

CHAPTER 3



CULTURE



LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe and illustrate a culture's characteristics
- 2 Explain the significance of symbols, language, values, and norms
- 3 Discuss and illustrate cultural similarities
- 4 Discuss and illustrate cultural variations
- 5 Differentiate between high culture and popular culture
- 6 Explain how and why technology affects cultural change
- 7 Compare and evaluate the theoretical explanations of culture

Key Topics



- Census Data, Traffic Data, Maps
- 3-1 Culture and Society
- 3-2 The Building Blocks of Culture
- **Journey to Sharahad**
- 3-3 Some Cultural Similarities
- 3-4 Some Cultural Variations
- 3-5 Popular Culture
- 3-6 Cultural Change and Technology
- 3-7 Sociological Perspectives on Culture

Culture and Society

- **Culture:** the learned and shared behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, values, and material objects that characterize a particular group or society
- **Society:** a group of people that has lived and worked together long enough to become an organized population and to think of themselves as a social unit

Culture involves the products of a society. A society shares a culture.

Culture and Society



Characteristics of culture

- Learned
- Transmitted from one generation to the next
- Shared
- Adaptive
- Always changing

Culture and Society

- **Material culture** consists of the tangible objects that members of a society make, use, and share.
- **Nonmaterial culture** includes the shared set of meanings that people use to interpret and understand the world.

Material culture examples: tools, jewelry, pottery, clothing, and furniture

Nonmaterial culture examples: political opinions, religious beliefs, and marriage patterns

Culture and Society—Application

What are the material and nonmaterial cultures of ...?

	Material	Non-Material
Football	Player Contracts	Crowd support
School		
Religion		

Football: material=ball, pads, whistles; nonmaterial=rules, cheers

School: material=books, computers, desks; nonmaterial=behaviors, valuing grades

Restaurant: material: dishes, cash register, booths; nonmaterial=customary behaviors, valuing good service, expecting to pay

Building Blocks

- **Symbol:** anything that stands for something else and has a particular meaning for people who share a culture
- Different forms of symbols:
 - Words
 - Gestures
 - Visual images
 - Physical objects

Examples: Words: chair, tomorrow, hope

Gestures: wave, salute

Visual images: tattoos, logos

Physical objects: cross or wedding ring

Building Blocks

Symbols: (Examples Please!)

- Distinguish one culture from another
- Unify or divide a society
- Change over time

Veil can be a symbol of respect or domination.

Confederate flag is a source of pride or offense.

“Green” is not used to mean environmentally responsible.

Discussion: Should nativity scenes be allowed in public places at Christmastime?

Building Blocks

- **Language** is a system of shared symbols that enables people to communicate with one another.
- **Language is important.**
 - It makes us human.
 - It helps us interact.
 - It directs our thinking, controls our actions, and gives us a sense of belonging.

Discussion: How does language make us human?

Building Blocks

- Language influences how we perceive genders, races, and ethnicities.
- Words create and reinforce both positive and negative
- Examples
 - Selectmen
 - Chairman

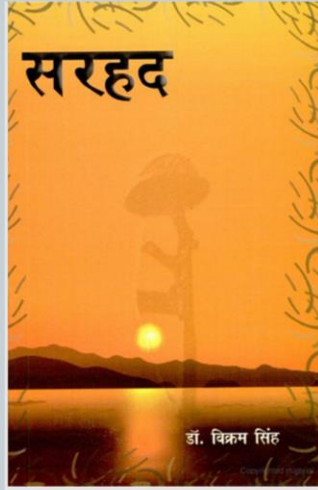
Discussion: Is it acceptable to use racist or sexist terms to describe oneself or one's group? Is there anything wrong with the traditional use of language such as businessman, chairman, mailman, or mankind? Is it acceptable to use he to refer to individuals who may be male or female?

Building Blocks—Application

- What are some uses of the word “black” to mean something negative?
- What are some uses of the word “white” to mean something positive?

