based on race or anything like that. I think I definitely knew for example my Caucasian friends weren't Asian. I think I knew that from a very young age. Just playing with the kids in my neighborhood I think I was aware on a very basic level, we are Asian, and they are not. I guess the answer is that as far as my memories go back that we were exposed to other races, other cultures, and other ethnicities just by virtue of hanging out with other kids and parents. Sometimes we would get baby sat by the neighbors. That was just something that was real open. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

They were more willing to engage themselves in cross-cultural interactive learning experiences with non-white groups intermingled in their neighborhoods. Their own cultural identity didn't necessarily become dichotomous, American or Chinese. This appeared to aid in their ability to decipher bias behavior in their own groups when they were able to interact across racial categories. Sometimes the interaction with other diverse groups created a lack of transnational identity, as some interviewees discussed, as well as the strength in a transnational identity. The environment once again creates ethnic markers and participants' opportunity to negotiate between them, creating their narrative.

When I first came here, I told you I was in Chinatown and that was for about three and a half years. I was in elementary school, so after I finished elementary school we sort of moved to Brooklyn. So for the rest of my elementary school years, it didn't seem all that different. Yeah we didn't know anybody, and we had our grandfather and some of our relatives that did move here. My school was really close. Everybody in there was Chinese, so I didn't really feel like it was a big transition. Everybody spoke my language or my dialect. So, to me it seemed pretty present, and I remember having a best friend and I fit in. It was kind of different when I moved to Brooklyn because there was more diversity there. Everybody there was mostly Chinese except for my teachers, they were mostly American. When I moved to Brooklyn there was more of a variety of people there. There were people from Pakistan, you know, just from all over the world, all sorts of colors. I just remember it being a little different, but I don't remember it being difficult. (Female interviewee from New York City, who is doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

Many second-generation immigrants felt it did not matter if they grew up in a predominantly Caucasian neighborhood, or not were able to see a difference between actual cultural mixing versus numerical diversity. In their opinions, the two were not the same. The numerical diversity, similar to politeness, could come off as artificial to

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

second-generation immigrants. In their understandings, it mocked actual diverse engagement.

I went to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and that's one of the most diverse cities in the country just because it pulls from so many people from around the country go to undergrad there. I think I hung out with more Asians, consciously hung out. So whereas in Troy there's a good mix of people, it's still predominantly white, but there were African Americans, and other Asians, and Indians, just all sorts of different cultures together, and you just kind of hung out with the people you went to school with or the people you ran track with or whatever. U of M, as diverse as it was it still felt like the groups were more segregated because many of the student activities and the clubs and all those sorts of things were all broken down by your ethnicity. You would join the Asian group for church or join the Asian group for a cultural show or join the Asian group for this and that. Even though there was a lot of diversity in terms of numbers on campus, it was very segregated in terms of feeling because you would tend to only hang out with people of the same ethnicity. I felt like in Troy it was more of a melting pot type of feeling where a bunch of different cultures came together and took a bunch of different pieces from everybody. Whereas in Ann Arbor, it was more like, you are going to stick with people who are just like you and you are going to do all the things that they do, and it was less co-mingling I guess is the word, between the different cultures as a result of that. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

I went to U of M, a school that touts cultural diversity. Whether or not I was a part of a peer group or it just happened to somehow be that way, there was a large cultural diversity among the student body. They were either purposely or it was just that way. Most ethnic groups come out with their own ethnic groups. So if you were to see someone maybe a mix of racial and ethnic backgrounds were to mingle together, to me that would be atypical versus the norm. So, that's kind of the way I saw it. (Older male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who works as an engineer in Michigan)

### *Gender Norms and the Burden of Culture*

Under this topic are language skills *and* cooking/food culture. The maintenance of the culture repeatedly can be seen as a burden resting mostly on the shoulders of only one

gender. The carriers of tradition, language, food, and culture repeatedly are females in narratives of the second-generation interviewees. The most prevalent of these behaviors is passing on language skills and the food culture. Women are expected to learn and be able to make traditional Chinese food items or western ones. Through negotiation of their societal expectations, female participants could choose to try to force sharing of this behavior between them and their partners. The male participant should choose to take a more active role on a larger scale, but their current behavior is often not questioned by the females themselves. Just as not doing something is negotiation, going along with gender norms is also negotiating. This behavior is often regarded by male and female participants as the natural flow of life. Cooking duties especially were not processed by males or females for the heavily gendered behavior that it was presented as. This is not very different from women of other ethnic communities in America (Purkayastha, 2005). Annechen Bahr Bugge (2003) expressed how cooking food is “identity work” and in some ways the mark of a good wife or mother, even for Norwegian women. Espiritu (2001: 423) discussed how kin work and cooking are expected responsibilities for females. It is so ingrained that the females are not able to separate the ethnicity from the gender. They do not realize similar burdens fall on white women as well as other ethnic women.

