Ethnicity, Culture and Alcohol

NIAAA Social Work Education

Module 10H

(revised 03/04)

Outline

- Background
- Alcohol consumption/drinking patterns
- Alcohol impacts
- Ethnic and cultural influences on drinking patterns
- Prevention and intervention

Background

- *Race (physical aspects)*
- *Culture (socio-cultural structures aspects)*
- *Ethnicity (group identity aspects)*
- *Cultural Identification (degree of affiliation)*

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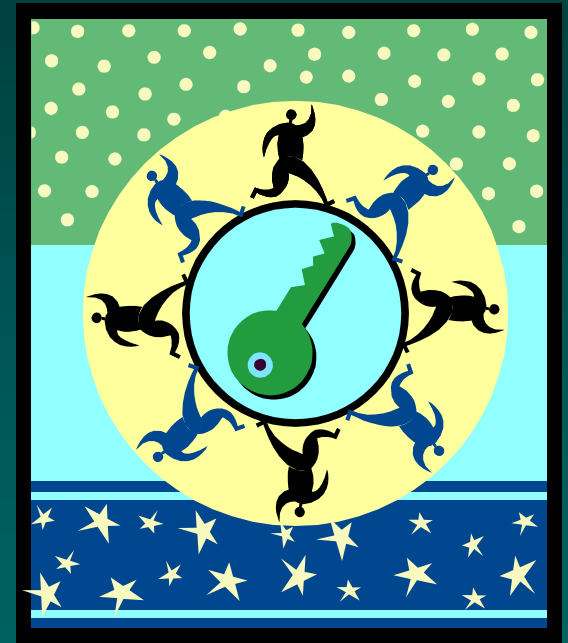
Background (continued)

- *Ethnoculturally competent practice leads to better outcomes*

- *Requires:*
  - *Self-awareness*
  - *Knowledge*
  - *Commitment*
  - *Ability to <u>appropriately</u> adapt practices*

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Alcohol Pattern

- *Typical study of "between   group" differences:*
  - *-White/Caucasian Americans vs.*
  - *-African Americans vs.*
  - *-Hispanic/Latino Americans vs.*
  - *-Asian Americans/Pacific   -*
  - *-Islanders*
- *Aggregate data mask key "withingroup" differences*

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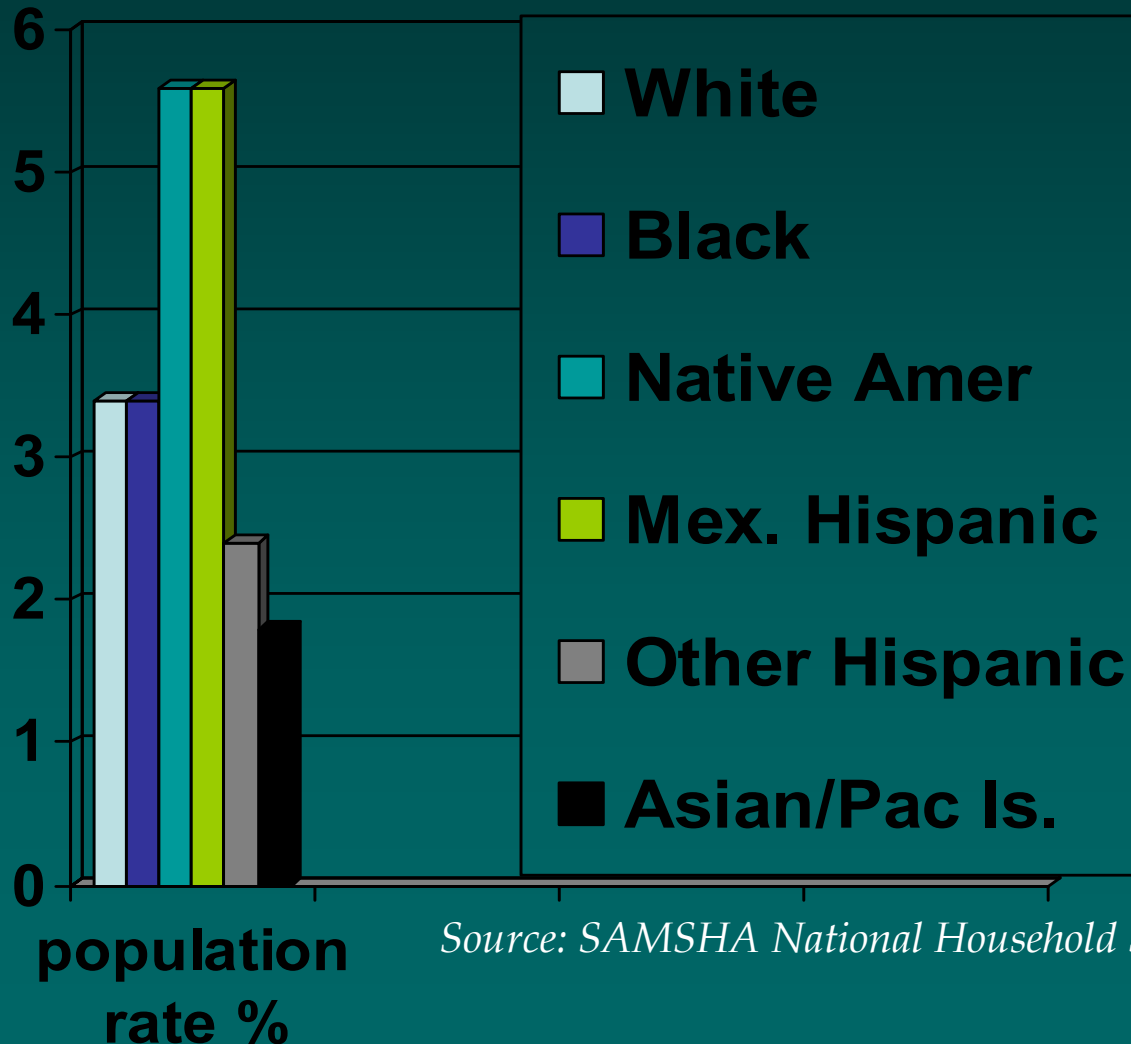# Alcohol Pattern (continued)