Examples of answers: black mood, black hats; whitewash, white as symbol of purity

Journey to Sharahad



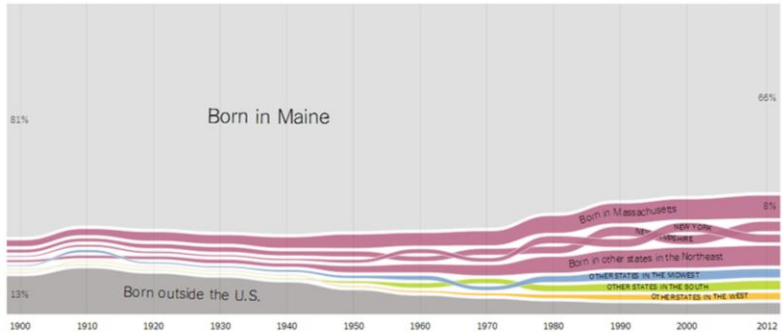
Where We Come From



http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/upshot/where-people-in-each-state-were-born.html?smid=fb-nytimes&WT.mc_id=UP_WPI_2014&utm_source=AD&utm_medium=WT.mc_id=blomrte13885ca0000&utm_term=.u2008840000&_r=0&fbclid=IwAR1aB...

Where people living in Maine were born:

New! [Switch to Diaspora Out of Maine](#)



MIGRATION INTO MAINE

The locally born share of the population has steadily shrunk as the migration from other Northeastern states has increased. About 40 percent of adults now living in Maine but born elsewhere have a college degree, about twice the rate of state natives.

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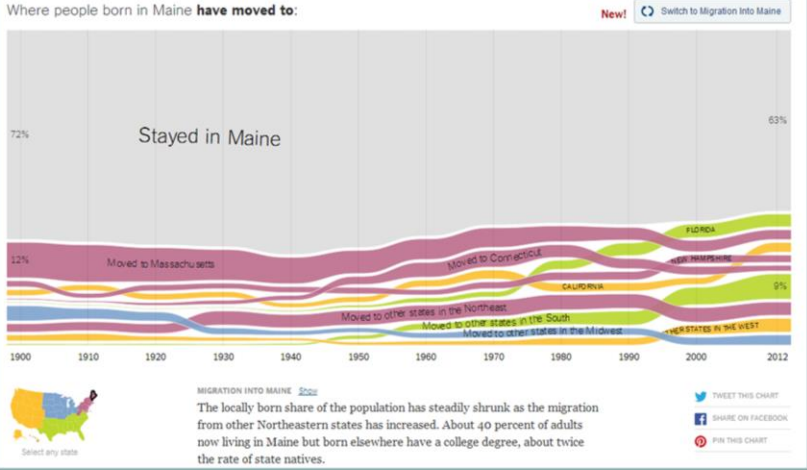
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Where We Come From



http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/upshot/where-people-in-each-state-were-born.html?smid=fb-nytimes&WT.sma=UP_WPI_2014&utm_source=AD&utm_medium=WT_m_id&utm_campaign=15852ca0000&utm_term=.20008800000&_r=0&abt=0002&abt=00&abt=0002



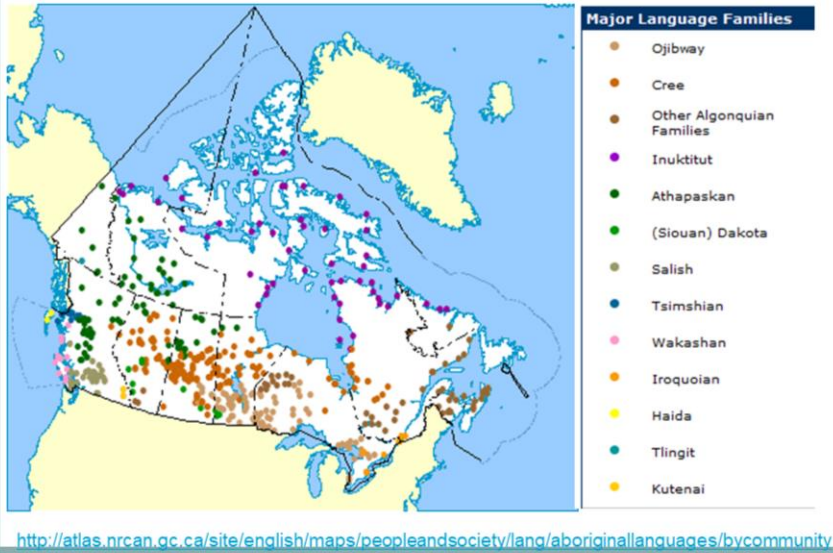
Ethnicity in Canada

- First Nations
 - Descendants of Immigrants from Great Britain
 - Descendants of French Immigrants
 - Other European-Canadians
 - Citizens of non-European origins
-
- 1774 "Quebec Act" Great Britain Parliament gives Quebec the right to preserve Francophone culture