*Language skills.* Chinese after-school programs, in particular their relation to language retention, have appeared in the female sub-culture frequently. Many of the female participants stated that they were made to go to a Chinese after-school program to

learn language skills outside of the home. While for most males and females spoken language exists, many are functionally illiterate when it comes to the *han zi* or written Mandarin and Cantonese. An effort or attempt was made by most parents to try and prevent illiteracy in the majority of the female sub-culture, as opposed to most of the male interviewees, who for one reason or another do not have the same amount language skill verbally and/or written. The educational effort, according to the interviewees, was only made with three of the males. Therefore, the stress to maintain the verbal and written skills becomes the duty of the person that knows the most language skills. In many cases, that is a female family member. The duty of maintaining language causes the negotiation of language to become a stress factor for some of the female participants unknowingly.

Yes, I went to a Chinese school after school to the beginning of elementary to school to the middle of middle school. I didn't really like it, and I would basically have my mom do my homework. I really didn't pay attention. My friends and I would cheat off each other, and I really didn't learn anything. But, I do regret that because I can't really read or write. I try to speak Mandarin as much as possible with my parents, and with my family. And, so that is something that I like to uphold, and if I have children one day I would love to teach them Mandarin. That is very important to me, even though it wasn't as important to me growing up. I find it hard to keep up Mandarin. I find that it is slipping away. Even though I haven't lived at home for a very long time, I just feel that I haven't had contact with my family or my family friends to be able to practice. Even though I very well could find people in Ann Arbor to practice Chinese with, I guess I don't really seek that out. I feel pretty lucky that Ann Arbor has a lot of Chinese food, Asian food, and even Taiwanese food, so, I can keep up with that. (Female interviewee from Long Island, New York, who is attending graduate school in Michigan)

Now I'm like sort of uncomfortable. There are even people here who are from Hong Kong. There are a lot of grad students from Hong Kong. They would speak to me in Cantonese, and I would respond back in English just

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

because I don't feel comfortable speaking. I know my Chinese is not as good as theirs, so I didn't want to sound silly, so I would respond in English. They would be like, 'Why are you responding to me in English?' Even my advisor, she speaks Cantonese sometimes and she would invite me to eat out with other grad students who also speak Chinese. They would speak Cantonese and I would respond in English, and it's obvious, and it's really awkward. That's the thing I struggle with the most. (Female interviewee from New York City, doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

I'm really trying to learn more about Chinese classical language. Most people don't study that nowadays, but it is the main part of the culture that I'm fascinated with, not so much the cultural stuff. So I can study ancient China stuff. I can really read the philosophies and the language. (Female interviewee from New York City, who is attending graduate school in Michigan)

I like the fact that we speak Chinese, and I'm going to continue that. I speak Chinese to my parents mostly because they can't speak English back to me. If I were to have my own family, I would like to continue that. Maybe some of the holidays, I would want to tell them the stories behind the reasons for the holidays and to eat the type of food we are supposed to eat during those holidays. (Female interviewee from New York City, doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

A few male participants stated that they thought about language and passing on that cultural norm to their children before their children were born. There were at least two males, who were younger, that thought about it. Other males were in the process of thinking about it. One male interviewee never brought it up.

Language was a little different. I mean I spoke mostly English at home but a little bit of Chinese. I went to a Chinese church part-time as a church thing. As far as a regular after-school thing, I never did. And at that time there probably weren't that many because it was mostly a Caucasian area, and we would have had to go pretty far to get to one. No, [my children don't go to a Chinese after-school program]. We actually taught our kids some Chinese ourselves, but we knew that if I have a first grade level, by the time he was 3 and 4 years old, there would be some things I couldn't answer in Chinese or teach him in Chinese. We knew realistically there

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

were only going to be some very basic things, so we knew that that wasn't going to go on forever. (Older male interviewee from Long Island, New York, who works as a doctor in Michigan)

My parents' perspective, they sent me to a lot of classes to try and teach me Chinese. I just never really picked it up. I never saw the point of it while growing up, and to me it was just more class on the weekend, which no kid wants to go through that. I'm at the point in my life where I am functionally illiterate, and I probably couldn't write my own name in Chinese any more. I definitely can't read it. I understand a little bit, so I can understand when my parents are talking to me, but I couldn't even speak it. So I respond back to them in English, not Chinese. I don't really have a strong desire for my kids, when I have kids, to teach them the language. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

We had a personal teacher for awhile. Someone from around the area who went to college there, and she was Chinese. She taught us a little bit of Chinese for around 3-4 months. That was about it. Other than that, we usually talked Chinese with our family members because they don't speak that much English, and I learned a lot of Chinese in college. I took it for a year, and before that I learned it from watching various TV shows and stuff. Yeah, verbally I'm good. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan attending school in Michigan)

Actually, the household I grew up in was more like both parents worked, and I was raised by both grandmothers each in separate shifts. So, when you're talking about even their perception of what society was like in a foreign land, I am not sure my grandmothers at that time had a real good grasp of that either. So they tried to instill probably a lot of what they brought over here in terms of their heritage and culture. I didn't think a lot about that. Language of course, I mean being raised by my grandmother's English was definitely not spoken of a lot. Even probably with my mom more than my dad for the most part, English wasn't usually spoken, unless necessary because at that time my grasp of Chinese wasn't sufficient enough to be able to communicate everything. So language yeah was an obvious one. I married someone that was born and raised in Hong Kong. So, by default she kind of infused that culture that strictness, perhaps a certain practicality of how we live our life to a certain extent. (Older male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who works as an engineer in Michigan)

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

The most interesting dilemma for some second-generation immigrants is when their significant other is Chinese American but from a different sub-group. They have to decide what languages and dialect(s) they will teach their children. They also have to look at potential grandparent involvement in their children's lives.