Within group differences relate to factors of

- *National origin*
- *Immigration/ migration histories*
- *Region/geographic distribution*
- *Generational and cohort influences*
- *Group and religious affiliations*

- *Discrimination and oppression experiences*
- *Resources, education, language, nutrition, health, etc.*
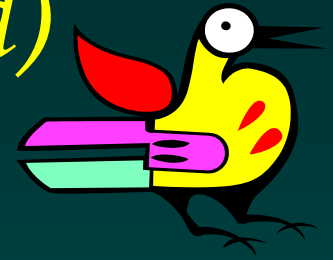- *Lifecycle phases, age*
- *Gender*

Alcohol Pattern (continued)
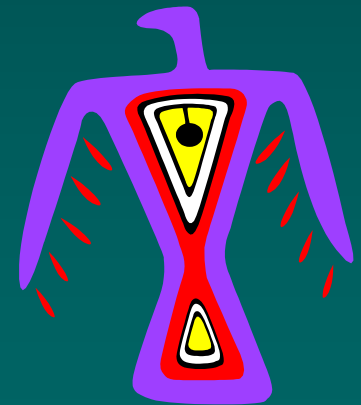

- *Relative rates of alcohol dependence*
- *Sample average = 3.5%*

population rate %

Legend:
- White
- Black
- Native Amer
- Mex. Hispanic
- Other Hispanic
- Asian/Pac Is.

Source: SAMSHA National Household Survey (1991-1993)

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Alcohol Pattern (continued)

- *Importance of distinguishing aggregate versus disaggregate data*
- *Examples:*
  - *Aggregate Native American data versus data on distinct tribal groups*
  - *Reservation versus urban versus rural habitation*
  - *Level of attachment to Native American community and family*

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Alcohol Impacts

- *Differential consequences of alcohol consumption relate to:*
    - *Differing (intrinsic, biological) vulnerability*
    - *Differing (extrinsic, contextual) resiliency*
    - *Service disparities (access to intervention and prevention resources)*

Alcohol Impacts (continued)

Differential consequences of alcohol consumption also relate to:

- *Differential rates of alcohol-related medical problems (cirrhosis, esophageal cancer not reflective of drinking patterns)*
- *Differential rates of alcohol-related mortality*
- *Differential impacts may relate to "drink of choice"*
- *Differential impacts may relate to physiology (e.g., ALDH2 gene, ALDH2*2 allele and "flushing" response)*