Aboriginal Language Map of Canada Major Languages



The language quilt

By Catherine Farley and Damian Lister/TORONTO STAR

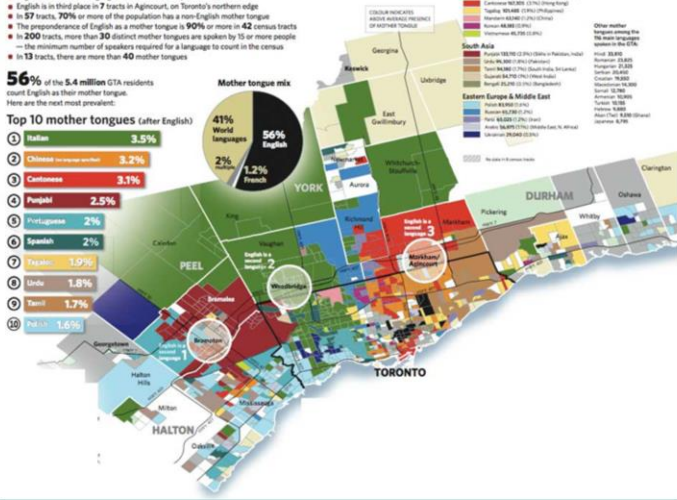
English is still, by far, the first language across Greater Toronto. But strip away that blanket of dominance and a colourful patchwork emerges, showing where newcomers from around the world chose to settle. The map shows the most prevalent mother tongue after English in more than 1,000 neighbourhoods across the GTA, as revealed by a Star analysis of 2006 census data

Some discoveries

- English is the second language in 47 of the GTA's 1,076 census tracts
- English is in third place in 7 tracts in Agincourt, on Toronto's northern edge
- In 57 tracts, 70% or more of the population has a non-English mother tongue
- The preponderance of English as a mother tongue is 90% or more in 42 census tracts
- In 200 tracts, more than 30 distinct mother tongues are spoken by 10 or more people — the minimum number of speakers required for a language to count in the census
- In 13 tracts, there are more than 40 mother tongues

56% of the 5.4 million GTA residents count English as their mother tongue. Here are the most prevalent.

Top 10 mother tongues (after English)



KEY TO MOTHER TONGUES

Number of census tracts in GTA

Western Europe, Americas

- Spain 14,878 (2.7%)
- France 10,200 (1.9%)
- Portuguese 10,100 (1.9%)
- Italian 9,500 (1.7%)
- Ukrainian 8,200 (1.5%)
- Polish 8,100 (1.5%)
- German 7,400 (1.4%)
- Dutch 6,400 (1.2%)

East Asia

- Chinese (not a specific dialect) 9,500 (1.7%)
- Cantonese 8,500 (1.6%) (not a specific dialect)
- Tagalog 8,400 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Manchu 8,200 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Korean 8,100 (1.5%)
- Japanese 8,100 (1.5%)

South Asia

- Punjabi 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Tamil 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Urdu 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Sinhalese 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Bengali 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)

Eastern Europe & Middle East

- Hebrew 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Arabic 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Russian 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Yiddish 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)
- Other 8,100 (1.5%) (not a specific dialect)

Other mother tongues among the 10 most prevalent languages in the GTA

- Irish 8,100
- Armenian 8,100
- Portuguese 8,100
- Chinese 8,100
- Spanish 8,100
- Tagalog 8,100
- Ukrainian 8,100
- Polish 8,100
- Hebrew 8,100
- Arabic 8,100
- Russian 8,100
- Yiddish 8,100
- Other 8,100

Building Blocks of Culture

Symbols
(Language)

Values

Norms

Rituals

Building Blocks

- **Values** are the standards by which members of a particular culture define what is good or bad, moral or immoral, proper or improper, desirable or undesirable, beautiful or ugly.
- Major U.S. values?
 - achievement and success
 - humanitarianism, freedom and equality,
 - activity and work, efficiency and practicality, democracy and individuality.

Values are **Achievement and success** - U.S. culture stresses personal achievement, especially occupational success.

Activity and work - Americans want to “make things happen.” They respect people who are focused and disciplined in their jobs, and assume that hard work will be rewarded.

Humanitarianism - U.S. society emphasizes concern for others, helpfulness, kindness, and offering comfort and support.

Efficiency and practicality - Americans emphasize technological innovation, up-to-dateness, practicality, and getting things done.

Progress - Americans focus on the future rather than the present or the past.

Material comfort - Americans want new products and services. Many work hard to pay for fancy new cars, and dream vacations (even if they can not afford them).

Freedom and equality - Countless U.S. documents affirm freedom of speech, freedom of press, and freedom of worship.

Conformity - Most people do not want to be labeled as “strange,” “peculiar,” or “different.” They conform because they want to be accepted, liked, and promoted.

