

Chapter 2

CULTURE

1

What do you think of when you hear the word **Culture**?

Have you ever talked with someone about a different **culture**? If so, what was the conversation about?

What are the **things** that make one culture different from another?

2

For those who have experienced a different culture:

What were some of the major cultural differences you experienced when coming to the U.S. (or when visiting another country)?

Consider, for example, language differences, gestures, money, religion, use of space, others....

3

Components of Culture

- language
- gestures
- norms (rules of behavior)
- beliefs and values (what is desirable)
- material objects (jewelry, art, buildings, food, clothing)
- positive sanctions (response to an approved behavior)
- negative sanctions (response to a disapproved behavior)

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From your experience:

What are some examples of subtle **positive or negative sanctions** that might differ between cultures?

USS Pueblo "**environmental research ship**", attached to Navy intelligence, which was attacked and captured by **North Korean** forces on January 23, 1968.



Some of Pueblo Crew in Captivity
(notice any cultural messages or "symbolic interactionism"?)



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What are "values"?

How might values differ for those for and against abortion?

7

Examples of American Values

- Achievement
- Individualism
- Activity & work
- Efficiency
- Science
- Progress
- Material comfort
- Humanitarianism
- Freedom
- Democracy
- Equality
- Religion
- Education

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How would you guess value contradictions and social change are related?

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■ What new values do you currently see emerging?

"protectionism"? physical fitness?
environment? leisure?

Why do you think they are emerging at this point in time?

10

"Real" vs "ideal" culture?

11

What do you think "material" culture might refer to?

"Non-material" (or symbolic) culture?

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■ **Material Culture**— objects of a culture including clothing, tools, buildings.

■ **Non-Material Culture**—a groups way of thinking and patterns of behavior.

■ Reflected in language, norms, beliefs, gestures, etc.

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What is a "stereotype" and how might it be related to culture?

Stereotype: assumptions of what people are like, whether true or false

There are certain stereotypes attached to particular cultures. Can you think of any?

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Subcultures

■ **Subcultures** are groups within a culture that have their own **distinctive** characteristics that distinguish them from the larger culture.

■ Their values and norms are **compatible** with the dominant culture.

What are some examples of subcultures?

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Counter culture

vs

subculture

Counter cultures have values that are at odds with the dominant culture.

What would be an example of an existing counter culture?

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How is language related to culture?

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis— language has embedded within it ways of looking at the world.

What does this mean?
Examples?

17

How is language related to what is "real" ?

Reality is only our perception of what we think it is.

Thinking and perception are shaped by language.

18

How is culture related to what is "real"?

And

What is ethnocentrism?

19

■ **Ethnocentrism**—the tendency to use one's own culture as a yardstick for judging the ways of other societies.

■ The belief that one's own culture sees what is "real" whereas some other cultures don't.

■ It can create in-group loyalties or lead to harmful prejudice and discrimination.

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What is the difference between prejudice and discrimination?

21

What is cultural relativism?

(Hint: opposite of ethnocentrism)

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Cultural Relativism—

Trying to understand other cultures without judging them by your own culture.

We can analyze how the elements of culture fit together without judgment.

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Cultural Lag—non-material culture sometimes lags behind material culture, particularly in areas of technology.

What might be some examples?

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Cultural diffusion—the spread of cultural characteristics from one group to another.

Can you think of any examples of cultural diffusion in the U.S.?

To what extent has it impacted American culture or other cultures?

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What do we mean by culture shock?

A good example is the Hmong, who were brought from Laos and had difficulty adjusting to the U.S. health care system (doctors drained their spirits out of their bodies).

Culture shock is mentioned in the Chagnon reading about the Yanomamo.

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The American Handshake (4:41):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDhXD25fmMo&feature=related>

American Stereotypes Held by British People (7 minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tR_QiqxDxyI

4 Questions Not to Ask Americans (10:46):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rR1NrBwmxlc>

Homeless Boy Steals The Talent Show (8:01)

(stereotyping the low-income)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZ46Ot4_lLo

Western Couples vs Chinese Couples: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rk3wBuvM-LI>
(7:00 minutes)

Culture Differences: What Chinese don't like in America
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stetxdiBeIE>
(4:00)