

WHAT IS CULTURE? 48

the language, beliefs, values, norms, behaviors, and material objects that are important enough to pass on to future generations of a society

WHAT DIFFERENTIATES ONE CULTURE FROM ANOTHER? 58

language, gestures, values, perception and categorization of experiences, actions, norms, interaction of social structures, and struggle for scarce resources

HOW DOES CULTURE INFLUENCE SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AND STUDY? 61

culture: affects how we perceive things; guides our thoughts and actions; must be studied while keeping these differences in mind

get the topic: **WHAT IS CULTURE?**

Material Culture 49
Nonmaterial Culture 49
Additional Values 54
Norms and Sanctions 54

The Study of Culture 54
Symbolic Interaction—A Crisis of Values 58
Functionalism—Communitarianism 59
Conflict Theory—The McDonaldization of the United States 59

Social Policy: Multiculturalism and Assimilation 61

Theory

FUNCTIONALISM 58

- culture (shared values and norms) holds society together through shared values and norms
- interaction of social structures
- society must have a balanced relationship between the community, the market, and the government
- communitarians (free markets and private ownership of businesses)

CONFLICT THEORY 59

- society struggles for resources
- societies win resources by using McDonaldization process (efficiency, calculability, predictability, and technology)

- convenience over quality
- only the wealthy benefit: wages drop, inequality increases, short-term profits rise

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM 59

- traditional vs. secular values
- three hypotheses: trend, comparison, and distribution
- individualist and traditional values result in higher rates of murder, poverty, and out-of-wedlock births
- U.S. citizens becoming more traditional, not secular

Key Terms

culture is the language, beliefs, values, norms, behaviors, and material objects that are passed on to future generations of society. 48

material culture consists of items within a culture that you can taste, touch, and feel. 49

nonmaterial culture consists of the nonphysical products of society, including our symbols, values, rules, and sanctions. 49

symbols represent, suggest, or stand for something else. 49

language is a system of speech and/or written symbols used to convey meaning and communicate. 49

cultural transmission is culture passing from one generation to the next through language. 50

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is a hypothesis, first advanced by Edward Sapir in 1929 and subsequently developed by Benjamin Whorf, that the structure of a language determines a native speaker's perception and categorization of experience. 50

gestures are symbols we make using our bodies, such as facial expressions, hand movements, eye contact, and other types of body language. 51

values are a part of a society's nonmaterial culture that represent cultural standards by which we determine what is good, bad, right, or wrong. 51

value pairs help us define values, usually in terms of opposites. 51

value clusters are two or more values that support each other. 54

value conflict occurs when two or more values are at odds. 51

norms are rules developed for appropriate behavior based on specific values that are conditional. 54

sanction is a prize or punishment you receive when you either abide by a norm or violate it. 54

folkways are informal types of norms. 54

mores are norms that represent a community's most important values. 54

taboo is an act that is socially unacceptable. 54

ethnocentrism occurs when a person uses his or her own culture to judge another culture. 55

xenophobia refers to fear and hostility toward people who are from other countries or cultures. 55

(continued)

xenocentrism is perceiving other groups or societies as superior to your own. 55

cultural relativism means making a deliberate effort to appreciate a group's ways of life without prejudice. 55

normative relativism is the evaluation of a society based on that society's norms. 55

cultural lag happens when social and cultural changes occur at a slower pace than technological changes. 55

culture shock occurs when a person encounters a foreign culture and has an emotional response to the differences between the cultures. 56

subculture is a subset of the dominant culture that has distinct values, beliefs, and norms. 56

countercultures are groups with value systems that are in opposition to the dominant group's values. 56

multiculturalism is a concept supporting the inherent value of different cultures

within society. 56

assimilation is the process by which minority groups adopt the patterns of the dominant culture. 56

global village refers to the "shrinking" of the world through immediate electronic communications. 57

Sample Test Questions

These multiple-choice questions are similar to those found in the test bank that accompanies this textbook.

1. Norms include all of the following *except*
 - a. folkways.
 - b. mores.
 - c. rules for behavior.
 - d. definitions of beauty.
2. Which of the following statements is *false*?
 - a. Values may cluster, but they cannot contradict.
 - b. Values remain the same over time.
 - c. Values are often defined by their opposite.
 - d. Values exist in all societies.
3. Gestures are part of
 - a. assimilation.
 - b. material culture.
 - c. nonmaterial culture.
 - d. multiculturalism.
4. How does a counterculture form?
 - a. When a subculture's values differ from the dominant group's values
 - b. When a group maintains likes to aspects of their original culture
 - c. When the dominant culture does not accept part of the group
 - d. When the subculture adopts the values of the dominant culture
5. In order for sociologists to practice cultural relativism when studying polygamists in the United States, they must consider
 - a. U.S. laws.
 - b. U.S. norms.
 - c. polygamist norms.
 - d. cultural universals.

ESSAY

1. What aspects of Las Vegas culture may lead to the city's culture death?
2. How does culture influence sociological theory and study?
3. How might individualism lead to conflict?
4. How can a business benefit from the McDonaldization process?
5. How did Wayne Baker determine whether a crisis of values really exists in the United States?

WHERE TO START YOUR RESEARCH PAPER

To learn more about the McDonaldization of America, go to <http://www.mcdonaldization.com>

To find more information about attending college while traveling the world, go to <http://www.semesteratsea.com>

To learn more about the Small World project (the online experiment to test the idea that any two people in the world can be connected through only six others), go to <http://smallworld.columbia.edu>

To learn more about the communitarian movement, go to <http://www.gwu.edu/~ccps/index.html>

To find urban legends and myths as well as their origins and why they are not true, see <http://www.snopes.com>

For more information on international study options, go to <http://www.studyabroad.com>, <http://www.studyabroadlinks.com>

To find vital information to consider before studying abroad, go to http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/studying/studying_1238.html

For more information on international volunteering, go to <http://www.crossculturalsolutions.org>

To learn more about the Peace Corp, go to <http://www.peacecorps.gov>