

A third perspective, typified by the work of Marin (1992), suggests that the impact of acculturation can be best assessed by discovering the kinds of material that have been gained or lost through acculturation. Marin distinguishes three levels of acculturation. The superficial level involves learning and forgetting facts that are part of a culture's history or tradition. The intermediate level has to do with gaining or losing more central aspects and behaviors of a person's social world (e.g., language preference and use, ethnicity of spouse, friends, neighbors, names given to children, and choice of media). The significant level of cultural material involves core values, beliefs, and norms that are essential to the very cultural paradigm or worldview of the person. For example, Marin (1992) points to the Latino culture's values of "encouraging positive interpersonal relationships and discouraging negative, competitive and assertive interactions," "familialism," and "collectivism" (p. 239). When cultural values of this magnitude are lost or become less central, acculturation has reached a significant point, and one might wonder what remains of an individual's cultural attachment. For many Whites, traditional cultural ties progressively slipped away, generation by generation in America, according to Marin's model. The immigrant generation tended to trade more superficial cultural material. Their children, in turn, exchanged more intermediate and core cultural material as they increasingly acculturated.

### IMMIGRATION AND ACCULTURATION

Acculturative stress is most pronounced during periods of transition, especially during and after significant migrations (e.g., to the United States) and the exposure and necessary adjustment to a new culture. Landau (1982) points to five factors that make the transition either easier or more difficult:

- The reasons for the migration and whether the original expectations and hopes were met
- The availability of community and extended family support systems
- The structure of the family and whether it was forced to assume a different form after migration (e.g., moving from extended family to exclusively nuclear)
- The degree to which the new culture is similar to the old (the greater the difference, the more substantial the stress)
- The family's general ability to be flexible and adaptive

According to Landau, when the stresses are severe, the support insufficient, and the family basically unhealthy, it is likely to try to compensate in one of three ways, each leading to further stresses and a compounding of existing problems. The family may isolate itself and remain separate from its new environment. It may become enmeshed and close its boundaries to the outside world, rigidify its traditional ways, and become overly dependent on its members. Or the family may become disengaged, wherein individual family members become isolated from one another as they reject previous family values and lifestyle. Especially problematic is the situation in which family members acculturate at very different rates.

Perhaps the most common and problematic consequence of acculturation is the breakdown of traditional cultural and family norms. Among Latino/a immigrants,