Sociology
Chapter 3: Culture
Culture V. Society

Society: a specific territory inhabited by people who share a common culture.

George and Bill were born in Lake Andes and graduated from high school. Both boys went into the Army after graduation and were stationed in Germany. After they were discharged, George returns to Lake Andes. Bill stays and lives in Germany. Bill and George are both Americans and practice American culture, but Bill is no longer a part of society because he lives in another country.
Have you ever heard that you...

Look like your mom/dad/grandma/grandpa?

Laugh like them?

Have a temper like them?

Culture shapes who we are and how we act, but so does our heredity.

About half (50%) of our traits come from our family.
Instinct- unlearned behavior (animals have instincts)

Reflex- automatic physical reaction to stimulus (hand on stove)

Drive- impulse (eat, sleep)
Reflex, Drive, or Culture?

Eye Blinking

Sleep

Reproduction

Reaction to a loud noise

Racial inequality

Socialism
Sociobiology - study of the biological basis of human behavior

For Sociobiology - "the strongest survive" (Darwinism)

Against - One race would be better than another and that is not true (Hitler killing the Jews)

Middle - Our genes work with culture to shape our choices for husbands/wives
1. What broad distinction can be made between most animal behavior and most human behavior?

Most behavior among animals is instinctual, whereas most human behavior is learned.
2. How does culture affect social behavior?

Culture serves as a guide for human social behavior, including actions, beliefs, values, and relationships with others.
3. How does heredity affect social behavior?

About half of our personality traits are determined by genetics. We are also born with certain reflexes (automatic physical reactions) and drives (impulses). However, innate personality traits, reflexes, and drives do not control human social behavior. Culture directs how these biological characteristics are expressed.
Section 2 - Language

What functions do these items serve? What do they do?

Stapler

Wedding ring
Now rename these objects....
Cultures give names and meanings to objects.

Cultures also share values (actions that are important) by using words and sayings. Look at some examples...
Complete the following statements that Americans use:

1. The pen is mightier than the ______________.

2. Better safe than ____________________.

3. It's always darkest before ________________.

4. Don't bite the hand that ____________________.

5. No news is ____________________.

Values these sayings convey...
Symbols- a thing that stands for or represents something else

Objects- Confederate flag
Sounds- applause
Smells, tastes- any food
Language allows us to read and discuss ideas.

Hypothesis of linguistic relativity (Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis)- our idea of reality depends upon our language

Americans have several words to describe time (important to our culture)
second, minute, hour, afternoon, morning, annual, regularly

Inuit have over twenty different words to describe "snow".
New words can change our perception of the world/people/actions:

- Racial slurs

Body language

- Bowing as respect in Japan
4. How are language and culture related?

Humans use symbols to create language, which can then be used to create and transmit culture.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parts of Culture - Norms: rules that define behavior</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Folkways</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mores</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Laws</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Beliefs</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Taboo</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Folkways</td>
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<td>----------------------------------</td>
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<td>1. sleeping in a bed</td>
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<td>2. supporting school activities</td>
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<td>3. talking to others in the hall</td>
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</table>
If you follow these norms, you receive a reward. If you break a norm, you receive a punishment.

These are called *sanctions*.

Two types of sanctions:

1. **formal** - given by people with authority (judge)

2. **informal** - given by the group (thanking someone)
Values- ideas about what is good and shared by people in society

1. Achievement and success- make $$$

2. Activity and work- get a job

3. Efficiency and practicality- get it done fast

4. Equality- equal rights for all

5. Democracy- power belongs to the people

6. Group superiority- Americans are the best!
Folkway, More, Law, or Value???

cursing in church
eat three meals a day
  progress
burning the flag
  sleep in a bed
no murder
  overtime parking
freedom
5. What are the essential components of culture?

Norms

Values

Beliefs

Use of material objects
13. How do norms affect the way we live our lives?

Once norms are learned, members of a society use them to guide our social behavior.
15. Distinguish among the three types of norms.

1. Folkways- no meaning behind the behavior
2. Mores- behavior with moral meaning
3. Laws- behavior enforced by officials
16. How is conformity to norms learned and accepted?

Groups teach conformity through formal and informal sanctions (rewards and punishments).
17. Why are values important?

Values are the basis for norms. Values teach a culture what is/is not important. They are involved in every aspect of daily life.
20. How have basic values changed in the US over the past twenty years?

There is less emphasis on group superiority, shown by fewer racist behaviors and attitudes.

Many Americans work just as hard at having fun as they do at their jobs.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON LGO
9. Why is culture more important than instinct when determining human behavior?

If humans were controlled by instinct, we would all act the same way. Instead, humans create and learn thinking, feeling, and behaving. Culture tells us how to meet our basic needs.
10. How do sociobiologists view human behavior?

Sociobiologists assume that the behaviors that best help people are biologically based and transmitted in our DNA.
11. What can be learned about a culture by studying its language and vocabulary?

When something is important to a culture, its language will have many words to describe it.
12. How can language change a person's perception of the world?

New words can expand a person's outlook and change what is important to them.
Number your paper from 1-15. List items (things or beliefs) that are important to you. How many of these things would you be willing to give up? Explain why or why not.
Beliefs and Material Culture

*Nonmaterial culture: ideas, knowledge and beliefs that influence people's behavior

*Material culture: objects of a culture
   A culture gives objects meaning (pepper story)

*Beliefs: ideas about the nature of reality
Real Culture: Actual behavior of people

Ideal Culture: The way a culture SHOULD behave

*Honesty*
Cultural Diversity and Similarity

- Technology

- Problem Solving Skills
Why do cultures change?

1. Discovery- find

2. Invention- create

3. Diffusion- share
Social Categories: grouping people together who share the same characteristic.

Subculture: part of dominant culture, but differs in some respects

Chinatown

Counterculture: deliberately opposed to beliefs and attitudes of dominant culture

Hell's Angels

Ethnocentrism: judging others in terms of one's one cultural standards

Americans are the best!
Cultural Universals: general cultural traits that exist in all cultures
-pg. 102 chart

Cultural Particulars: the ways in which a culture expresses universal traits
- caring for children

*Cultural universals exist because as humans, we all have the same basic needs and desires.
6. How does cultural diversity arise within a society?

Diversity results from social categories, subcultures, and countercultures. We are all uniquely different in some way.
7. What is the role of ethnocentrism in society?

Ethnocentrism helps people feel good about themselves and their group. Stability is promoted because traditions and behaviors are valued.
8. What similarities can be found in cultures around the world?

More than 70 cultural universals exist: sports, cooking, art, family, funeral rites, etc.
14. What benefits are to be gained by studying cultures other than your own?

Answer on your own
18. What is the difference between ideal culture and real culture?

Ideal culture is what a group claims to do and wants to do, while real culture is the actual behavior taking place.
19. How is material culture related to nonmaterial culture?

The meanings of objects are based upon beliefs, ideas, and knowledge that a culture holds regarding the items.