THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

When we look back upon the international and intercultural situation at the time we first began writing this book, we recognize how rapidly the world has changed, with even more pressing issues for intercultural communication scholars and practitioners. In the third edition of this book, we were writing in the shadow of the events of September 11. Since then, human events such as the invasion of Iraq and bombings in London, Russia, and Spain have focused more attention on interethnic and religious conflicts. Natural disasters such as the tsunami in Indonesia and hurricanes Katrina and Rita that hit the Gulf Coast summoned a variety of positive responses, including tremendous caring and compassion across intercultural and international divides, but these tragedies also exacerbated enduring social-group inequities. In addition, the increasing use of the Internet and cell phones has made intercultural interactions that may once have seemed distant or peripheral to our lives now far more immediate.

In this climate, the study of intercultural communication takes on special significance, offering tools to help us as we grapple with questions about religious and ethnic differences, hate crimes, and many other related issues. Those who study, teach, and conduct research in intercultural communication are faced with an increasing number of challenges and difficult questions to address: Is it enough to identify differences among people? Are we actually reinforcing stereotypes in emphasizing differences? Is there a way to understand the dynamics of intercultural communication without resorting to lists of instructions? Don't we have to talk about the broader social, political, and historical contexts when we teach intercultural communication? How can we use our intercultural communication skills to help enrich our lives and the lives of those around us? Can intercultural communication scholars promote a better world for all?

Such questions are driven by rapidly changing cultural dynamics—both within the United States and abroad. On one hand, attempts to establish peace between Israel and Palestine by withdrawal of Israeli settlements in Gaza, as well as the continued expansion of the European Union, CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement), and the African Union (formerly the Organization of African States), reflect some global movement toward unity. On the other hand, the increase in nuclear armaments, continuing conflicts between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and the conflict with and within Iraq illustrate continuing

intergroup conflict. These extremes demonstrate the dynamic nature of culture and communication.

We initially wrote this book in part to address questions and issues such as these. Although the foundation of intercultural communication theory and research has always been interdisciplinary, the field is now informed by three identifiable and competing *paradigms,* or "ways of thinking." In this book, we attempt to integrate three different research approaches: (1) the traditional social-psychological approach that emphasizes cultural differences and how these differences influence communication, (2) the interpretive approach that emphasizes understanding communication in context, and (3) the more recent critical approach that underscores the importance of power and historical context in understanding intercultural communication. In this edition, we extend the critical paradigm to include recent scholarship in postcolonial approaches.

We believe that each of these approaches has important contributions to make to the understanding of intercultural communication, and that they operate in interconnected and sometimes contradictory ways. In this fourth edition, we have further strengthened our *dialectical* approach that encourages students to think critically about intercultural phenomena as seen from these various perspectives.

Throughout this book, we acknowledge that there are no easy solutions to the difficult challenges of intercultural communication. Sometimes our discussions raise more questions than they answer. We believe that this is perfectly reasonable. Not only is the field of intercultural communication changing, but also the relationship between culture and communication is—and probably always will be—complex and dynamic. We live in a rapidly changing world where intercultural contact will continue to increase, creating an increased potential for both conflict and cooperation. We hope that this book provides the tools needed to think about intercultural communication, as a way of understanding the challenges and recognizing the advantages of living in a multicultural world.

SIGNATURE FEATURES OF THE BOOK

Students usually come to the field of intercultural communication with some knowledge about many different cultural groups, including their own. Their understanding often is based on observations from television, movies, the Internet, books, personal experiences, news media, and more. But many students have a difficult time assimilating information that does not readily fit into their preexisting knowledge base. In this book, we hope to move students gradually to the notion of a *dialectical framework* for thinking about cultural issues. That is, we show that knowledge can be acquired in many different ways—through social scientific studies, experience, media reports, and so on—but these differing forms of knowledge need to be seen dynamically and in relation to each other. We offer students a number of ways to begin thinking critically about intercultural communication in a dialectical manner. These include:

- An explicit discussion of differing research approaches to intercultural communication, focusing on both strengths and limitations of each
- Ongoing attention to history, popular culture, and identity as important factors in understanding intercultural communication
- "Student Voices" boxes in which students relate their own experiences and share their thoughts about various intercultural communication issues
- "Point of View" boxes in which diverse viewpoints from news media, research studies, and other public forums are presented
- Incorporation of the authors' own personal experiences to highlight particular aspects of intercultural communication

NEW FEATURES IN THE FOURTH EDITION

- Running glossary that gives students immediate definitions for terms used in the chapter
- Chapter objectives which guide students reading through each chapter
- Bulleted summaries which focus students' attention to the most important points in the chapter

NEW CONTENT IN THE FOURTH EDITION:

- To reflect the increasing influence of globalization, we have expanded our discussion of globalization and its importance to intercultural communication. For example, in Chapter 1, we discuss how globalization and related economic disparities influence intercultural communication. In Chapter 8, we expanded our discussion of the impact of globalization on continuing worldwide migration and the resulting intercultural encounters.
- The continuing and expanding influence of communication technology in our daily lives is addressed by new material in Chapter 7 on virtual spaces (e.g., blogs) and expanded coverage of online intercultural relationships in Chapter 10.
- Our expanded discussion of the implications of religious identity in Chapters 5 and 11 is prompted by continued awareness of the important role religion plays in intercultural communication.
- We have also incorporated new sections on the important roles that institutions play in intercultural contact. In Chapter 8, we note the role of churches and government institutions in facilitating or discouraging cultural adaptation of immigrants. Similarly, in Chapter 10, we address the role of institutions in supporting or discouraging intercultural relationships; in Chapter 11, we examine how institutions can exacerbate or ameliorate intercultural conflict.