So for whatever reason, languages just never stuck with me, and it's not something I'm passionate about. Meanwhile, my wife is fluent in French and English, of course, and Cantonese. So she's got three languages down, and I've got one. The interesting thing is my wife is Cantonese. Her parents speak [Cantonese]. I guess they are much more fluent in Cantonese than they are in English. So that is their first language choice, and they have kind of hinted at the idea that when we have kids that they are going to want their grandkids to learn Cantonese. So, I guess the difficulty for me is I never knew Cantonese to begin with, but on top of that, there is kind of an outside influence of them wanting to teach my kid something, which is ok. But, I'm definitely not going to be able to help out, and I'm not necessarily for or against it. I'm just kind of neutral on that issue right now. I guess there could be a situation where my kid is speaking Cantonese, and I can't understand what he or she is saying. So, I guess that can be a little challenging. But, there is a little bit of pressure from the grandparents because they want, I think, to instill some of the traditional values, and one way to do that is to teach the kid the language that they speak. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

I think the language part will make it difficult. Right now I'm dating someone who is Chinese, but he speaks Fujinese [Fujin province dialect]. That is a completely different dialect than Cantonese, which is what I speak. So, I think there will be some issues there in the future. Like if we were to have a family to continue that, I feel like I might be more comfortable with English, to just continue with English. I'm afraid my parents won't be able to speak to their grandchild. That is something that is really difficult. (Female interviewee from New York City, doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

*Cooking/food culture.* Many of the female participants expressed an interest in cooking traditional Chinese food. Some see it as a cultural given that they should want to

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

cook traditional food. Food culture appears as a staple in the second-generation Chinese American female's sub-culture. Statements reflect a need to pass that on to the next generation. Female members of the Chinese-American community are performing much of the cooking, according to both male and female interviewees.

Well, an obvious one, cooking, Chinese cooking. I have been trying to experiment with Chinese sauces and things like that starting with the very basic stir fry, and then moving making really advanced things. Whenever we eat dinner we have just the small things, where I have to set up the table and the dad is the last one called so everything is ready when he gets to dinner. (Female interviewee from Grand Rapids, Michigan)

I love Chinese food, and so, I do try to eat it or cook it, usually its cook it. (Female interviewee from Long Island, New York, who is attending graduate school in Michigan)

One interviewee expressed that cooking and eating together wasn't just about passing on cultural norms but was a huge communal experience for her. According to American Advertisers food can be a way to harness others' care, love, and create connections for females in the tradition gendered domesticated identity. They themselves have a hard time understanding how to understand cooking identities from a feminist perspective (Perkins, 2006). Sometimes females are willing to sacrifice cooking, which they may like to do, for the companionship of others. The companionship is just as important. The race of the person doesn't matter, as long as it was someone to share food with.

I really like the way we cook food, so I still cook food the same way at home, and we eat with chopsticks. I grew up eating with my family, like family dinners. It's sort of difficult when I moved here [Ann Arbor] that I don't get to eat with people. When I first moved in, my roommate was in

my program. She's African-American. It was very difficult because she liked to eat whenever she wanted, and I wanted to eat with her. I would try and make meals together so that we could eat together. She would be like, 'Oh no, I'm not hungry.' I would take that so offensively. I was like, 'Why can't we eat together even though you're not hungry?' That's a part of the learning experience [talking to her roommate]. Then I started slowly adapting to her way. You should be eating [only] when you are hungry. That is why you are fat [talking to herself]. Things like that. You shouldn't eat because it is time to eat, which is what I've been trained to do my whole life with my family. Eating is such a social experience, so yeah, slowly I would just [accept that] she would cook her own food, and I would cook my own food. Occasionally we would eat together. I would try to make it so we would eat together. I would be like, 'Oh, I'm hungry too now'. She's like, 'Why are you tagging along with me everywhere I go' kind of thing. Yeah, except now she's not there anymore and I have a roommate who is never home. She's Asian too, but she's like super American and very busy as well, so she's never home. I just eat alone, well most of the time when I don't go out to eat, but when I go out, that's the only reason I would go out, is to eat with people. I don't like to buy food and eat it at home because I would just rather cook. (Female interviewee from New York City, doing her Ph.D. in Michigan)

Another female participant noticed the use and/or waste of food as a cultural difference.

That is not a portion of the "American identity" she chose to adopt. Her mother enforced a strong will to use food and supplies in the most efficient way possible. She has stood by that upbringing. Food has also taken on a medicinal property for her as well.

