Nicole Jules-Paul

Tooth Morphology – Abstract

10/31/11

Balinese Aesthetics

Everyone has their own perception as to what’s acceptable in everyday life. Many people believe that outside of the United States, people of specific ethnic minorities have poor oral health. What people fail to realize is that being a part of an ethnic minority group does not always lead a person to having poor oral health. Culture is a widespread of actions or beliefs to different groups of people that survive based on the behavioral norms and interpersonal relationships for proper living. Take the Balinese people for example; they consider tooth filing beautifying and a humanizing right, that may seem beautiful for them, but ugly to other different cultures. Tooth filing is a ceremony they perform to ensure the smooth transition of the soul from birth through death and reincarnation. To believe that big, straight, white teeth represent a beautiful smile is a narrow perspective. Aesthetic dentistry is to please the patient, not the dentist, which is related to the principle that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder”. What may seem to one person that beauty and esthetics is a blend of symmetry and proportion, another can argue that unaesthetic or unattractive things may lack symmetry and have poor proportion.