behaviors is expected, depending on the particular context (e.g., culture) of the dyad.

From this perspective, Rothbaum and colleagues' (2000) claim that the universality of the sensitivity–security link is questionable because of evidence of fundamental cultural differences in parental sensitivity is not relevant. The issue is not about cultural differences in sensitive behavior. Differences in how sensitivity is displayed in each context are expected. The key issue is whether sensitivity and security are related. Furthermore, other than a conceptual discussion of what constitutes caregiving in Japan and the United States, they did not offer empirical evidence that contradicts the sensitivity–security hypothesis or that tests the hypothesis in Japan using their culturally specific definition of caregiving.

It is important to note that Rothbaum et al. (2000) again overlooked evidence from non-Western cultures. Posada et al. (1999) in Colombia, Valenzuela (1997) in Chile, and Vereijken, Riksen-Walraven, and Kondo-Ikemura (1997) in Japan reported that the constructs of sensitivity and security are significantly related (although previously Nakagawa, Lamb, & Miyake, 1992, reported no significant associations between the constructs in Japan). Further, when focusing on maternal preferences, Rothbaum et al. ignored Posada and colleagues' (1995) findings that when maternal preferences about interactions, physical proximity, and contact were compared, no differences were found between Japanese and U.S. mothers. If anything, U.S. mothers had higher scores in preference for physical contact and having emotionally close and positive interactions with their infants than did Japanese mothers. Although more research is needed, the few existing studies support the universality of the link.

The Security–Competence Hypothesis

What do children learn from participating in attachment relationships? Researchers have specified developmental domains where security would be relevant. The most direct hypotheses suggest that experience in attachment relationships has implications in the organization of behavior, cognition, and emotion in close relationships; self-concept; and parenting. Few current researchers, if any, would claim that competence is a direct consequence of security. Attachment security is but one of a number of influences on socialization outcomes. An important task in attachment research is to elucidate the role that security plays in effecting socialization.

The difficulty with Rothbaum and colleagues' (2000) discussion of the security–competence hypothesis is that rather than presenting an evaluation of cross-cultural research on the link between security and competence, their focus is on the cultural specificity of the construct of competence alone. These are different issues. They argue that what is considered competent varies by culture. This may well be so, yet the issue is not whether there are cultural differences in definitions of competence but whether security is associated with the socialization outcomes that the theory predicts it should be. It is striking that Rothbaum and colleagues presented no evidence regarding the associations between what they propose is competence in Japan and security.

We are not suggesting that culture-specific differences in the conceptualization or assessments of competence are nonexistent or unimportant. Their documentation and study in relation to attachment would likely challenge and enrich the theory, but, with no evidence discussed, not much is added to the current state of affairs. Stating that there are cultural differences in definitions of competence does not support or contradict attachment theory. Moreover, as before, Rothbaum and colleagues (2000) ignored relevant evidence. For example, despite citing Takahashi's (1990) study, they overlooked the findings concerning the security–competence hypothesis. Those results indicated that one year later, secure one-year-old Japanese infants were more compliant with their mothers, curious about an object, and socially competent with peers than insecure Japanese infants were. This concords with predictions from the theory. Takahashi also reported that two years later, these differences were not significant anymore. This latter finding challenges the theory and demands more research; it does not prove the theory wrong, for there could be lawful discontinuity.

Conclusion

Humans' primate heritage, attachment theory, and available empirical evidence suggest that all human infants have the potential to develop a secure base relationship with one or a few primary caregivers. Of course, this potential is not necessarily realized in every family or every cultural context. Attachment relationships can be an important context for a broad spectrum of early learning and enculturation. Culture and family importantly shape how caregivers and infants communicate within and use secure base relationships. Attachment theory can be a valuable framework for examining general questions about interactions between biology and culture during development, and cross-cultural research affords useful opportunities to study those interactions.

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Integrating Culture and Attachment

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Rothbaum, Weisz, Pott, Miyake, and Morelli's (October 2000) important article, "Attachment and Culture: Security in the United

States and Japan," strikes at the common basis in human life, infant attachment. Even in the United States, say Rothbaum et al., the current theory of attachment is ethnocentric. Psychologists must develop "an indigenous approach to the psychology of attachment" (Rothbaum et al., 2000, p. 1093) for multicultural psychology.

Now, crucially, psychologists must watch for two items. First, *culture* must be defined before considering attachment in cultures. Rothbaum et al. (2000) defined cultures as nations, Japanese and Western—"the United States, Canada, and Western European countries" (p. 1093)—and compared the Western middle class with the whole Japanese population. But cultures are attitudes, values, norms, and behaviors of many and various social groups, not mere countries with a tacit emphasis on their typical middle-class population.

Second, such a cavalier attitude also showed in Rothbaum et al.'s (2000) naive enthusiasm for cultural varieties and specifics that, without being balanced with generality, kills theorization. Lack of such twofold caution leads them to theoretical disaster. In the following paragraphs, I describe how the disaster obtains and propose a direction for intercultural psychology to take.