Alcohol Impacts (continued)

Mental health and other social effects
- *Alcohol-related problems of men and women continue to be strong predictors of interpersonal violence*
- *Historically, alcohol has been used to maintain and preserve an inequitable social order and to reinforce patterns of oppression*
- *Alcohol has been recognized by some Native American tribal leaders as a source of their increasing vulnerability, poverty, persecution, and loss of traditional social order and resources*

Ethnic/Cultural Influences

Drinking is influenced by:

• *Social norms, customs, and traditions of ethnic/cultural context*

• *(False) stereotypes, over-estimates, and misperceptions that affect drinking patterns by "normalizing" drinking behavior*

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Ethnic/Cultural Influences (continued)

Alcohol-related cultural norms/values affect:

- Drinking patterns, reasons
- Alcohol expectations and resiliency/cultural strengths
- Preferences, which affect access and relative exposure
- Drinking contexts, controls, linked behaviors
- Some consequences

~abstinance~
~ceremonial~
~group solidarity~
~non-deviance~
~problems~

Ethnic/Cultural Influences (continued)

Socialization theory explains transmission of drinking norms, customs, and patterns

modeling
reinforcement paradigms
verbal directives
shaping environment

Ethnic/Cultural Influences (continued)

- *Alcohol risk perceptions vary with cultural norms, may affect use of alcohol*
- *Culture affects help-seeking*
- *Culture/ethnicity interact with other factors to affect stress and responses*

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Ethnic/Cultural Influences (continued)

Practice and research influence drinking by:

- Influencing perceptions about ethnic groups' drinking patterns
- Inattention to underlying social conditions, inequities that encourage drinking
- "Problematizing" ethnic groups

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Ethnic/Cultural Influences (continued)

- *Ethnicity x Gender (e.g., Hispanic communities)*
- *Religion, spirituality (e.g., Asian and African- American communities)*
- *Sub-groups may have risk factors/absence of protective factors*
- *Norms may include drinking in moderation*

Ethnic/Cultural Influences (continued)

Discrimination

Racism

Oppression

Social Injustice

Ethnocentrism

Economic Instability

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Ethnic/Cultural Influences (continued)

- *Alcohol access differs*
- *Neighborhoods differ in concentration of suppliers*
- *Targeted marketing exists*
- *Adolescents encounter differences in offers, have different refusal strategies*

Prevention & Intervention

Ethnocultural competence in prevention and intervention:

- *Strategy #1*
    - *Adapting evidence-based approaches*
- *Strategy #2*
    - *Developing culturally-specific approaches*

Prevention & Intervention (continued)

*Different cultural and ethnic group approaches
to accessing treatment (rates, styles of
approach)*

Models/approaches:
- *Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET)*
- *Motivational Interviewing (MI)*
- *Transtheoretical Stages of Change*
- *AOD Cultural Framework*

Prevention & Intervention (continued)

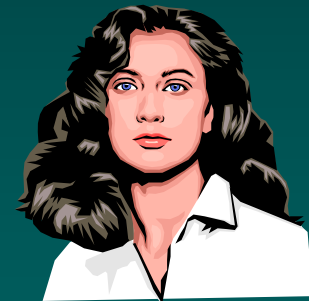*Screening, assessment, diagnosis needs differ:*
- *Avoiding "built in" bias of instruments & interview techniques*
- *Norming for different groups may be necessary (non-universal "cut" points)*
- *Intake success predicts outcomes*

Instrument reliability?

Prevention & Intervention (continued)

Different "best practice" approaches may be more salient with different groups:

- *For example, behavioral vs. insight orientation vs. AA*
- *Approaches must address differences in causality and relapse risk factors*
- *Approaches need to draw on different strength factors*

Prevention & Intervention (continued)

- *Discrimination*
- *Racism*
- *Oppression*
- *Social injustice*
- *Ethnocentrism*
- *Economic instability*

- *Pain*
- *Fear*
- *Anxiety*
- *Depression*
- *Frustration*
- *Low self-esteem*
- *Economic difficulties*

Prevention & Intervention (continued)

Community practice addresses:

- *Messages about risk/protective factors*
- *Change norms, values, policies*
- *Promote cohesiveness*
- *Support systems enhancement (including "natural" systems and traditions)*
- *Integrate existing services; involve accepted groups/organizations*