... Trying to waste as little food as possible when you are cooking, because again this is about my mother because she is like the traditional person in our house. But we were watching 'Iron Chef,' I notice every time we are looking at American chefs or just western chefs in general, we watch them cutting stuff. She's like, 'What are they doing? They are wasting so much food.' Like for example if they are cutting a pineapple. There is a special way to do it where you only cut off the skin. Whereas the American will do the big chunky squares and my mother is like, 'You are missing a lot of meat.' Yeah we don't do that. The way I try to cut things, I try to make sure I'm not wasting. Sometimes my mother will buy certain foods and be like, 'You should eat this because it's cooling, and it's good for you'. I think that's very distinctly Chinese in that she thinks of food as medicine.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

This goes beyond the whole chicken soup and drinking lots of fluids.  
(Female interviewee from Ann Arbor, Michigan, working in Michigan)

Only one male interviewee distinctly stated that he enjoys cooking. The majority of males made general statements about cooking using “we” statements. “We” could be “she,” if they are only having a discussion about the food, and their wives, mothers, and grandmothers are actually the ones cooking. Food is a means for men to help their children form identities even if they are not cooking themselves. Advertisers have had similar understandings of identity negotiation and cooking from a motherly perspective. According to Parkin (2006), advertisers have tried to sell American women on the idea that they can help create their family’s identity as well as their own with the food they are expected to create. Why shouldn’t Chinese Americans as well as Caucasian American understand food as a negotiation tool?

As far as food is concerned, my wife cooks Chinese food probably about a third of the time or quarter of the time. So, I think we have probably mixed in more of that than we would have, if we were a Caucasian family or an African-American family, but it’s not like we go out of our way to only eat that or something like that. I think we don’t want them to completely not be aware of foods, any identity, or have no feel of the culture. But, I don’t think we have placed it as a high priority. It’s just something we want to include as part of our lives and our kids growing up.  
(Older male interviewee from Long Island, New York, who is a doctor in Michigan)

Well, we do eat Chinese food at home. My wife does most of the cooking, but she cooks Chinese food at a fairly regular basis. I think, nobody forced us to do that. (Male interviewee from Troy, Michigan, who is a lawyer in Michigan)

I think that cooking is one I’m actually into to because my parents own a restaurant as well. I think the first thing we all know how to cook, my

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

cousins and stuff, would be rice because we eat that with all of our meals, so I think that would be something more Chinese. I think everyone, well we always eat rice three meals a day every day. We just don't feel right when there is no rice there. (Male interviewee from different places in Michigan going to school in Michigan)

The last interview falls under the contradictory notion that cooking is okay for males and should be dominated by males in a restaurant setting. Males are the judges of food or the food experts (Perkins. 2006: 126-128). The restaurant industry is dominated by males, not because of an inability to cook on the part of females but because of gendered stereotyping. The interviewee gives a rationale that the reason he likes cooking is because his parents own a restaurant. This implies that the only reason he as a male likes cooking is because his family consists of cooks, though he does not claim to be an expert cook. Regardless of who is doing the cooking, cooking has taken on the role of being a meaningful tool in the negotiation process, whether it is with western food or not. Food, and especially in the family, is important in the second-generation identity and the production of culture in the family.

## CONCLUSION

### *What Kinds of Negotiating Are Second-Generation Chinese-Americans Immigrants Doing?*

Identity, particularly for female participants, felt steadier when they looked at themselves as a Chinese-American mix. Many of the female participants think about their identity and process it because they conscientiously think about their negotiating behaviors and clearly state choices with not just family, community, friends, but also employment. Female participants seem to be more aware about what things they will or will not do in reference to language, cultural identity, and potential child-rearing. If they are not completely settled on something, then they are at least processing their options and are in turn conscious participants in their identity development.

The majority of the male interviewees negotiate with a little bit less awareness of who they think they are, as well as what they are doing, than the female participants. They do not appear to be expected to process that information throughout most of their young lives. In fact, it appeared as though they are just starting to have to process who they are by means of processing their own children's development or this interview. Most weren't aware of the significance of some of the questions asked, whereas the females more often than not do. Some interviewees even speak in a way that may contradict statements previously made about culture or identity. Only two males really seemed to be processing their current and future identities before they had spoken with me. There weren't as many, 'I never thought about it before' statements with those male interviewees. The number of, 'I never thought about it' comments from the male

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

participants greatly outnumbered similar comments from the females in reference to their behavior and negotiation of their ethnic and cultural identities. Some males stated that they do not think about their identity in that realm at all. The youngest male however had the least, ‘I never thought about it’ comments. He seemed to be more in-tune with his cultural identity. He didn’t have all the answers, but he was willing to process them.

Both male and female interviewees view language as a strong negotiation behavior. All participants know at least some Chinese as well as English. Some have traces of a Chinese accent regardless of if they were born in the U.S. or not. This could be in part due to heavy involvement in their local Chinese community and location. Many of the interviewees had to go to a language school. The majority attending were female. Females repeatedly made statements that they take the lead as the linguistic and cultural educators of their children. This ethnic marker tends to make some interviewees identify as more Chinese than not. The words they chose to speak about themselves were often as Asian or Chinese more so than Chinese American or Asian American, especially when speaking about being in the presence of other Chinese American or Asian Americans. When asked directly about being American, the language used was often “I’m American” or “I see myself as American.”