Rothbaum et al. (2000) urged the development of a culture-specific theory of attachment (ignoring common variables and factors in cultures). They did not compare the middle class of Western countries with the counterpart middle class of Japan; however, different social classes may manifest different modes and developments of attachment. Moreover, gender is a factor. Parents in both cultures expect boys to grow up to be more assertive than girls. Time also causes variations in a culture. Culture is people's way of thinking, acting, and living. As children grow up, they change their parental societal mode of thinking and living by interacting with other cultures. In short, time changes things to shape cultures as it modifies cultures.

If psychologists develop a theory of attachment specific to each of the indefinitely numerous and diverse cultures in the world, as Rothbaum et al. (2000) urged, soon indefinitely numerous theories of attachment in indefinitely different cultures—nations, races, social classes, genders, new cultures, and so on—will exist. An indefinitely growing medley of "mini-theories" currently exist, as psychologists find one culture after another to investigate, and unmanageably numerous theories amount to no theory.

Perhaps psychologists should stop and ask, "What is *attachment*, if every attachment in every culture differs from one in every other?" *Diversity* and *difference* lose meaning if they have nothing running through all differences to render them mutually different. Diversity disappears without situational commonality against which to appear.

Scientific theory makes no loose descriptive hotchpotch but has two poles: generality and specificity. A theory has a system of generic structure, categories, and methodology, so as to be culture sensitive, relevant to—and capable of adequately explaining—cultural and situational specifics. An overall attachment theory sensitive to cultural diversity must be created. A culture-sensitive theory of attachment would enable psychologists to both describe a universal and ubiquitous attachment process and make sense of—adequately explain—its specific cultural manifestations. In trying to study mere cultural specifics, Rothbaum et al. (2000) lost theoretical generality and so lost an explanatory power over specifics.

Rothbaum et al. (2000) noted that "biology and culture are inseparable aspects of the system within which a person develops" (pp. 1095–1096). Integration of attachment modes in many cultures should operate by studying the interaction between biological generality and cultural specifics and cultural similarities and differences. Differences are different manifestations of how both Western and Japanese cultures identically attend to "helping infants regulate their emotional states" (p. 1096) and "meeting children's need to assert their personal desires" (p. 1096). Mind you, saying so does not imply that no specifics count but that specifics are to enrich generality, not to destroy it. Specifics and generality should mutually strengthen. This mutuality should authenticate and enrich both generality and specificity.

Science is a systematic body of knowledge, implicating general theory about specifics. Globalizing studies of mere cultural specifics kill theoretical generality. Interlearning of different mothering modes consists of learning not differences but their mutuality manifesting their common theme of attachment. By castigating naive ethnocentrism, Rothbaum et al. (2000) naively committed theory suicide. Studying only cultural varieties obscures the attachment they manifest, killing their theorization.

Even ethnocentrism requires consideration: It is cultural and communal self-centeredness with valid and suicidal aspects. The suicidal aspect is not just the imposition of irrelevance by which other cultures are squeezed or broken into one's own Procrustean bed. Devastating others by self-imposition devastates the imposing self. Such suicidal ethnocentrism must be avoided. Rothbaum et al. (2000) said,

> [F]or Japanese caregivers, responsiveness has more to do with emotional closeness and the parent's role in helping infants regulate their emotional states, whereas for caregivers in the United States, responsiveness has more to do with meeting children's need to assert their personal desires. (p. 1096)

Never impose American mothering on Japanese mothers.

Yet psychologists should not throw out the valid aspect of ethnocentrism with the lethal, or throw the baby of self-enrichment out with the bathwater of suicidal self-centeredness. Stopping self-imposition discards no self but opens oneself to others to self-enrich. Not using Western mothering as a standard by which to judge Japanese mothering discards no Western mothering ideals but enriches the Western ideals by exposing them to the ideas and ideals of Japanese mothering. Watching Japanese mothering, one realizes that Western parents also help their infants regulate their emotions, and Japanese parents also help their infants express their needs.

Science then needs theorization that lets others enrich the self, whose theories and theorizing must come out of the self's purview or milieu. Clamors for diverse specific others should not shout down or allow one to lose sight of one's theory or theorization. Theorization from specific cultures should contribute two things: (a) structure, categories, and methodology and (b) open readiness to shift, overhaul, and enrich theories by studying other cultural specifics. Psychology has (a) and Rothbaum et al. (2000) said (b) is needed. In this comment, I warn not to throw out (a) in doing (b). To shift, overhaul, and enrich something is not to discard it. To develop a culture-sensitive theory of attachment, psychologists must integrate universal and culture-specific components by adjusting Western theories to cultural diversities. Rothbaum et al. endorsed "adopting the approach of indigenous psychologists" (p. 1102) for attachment theory. *Indigenous* means "local, native," whereas psychologists originated in Western cultures. Developing a localized or indigenous approach to attachment requires not discarding Western theorization and methodology (observation, assessment, testing) but enriching and adjusting both to native cultures by conducting localized studies of them.

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