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

The Online Learning Center (OLC), at www.mhhe.com/martinnakayama4, provides interactive resources to address the needs of a variety of teaching and learning styles. Students and instructors can access chapter outlines, sample quizzes with feedback, crossword puzzles using key terms, and Internet activities for every chapter. For instructors specifically, the OLC offers an online *Instructor's Resource Manual* with sample syllabi, discussion questions, and pedagogical tips designed to help teach the course in general, and to help meet the special challenges arising from the controversial nature of much of the material.

In addition, an Instructor's Resource CD-ROM features the instructor's manual, test bank files, and a computerized test bank. McGraw-Hill's EZ Test is a flexible and easy-to-use electronic testing program. The program allows instructors to create tests from book-specific items. It accommodates a wide range of question types. Instructors may add their own questions as well. Multiple versions of the test can be created, and any test can be exported for use with course management systems such as WebCT, BlackBoard, or PageOut. EZ Test Online is a new service and gives you a place to easily administer your EZ Test–created exams and quizzes online. The program is available for both Windows and Macintosh environments.

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Intercultural Communication in Contexts is organized into three parts: Part I, "Foundations of Intercultural Communication"; Part II, "Intercultural Communication Processes"; and Part III, "Intercultural Communication Applications."

Part I, "Foundations of Intercultural Communication," explores the history of the field and presents various approaches to this area of study, including our own.

We begin **Chapter 1** with a focus on the dynamics of social life and global conditions as a rationale for the study of intercultural communication. We introduce ethics in this chapter to illustrate its centrality to any discussion of intercultural interaction. **In this edition, we have expanded our discussion of the impact of globalization and global economic disparities, as well as the increasing role of technology in intercultural encounters.**

In **Chapter 2,** we introduce the history of intercultural communication as an area of study, as well as the three paradigms that inform our knowledge about intercultural interactions. We establish the notion of a dialectical approach, so that students can begin to make connections and form relationships among the paradigms. We utilize the example of Hurricane Katrina to help explicate the three paradigms. **In this edition, we have extended the critical approach to include recent scholarship on postcolonial approaches**—helping students learn how past colonization impacts contemporary intercultural relations.

In **Chapter 3,** we focus on four basic intercultural communication compo-nents—culture, communication, context, and power. In this edition we have strengthened **the discussion of culture**—to more clearly reflect our dialectical approach.

Chapter 4 focuses on the importance of historical forces in shaping con-temporary intercultural interaction. We have expanded our discussion of the ways in which **colonial histories are related to current economic and polit-ical structures that influence intercultural relations.**

Part II, "Intercultural Communication Processes," establishes the factors that contribute to the dynamics of intercultural communication: identity, lan-guage, and nonverbal codes.

Chapter 5 on identity has extended coverage of religious identity, multicul-tural identity, as well as **the new concept of cultural hybridity.**

Chapter 6 addresses language issues, including sections on code-switching and globalization, and expanded coverage of interlanguage. We also emphasize the **postcolonial views on language.**

Chapter 7 focuses on nonverbal codes and cultural spaces and **includes new material on postmodern virtual spaces.**

Part III, "Intercultural Communication Applications," helps students apply the knowledge of intercultural communication presented in the first two parts.

Chapter 8 addresses intercultural transitions. We have incorporated new material addressing the **important role of the host society, including social institutions, in facilitating or discouraging adaptation of new immigrants into their culture.** We have also added information on the **effects of colonial-ism on contemporary international migration.** We address the complexities of relations between and among various migrant co-cultures.

In **Chapter 9,** we focus on popular and folk culture and their impact on in-tercultural communication. We have also added **recent examples of popular-culture resistance and English-language dominance** as well as **international examples of popular culture.**

Chapter 10 explores intercultural relationships. We have added new mate-rial on **the effect of colonial histories and contemporary institutions on in-tercultural relationships.** Another new section addresses **online intercultural relationships.**

In Chapter 11, we focus on intercultural conflicts. We have strengthened the discussion of a dialectical approach to conflict and incorporated new mate-rial on the **effects of globalization and economic disparities in intercultural conflict; there is new material on the role of institutions in exacerbating or ameliorating intercultural conflicts.**

Finally, in **Chapter 12,** we turn to the outlook for intercultural commu-nication. We have expanded our discussion on motivation and the difficulty in achieving effective intercultural communication and provided **contempo-rary examples of groups working together to promote better intercultural relations.**

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The random convergence of the two authors in time and place led to the creation of this textbook. We both found ourselves at Arizona State University in the early 1990s. Over the course of several years, we discussed and analyzed the multiple approaches to intercultural communication. Much of this discussion was facilitated by the ASU Department of Communication's "culture and communication" theme. Department faculty met to discuss research and pedagogical issues relevant to the study of communication and culture; we also reflected on our own notions of what constituted intercultural communication. This often meant reliving many of our intercultural experiences and sharing them with our colleagues.

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