In the male interviews oftentimes they identify that the females bear the majority of the burden of language, culture, and cooking. These women can be their mothers, grandmothers, or wives. When discussing food, “we” statements quickly turn into “they” statements when referring to the actual cooking taking place. A unique trend that can be highlighted was that some younger male interviewees started processing what role they

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

would like to take in passing on traditions of language, culture, and cooking to their future children. Some cook, and some are thinking about taking a more active role in the cultural education of their future children, to make their children more aware of their negotiation opportunities. The burden of thinking about one's behavior and how to negotiate in a societal realm still falls heavily in the laps of females. The burdens second-generation Chinese-American immigrant females carry are shared by females in many other ethnic and racial groups, Filipinas (Espiritu, 2001), South Asian females (Purkayastha, 2005) just to name a few. Hopefully, with the emergence of some newfound awareness with younger males, the pattern of the burden of conscientiousness and culture will shift.

Most interviewees had an ambivalent relationship with the Chinese community. They like it for its safety, but do not like its attempt at control and structure. They can not always master, or haven't always been told about, the rules they are expected to follow. That is why many of them stick to their own generational groups if they willfully choose to get involved with Chinese community. Their generation has similar experiences and may be willing to do similar exploratory things to help develop or decide their identities. Those choices to associate with second generations or 1.5s are different from the obligatory interactions with older members of the community, often forced upon them by parents or older siblings. Some second-generation members purposefully do not get involved with first generations outside of family members. So there is a cultural divide between those who were possibly born here or raised here at a younger age and those who immigrated over later on in life.

*How Does Cultural Negotiating Help Second-Generation Chinese American Immigrants Develop Their Own Identities?*

Through negotiation, some have decided to see themselves as average, normal just like everyone else, to a point. This is similar to the South Asian interviewees Purkayastha (2005) interviewed, who stated a willingness to see themselves as a part of a larger group of their ethnicity. They see themselves as holding more determination and drive due to family pressures from the Asian community or control. Some like the control. Some didn't like the control, but still see some of its benefits and plan on using it on their own children in some element of child rearing. It is what some used to refer to as Boater/FOB (Fresh off the Boat) guilt.

There is belief that through emotional manipulation by way of religion, spankings, pressure to benefit the family, other forms of discipline, and culture, parents are able to get children to do what they want, even into old age. This also makes their children feel bad about not doing the expected behavior even in the absence of the parent. Some participants have referred to it as control or discipline. They sense it even when they have not done anything wrong. They say parents just want to be in control. Any way parents do not feel in control they may attempt to regain it. This control extends not only from parents but also into the broader Chinese community. Several interviewees complained that they felt pressured and controlled by community members testing them, or telling them to go places, and do specific things. They, due to social pressures, are expected to be polite, grin, and bare it. Unlike their South Asian American counterparts, the control element is not being manifested from a mostly religious morality creating a belief in

superiority of their community through not just a local but a transnational level (Purkayastha, 2005: 88). It is strictly ethnically based and sometimes racially based if they are willing to open up to the broader concept of being Asian American.

Cooking, even if by a spouse, appears to be a major contributing factor to their identities. Almost all participants tried to have some element of Chinese cooking in their life. What varied was how often it took place and who was performing that task. Very few males cooked. The females dominated in cooking at home, which was in keeping with gender norm expectations in several racial and cultural groups around the world. They, males and females, generally appeared to believe that was the way it should be or expected it to be. It was a consistent negotiation tactic to maintain some Chinese culture through the sharing of food. Language on the other hand was not as consistent.

Verbal language frequently came up as another negotiation tactic. Some interviewees were illiterate in Chinese, and only one spoke next to no Mandarin or Cantonese. The language element was at least minimally maintained. The important aspect for many interviewees was to pass on their native language to their children, even if they couldn't speak it well themselves. This burden still fell heavily upon females. Only two males had strong verbal Chinese language. The fact that three of the male participants didn't go to any Chinese school or language-tutoring program, did contribute to the lack of literacy. However, one of the strongest speakers never went to Chinese school, but did have two generations of family members, with little English skills, that lived in his home and took care of him as a child.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

The few interviewees who had permanent significant others indicated their romantic partners were Chinese American. Most partners were second generation themselves. Some interviewees are or have been open to dating outside of their race, but few talked about it. Having children or being of a childbearing age helped many of the males' process and think about their own identity, and what they would hope for their children. For the females, it is necessary to constantly be concerned about traditions and culture, especially as they are expected to them on to their children. Only one male stated that he felt any of that pressure to make sure he was practicing his roles in the Chinese family and community. He was the youngest interviewee, twenty years old.

Some interviewees lived in areas dominated by Caucasians or other "white" groups when their parents chose the destination. In fact, some parents intentionally chose to live where less Chinese lived, due to business reasons. Some have chosen to still live in those neighborhoods, but associate in their personal time with those fitting closer to the second-generation, 1.5 Chinese group. This is not just in religious activities, but leisure. Two of the male participants stated that a Chinese Christian church was the reason why they had mostly Chinese-American friends. One participant stated that it just happened to work out that way, while the other stated that there is comfort in being around those similar to oneself.

