

CULTURE

* **CULTURE: a design for living that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morality and customs.**

- There are 3 components of culture: _____, _____ and SYMBOLIC

* **COGNITIVE COMPONENT:**

- Culture helps us develop certain _____ and BELIEFS about what is going on in the world.

* **NORMATIVE COMPONENT:**

-Each culture has its own ideas about what is important and how people should act.

- VALUES:
- NORMS:

Example: picture on pg. 53. Our ancestors placed a high value on fertility (having kids) when you get married. There developed a norm of showering a bride with rice after a wedding. We continue to do so even today.

-Norms can change. (Ex: in America prior to WWII, racial equality was not valued. This supported the norm of racial segregation. Today, racial equality is valued and our society is integrated.)

MORE ABOUT NORMS...

- FOLKWAYS:
- MORES:

-INSTITUTIONALIZED DEVIANCE: a norm violation that is so prevalent it has become socially acceptable.

Example: speeding, J-walking, speeding up at a yellow light

-SANCTIONS: the way in which a culture enforces norms are called sanctions. Sanctions can be positive or negative.

-POSITIVE SANCTIONS:

Example: congrats by friends, getting food or candy, getting a sticker, monetary reward

-NEGATIVE SANCTIONS:

Example: getting a dirty look, grounded, timeout

Some sanctions are applied by formal agents of social control such as the police and judges, but most often sanctions are applied informally by parents, neighbors, strangers, etc.

Values and norms do not describe actual behavior so much as they suggest how we *should* behave. We must remember that *ideal culture* differs from *real culture*, which is what actually occurs in everyday life.

- IDEAL CULTURE: how people SHOULD behave
- REAL CULTURE: how people ACTUALLY behave

Example: most men and women agree on the importance of faithfulness in relationships, yet a 2009 study in the U.S. found 17% of married people reported being unfaithful to their spouse at one point in their marriage (NORC).

When sanctions aren't enough... there are values

(Sanctions aren't enough to produce the conformity to norms that occurs in cultures throughout the world. This is where values come into play.)

-Characteristics of VALUES (socially shared ideas)

- 1.
2. We learn them from socializing agents (media, peers, family, school)
-they contain a certain moral element
- 3.

Chapter 3.2

Culture Notes

***SYMBOLIC COMPONENT:**

_____ help us communicate, share and transmit our culture to the next generation. A _____ is a word, gesture, music, or anything that stands for some other thing.

A key example of a symbol is _____, which does more than enable us to communicate, it also influences how we see the world.

Edward Sapir (1929) was the first to hold this view. Human beings, he said, live “at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society.” Sapir also wrote that language has “a tyrannical hold upon our orientation to the world.” When societies speak a different language, “the worlds in which societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached to it.”

This view was developed by Sapir's student **Benjamin Whorf** (1956) and became known as the ***Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: language molds our minds, determining how we think about the world.***

Example: Whorf found that the language of the Hopi Indians of the southwestern U.S. has neither verb tenses to distinguish the past and the present, nor nouns for times, days, seasons, or years.

Consequently, according to Whorf, Hopi and English-speaking people perceive time differently. Although we see the difference between a person working now and the same person working yesterday, Hopi do not because their language makes no distinction between past and present.

Criticisms of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis:

- The hypothesis overemphasizes the power of language. Language only influences – rather than determines – how we think.
- If language determined thought, people who spoke different languages would always think differently, and it would be impossible for us to comprehend English translations of foreign languages.
- Critics do admit that language has some influence on cognition. Virtually all social scientists agree that language influences perception and thinking, though they disagree on the amount of influence.

U.S. Popular Culture:

- Mass culture:

-Capitalism and the pursuit of _____ leads to efforts to please consumers who want popular culture. (Demand for products, entertainment, etc., drives popular culture trends)

-Feminists believe that popular culture is _____ and upholds the view that _____ are more important than _____.

-U.S. popular culture exerts a powerful _____ and _____ influence on the world

High Culture v. Popular Culture

Sociologists use the term **high culture** to refer to *cultural patterns that distinguish a society's* _____ and **popular culture** to describe *cultural patterns that are* _____ among a society's _____.

We often speak less kindly of ordinary people, assuming that everyday culture is somehow less worthy. For example: We are tempted to judge a person who attends an opera as more “cultured” than a person who attends a hip-hop concert.

Common sense may suggest that high culture is superior to popular culture, but sociologists are uneasy with such judgments for two reasons:

1. Neither “elites” nor “ordinary” people share all the same tastes and interests; people in both categories differ in numerous ways.

2. Do we praise high culture because it is really better than popular culture or simply because its supporters have more money, power, and prestige?

-SUBCULTURES: simply put, a subculture is a culture within a culture. There is no total break with the larger culture. In modern cultures there are likely to be differences along many lines-such as gender, age, class or region.

-VARIANT SUBCULTURES:

(ex: high school students)

-COUNTERCULTURES:

(ex: hippies in the 1960s)

-DEVIANT SUBCULTURES:

(ex: gangs)

Chapter 3.3 CULTURE

Cultural Change

Every culture changes in order to adapt to the ever-changing physical and social environment. **What drives Cultural Change in an environment?**

1. _____

(ex: Modern _____ and _____ have made the world smaller, increased contacts among cultures, and accelerated the pace of change.)

Technology also may create _____: **the social situation in which a culture's values and beliefs fail to catch up with technology.** (ex: Medical technology is lowering death rates in many poor countries, but traditional values and beliefs that favor having many children are not changing. The result of this cultural lag is overpopulation.)

2. _____

Cultures must support inventions and discoveries

3. Diffusion: *The spread of things, ideas, beliefs or some other cultural items from one society to another.*

Diffusion results from contact between societies. Generally, the more contacts a society establishes with others, the higher its rate of cultural change. (ex: compare U.S. to North Korea)

*GLOBAL ANALYSIS OF CULTURE

- _____: practices found in all cultures as the means for meeting the same human needs. (ex: food, shelter, symbols, language, clothing)

While cultural universals reflect the _____ means by which all societies meet their common needs, the _____ content of these means varies from culture to culture.

From a very young age, we are taught that our way of life is good, moral, civilized or natural. At the same time we learn to feel that other peoples' ways of life are not. The result could be _____: the attitude that one's own culture is superior to those of others. Ethnocentrism exists to one degree or another in every society.

The alternative to ethnocentrism is cultural relativism

-CULTURAL RELATIVISM: the practice of judging a culture by its own _____ - looking at a culture through the perspective of the people within the culture.

Cultural relativism can be difficult for travelers to adopt: it requires not only openness to unfamiliar values and norms but also the ability to put aside cultural standards we have known all our lives. Even so, as people of the world increasingly come into contact with one another, the importance of understanding other cultures will become even greater.

*SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURE:

-FUNCTIONALIST: CULTURE MEETS HUMAN NEEDS

-Most important function of culture is to ensure _____ & STABILITY.

-CONFLICT: CULTURE SUPPORTS INEQUALITY

-Culture represents the interests of the _____ & _____.

-Popular media distracts the exploited and the powerless

-SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONIST: CULTURE REFLECTS SHARED UNDERSTANDINGS.

-Stresses culture is a _____ of human creation

-People use culture as a guide during _____