Other participants grew up in either a very diverse neighborhood at some point in their childhood or Chinese enclaves. Those interviewees seemed able to mix and understand the concept that dominant groups can vary by location, and that they didn't necessarily see one place as more normal than another. They also didn't see the need to

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

necessarily downplay their own culture in order to fit in. Their identity just helped make up the “melting pot” of their city or hometown.

### *What Identities Form?*

Marginal man (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937) appears to be a big identity for Chinese-Americans who grew up in predominantly white areas with little connection to Chinese or other ethnic groups. Statements can often be summed up as, ‘I’m just like everyone, but not’. Everyone means white groups, and white was the assumed norm for them because they didn’t have many other cultural or racial groups with which to compare. They use the words safe and normal when speaking about their neighborhoods and schools. They felt normal there as well. The question begs to be asked, what is normal? Those participants that grew up just in one culturally dominated environment didn’t appear to have any major personal adjustment problems with mixed company. They were able to see some differences and process them. If they didn’t like something, they often chalked it up to a person and not a group. Even when family members used what one interviewee called “racist” language to describe other cultural groups, they processed the situations and came to realize that thinking of others as “not as good” was incorrect and just as wrong as someone thinking that way about them. Those participants expressed being able to code switch depending on their environment or friends. They appeared better able to analyze the cultural norms of the areas in which they engaged. They sometimes can even understand the difference between numerical diversity and actual mingling of groups. This was repeatedly stressed when speaking about the city of Ann Arbor versus other Michigan cities.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

No one saw themselves as un-American or felt they had a closer tie to China than they did here. There were only three interviewees that expressed a sense of transnational identity. All had traveled back and forth from the U.S. to China. The majority of interviewees just vacillated on their relationships with the Chinese-American continuum not fully one or the other, by means of negotiation. They see themselves as a conglomeration. There is a sense of “ethno-nationalism” or seeing themselves as Asian-American or Chinese-American, a united group based more on the culture of being Chinese rather than their racial identity (Purkayastha, 2005).

More females than males seemed settled in being a mix of things and taking the good things and bad that happened in their surroundings, processing them and deciding how to move forward in their concepts of self at an early age. More males may start such cultural negotiations after they had children, or following this interview. If male participants hadn't consciously thought about how they reacted to different situations, or what they were doing with their children, they began processing it after the interview because they created new questions for themselves. They made statements, and then thought about what they said. Even in attempts to be politically correct, they came to think about how to rephrase things and why they did it. The question is where will their identities develop as they get older, and if they have children, when will their children start questioning and deciding how will they react? Every age group and gender does not pick the same things they like and do not like. They do not all grow up in the same neighborhoods. They do not all have the same parents and friends, so their modes of

negotiations and things they negotiate with would be spread over their Chinese-American acculturation continuum.

### LIMITATIONS/DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The largest challenge was recruiting the male participants and the effect it had on the time-line. A couple interviewees were asked about the cause of such issues as stated before, and their response referred to laziness in the male population. Though the time-line was extended, the quality of the research was not greatly affected. Ensuring a minimum number of men participating led to important findings. For example, older male participants often stated that they didn't process how they negotiated or even think about many aspects of their identities that they didn't process. Future research should look at men in more detail to see not only how they negotiate, but also to what extent age plays a role in second generations' process of negotiation.

The female pool of participants was not from as diverse of an age pool as the male participants. However, the female pool's hometowns were pulled from not just Michigan locales. The females ranged in age from early 20s to late 20s, whereas the male participants ranged in age from early 20s to mid-40s. If the research were to be performed again, it would be preferable that the age of the females is pulled from a broader spectrum. This would allow the researcher to see if there are differences between ideologies of second-generation Chinese Americans born during different eras as well. Definitely more probing and further study is needed into the genderization of some aspects of negotiation. How does gender impact not just things viewed as "women's

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

work” but also how they negotiate themselves in relationships with in-laws or other women? How does gendered negotiation affect same-sex relationships?

While the interviewer was not a perceived member of the in-group with interviewees, disclosure didn't appear to be an issue with most of the participants. Some male participants did appear to make statements, and then would rephrase them when the statement made may have come out not sounding politically correct. Sometimes they didn't rephrase the statement, but instead tried to explain it more. The initial statements were still very candid, even if it wasn't initially intentional.

As the research progressed it became apparent that knowing about sibling behaviors was also important to see if there were age or gender differences between siblings in the same home. Some of the participants didn't get into too much detail about their siblings because the beginning portion of the interview didn't involve questions about siblings. Some volunteered information that stirred up further questions about how they viewed their sibling's negotiation versus their own. Good older daughters connected more with tradition as an example. Did parents treat females differently, and were older siblings more connected with Chinese traditions because they were older? Some of the participants did volunteer such information, but questions about siblings would make the results more apparent. Interviewing siblings of participants, to get a better feel for the home atmosphere, and growing up in a similar environment, could also improve the available information of negotiating in the Chinese American community. Since two people in the same home can grow up with a different lens in which they see themselves, and their families, their identities will develop in different ways, even as they potentially

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

have similar amounts of capital. It would only help with the study of negotiation practices to see exactly how two different siblings negotiate coming from the same home. Do they see similar things in their home, school, or neighborhood?

Time restraints on this study also served as a limitation. Had the size of applicants been any larger, it would have taken a lot longer to study the responses of participants, yet it would have made for a more diverse response pool as well. The ideal study would be longitudinal, so one can ask participants their ideas about identity and negotiation at younger ages, to see when they begin to take notice of their cultural identity. It would be beneficial especially to be able to analyze many male participants to see if they really are not processing things and understanding actively choosing behaviors at the same ages as their female counterparts. If they are not aware of their negotiation at similar ages, what factors may be contributing to that lack of negotiation and identity awareness?

Overall this study has added to the growing Asian American research and second-generation American research. The findings only strengthened the negotiation language newly emerging in various fields. Participants have been negotiating the development of their personalities, and will continue to do so. Participants showed a spectrum of identities that have helped create American society. With their declaration of the diversity in the Chinese-American society, some are willing to acknowledge the underdeveloped parts and enrichment them. All participants expressed a willingness to now continue to explore elements of their gender, racial, and cultural identities as they interact in the United States of America.

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APPENDIX A

*Demographic Questions:*

1) What is your gender?

Male            Female    Transgendered            Intersex

2) What is your ethnic ancestry?

3) What is your age?

4) What is your education level?

5) Where is your place of birth?

*Parental Questions*

1) Where were your parents born? What country and region?

2) Why did your parents come to the USA?

3) In what state did they settle, and can you tell me a little bit about why they settled there?

(Follow-up questions)

a. How long have they been in the USA?

b. What year did they immigrate to the USA?

c. How old were they when they immigrated to the USA?

*Questions about Second Generation and Community*

1) (If you were not born in the USA, 1.5 immigrant) Why did you come here?

2) Tell me about where you grew up.

(Follow-up questions)

a. What was your neighborhood like?

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

- b. What was your school like?

### *Negotiation Questions*

- 1) At what age did you come across people who were ethnically different from you?
- 2) How did you feel during that encounter?
- 3) Did you feel that you were accepted?

(Follow-up question)

- a. Why or why not?
- 4) Did you want to be accepted?

(Follow-up question)

- a. Tell me about that?

### *Second generation and Family Dynamics*

- 1) Tell me about the cultural norms and practices that your family finds important?

(Follow-up question)

- a. In your mind what makes them Chinese?
- 2) Are any of the norms similar to other groups you have come into contact with or groups you have observed?

(Follow-up question)

- a. Tell me about that.
- 3) Which aspects of Chinese culture do you adopt?
  - 4) Are there any that you think are hard to adopt?

(Follow-up question)

- a. What makes them hard?

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

- 5) Tell me about a time when you were with your family of origin (parents) and other groups ethnically different and you had to decide whether to adopt the cultural Chinese norm or not. In other words, tell me about a time when you felt torn between Chinese norms and the other cultural norms?

(Follow-up questions)

- a. What happened?
- b. What was the outcome?

APPENDIX B

*Participant Consent Form*

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into how second generation immigrants negotiate between broader societal norms and those of their family culture. You are being asked to participate in an interview that will be about 60 minutes long. This interview involves open ended questions and will be audio recorded. We would like to hear about what you think and your experiences with family and your community. Participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you can stop this interview at any time. We will carry out the interview at a place determined to be convenient to you. If there are questions you do not want to answer, all you have to do is tell me and we will skip those questions.

There are only minor potential risks or discomforts to your participation in this study. Discussions of personal experiences can cause an emotional responses in some participants. Benefits for participation would be limited to contributing to a better understanding about second generation immigrants negotiation practices. Neither notes nor the tape recording will be marked with your name. Information will be used solely for the purposes of my M.A. thesis. All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and the data will be destroyed after the thesis is completed. The information you give during the interview will not be associated with your name in any research reports, and no one other than Erika Buckley and my thesis chair Dr. Kristine Ajrouch will know how you answered the questions.

If you decide not to complete the entire interview, your responses given before withdrawal will be used unless you indicate otherwise. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefit. You may ask questions about this study at any time and can expect truthful answers. You can ask the interviewer, or call Dr. Kristine Ajrouch at Eastern Michigan University in the Faculty of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology Department, 734-487-0012. This research protocol and informed consent document has been reviewed and approved by Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee for use from 5/5/2011 to 5/4/2012. If you have questions about the approval process, please contact Dr. Deb de Laski-Smith (734.487.0042, Interim Dean of the Graduate School and Administrative Co-chair of UHSRC, [human.subjects@emich.edu](mailto:human.subjects@emich.edu)).

**Do you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study? YES NO**

INTERVIEWEE/WITNESS SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you voluntarily agree to be audio recorded? YES NO**

INTERVIEWEE/WITNESS SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### *Definitions*

*Acculturation*- “As the changes that occur in behaviors, values, attitudes when an individual of one culture comes into prolonged contact with one or more cultures” (Berry, 2003).

*Cultural negotiation*- is a term developed to address a person’s attempt to create a sense of normalcy between multiple cultures by means of behavior. Code switching can be considered a form of cultural negotiating.

*Downward Assimilation* – when first generation and or preceding generations of immigrants do not move higher on the economic attainment levels or they move to lower levels.

*Ethnic Markers*- participation in religious practice, cultural norms, and language influence attachment to one’s ethnic identity. (Dhingra, 2010; Kim, 2001, Shankar & Balgopal, 2001). That means the less involvement or connections with those markers associated with being Chinese American may cause a second generation Chinese American immigrant to identify more with groups that may either dominate the location they grew up or may cause them to draw closer to their parents’ ethnic identity (Accapadi, 2012). This can create the lack of transnational identity as well as the strength in a transnational identity. It creates what respondents consider more or less Chinese behavior, and also self-identifies how Chinese they see themselves.

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

*Filial piety* – Includes several obligations that the child owes his/her parents. For example, the child must obey and respect his or her parents, and support them in old age. The child's duties to his/her parents are unconditional because he/she owes his/her birth (which is the basis of his/her entire being) to his/her parents. Hence, theoretically speaking, the adult child is obligated to provide his/her elderly parents with financial and emotional support at any cost. In Confucianism, the core of moral behavior lies in being filial to one's parents (Ni, 2010).

*Gemeinschaft* – “The social group brought into existence by this positive relationship, envisaged as functioning both inwardly and outwardly as a unified living entity, is known by some collective term such as a union, fraternity or association. The relationship itself, and the social bond that stems from it, may be conceived either as having real organic life, and that is the essence of Community [Gemeinschaft]... All kinds of social co-existence that are familiar, comfortable and exclusive are to be understood as belonging to Gemeinschaft. In Gemeinschaft we are united from the moment of our birth with our own folk for better or for worse” (Tönnies, 1887: 63-64).

*Hegemonic Trope “Forever Foreigner”*- “Asian Pacific Islander Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have been seen as un-American. Often during recent times of war, they have been suspected of illegitimacy. One can cite WWII internment camps, Anti Japanese sentiments in the 80’s causing the Death of Vincent Chin, and most recent America’s War on Terror that has caused hate crimes to be perpetuated against Muslim and Seik Asian Americans” (Pendakur &Pendakur, 2001).

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

*Identity*- “A subjective sense as well as an observable quality of personal sameness and continuity, paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image. As a quality of unself-conscious living, this can be gloriously obvious in a young person who has found himself as he has found his communality. In him we see emerge a unique unification of what is irreversibly given--that is, body type and temperament, giftedness and vulnerability, infantile models and acquired ideals--with the open choices provided in available roles, occupational possibilities, values offered, mentors met, friendships made, and first sexual encounters" (Erikson, 1970.)

*Marginal-man*- a situation whereby second-generation immigrants are pulled in the direction of the mainstream culture, but then are drawn back by cultures of their own (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937).

*Race*- “Race is a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interest by referring to different types of human bodies” (Omni and Winants, 1994). Race is a social construct placed upon people or ascribed based on how people in various societal groups understood or interpreted relationships and interactions based off of their reality and is associated with physical features. It has been used to validate oppression of groups on local and global scales.

*Straight-line assimilation*-“This particular theory predicts that immigrants become increasingly similar to the native population as they spend more time in the country--

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

basically coming to 'blend' into the melting pot (Lieberson, 1970, 1981; Gordon, 1964; Labov, 1967; Lopez, 1996)"(Peter, 2008).

*Segmented assimilation*-“There are multiple pathways of incorporation into a country.

The path taken and the conditions associated with it affect the experiences of immigrants and would their particular assimilation, which may be dissimilar to the prevailing characteristics of the native population (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Rumbaut, 1997; Buriel and De Ment, 1997; Waters, 1997)” (Peter, 2008: 52).

*Quarter-life crisis*- Initially discussed by Erik H. Erikson (1968), but has been adopted by some underrepresented groups as a way to explain an identity crisis when they get around college age. They become confused about their cultural identity and behaviors after interacting with others of a similar race or ethnic group, also others who do not share their ethnicity or race. They begin to reassess their values and ideas about self. Similar to their peers of all groups who begin to discover themselves as new adults separated from parents and entering the real world, it is compounded by having to process their racial identity. There are 4 phases associated with the life crisis that were re-assessed by Dr. Oliver Robinson (2010) to be related to ages 25 through 35.

“Phase 1 is defined by feeling “locked in” to a job or relationship or both”

(Robinson, 2010). For underrepresented group, may feel trapped into a cultural stereotype or idea by peers or parents from as young as 18. “Phase 2 is a rising sense that change is possible, along with a mental and physical separation from previous commitments. Phase 3 is a period of rebuilding a new life. Phase 4

## Next Generation Immigrant Negotiation Practices

involves developing new commitments that are more in tune with personal interests, aspirations and values” (Robinson, 2010).

*Transnationalism*-“The frequent and widespread movement back and forth between communities of origin and destination, and the resulting economic and cultural transformations” (Levitt & Waters, 2005).