Democracy - Provides the average U.S. citizen with equal political rights. It emphasizes equality, freedom, and faith in the people rather than giving power to a monarch, dictator, or emperor.

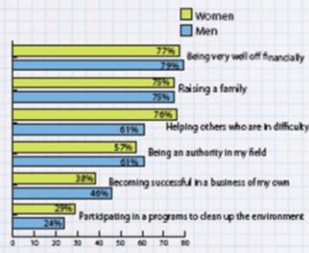
Individualism - U.S. culture values each person’s development. Thus, people often encourage children to be independent, creative, self-directed, self-motivated and spontaneous.

Building Blocks

FIGURE 3.2
What Really Matters in Life?

These objectives of first-year college students reflect U.S. values. How are women and men similar? How do they differ? How might you explain the differences?

Percentage who said that each objective is "essential" or "very important"



Source: Based on Chronicle of Higher Education, 2010: 12.

FIGURE 3.2 WHAT REALLY MATTERS IN LIFE?

Percentage of women and men saying that each objective is "essential" or "very important."



These objectives of first-year college students reflect U.S. values. How are women and men similar? How do they differ? How might you explain the differences?

Building Blocks - Norms



Norms society's rules of right and wrong behavior.

- Norms tell us what we should or should not do.

Characteristics of Norms

- Most are unwritten.
- They are instrumental.
- Some are explicit while others are implicit.
- They change over time.
- Most are conditional.
- Norms can be rigid or flexible.

Building Blocks

- **Folkways:** norms that members of a society look upon as not being critical and that may be broken without severe punishment
- **Mores:** norms that society considers very important because they maintain morals and ethics
- **Taboos:** strong prohibitions of any act that is considered to be extremely offensive and forbidding because of social customs, religious or moral beliefs, or laws.
- **Laws:** norms that are defined and enforced by a political authority

EXAMPLES?

Examples: folkways: eat with a fork; cover your mouth when you cough; dress in style
Mores: Don't murder; cover genitals in public

Identify whether it is a folkway or more.

Drive at or below the speed limit.

Protect children from physical harm.

Don't cheat on your spouse.

Chew with your mouth closed.

Building Blocks

Social Controls

- **Sanctions:** rewards for appropriate behavior and penalties for inappropriate behavior
 - Sanctions vary in strength and can be positive or negative.
 - A hug
 - Getting fired

Laws may reflect either mores or folkways.

Similarities



- **Cultural universals:** customs and practices that are common to all societies
- All cultures include bodily adornments, dancing, food taboos, ideas about modesty, and expectations for mourning.
- Cultures differ in the expression of the universals.

Similarities

- **Ideal culture:** the beliefs, values, and norms that people say they hold
- **Real culture:** actual everyday behavior
- **Application:**
 - Behavior in classroom?

Example: Many people exceed the speed limit.

Similarities

- **Ethnocentrism** is the belief that one's culture and way of life are superior to those of another group.
- **Cultural relativism** involves recognizing that no culture is better than another and that a culture should be judged by its own standards.

Discussion: In what ways is ethnocentrism functional? In what ways is ethnocentrism dysfunctional? In what ways is cultural relativism functional?

Variations



- A **subculture** is a group or category of people whose distinctive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting differ somewhat from those of the larger society.
- Subcultures can be based on ethnicity, religion, politics, age, physical disability, or social class.

Variations



- A **counterculture** deliberately and consciously rejects some of the basic beliefs, values, and norms of the dominant culture.
- Countercultures can range from the Ku Klux Klan to the Old Order Amish.

SPLC
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RESOURCES - WHAT WE DO - OUR ISSUES - HISTORY - HATE MAP

917 Hate Groups and Extremity operating in the US. Track them below with our Hate Map.

HATE GROUPS STATE TOTALS

Search by: [dropdown] [dropdown] [button] All hate groups in the US: 917

Southern Poverty Law Center – Maps Hate Groups
www.splcenter.org/hate-map

ABOUT THE HATE MAP

- All hate groups have beliefs or practices that seek to injure or victimize classes of people, typically for their race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, or national origin.
- This list was compiled using hate group publications and websites, news and law enforcement reports, field research and news reports. Groups that appear in the center of some national news coverage.
- Hate group activities can include criminal acts, marches, rallies, speeches, meetings, recruiting or advertising.

Variations

- **Multiculturalism** refers to the coexistence of many cultures in the same geographic area, without any one culture dominating another.
- Multiculturalism is also called cultural pluralism.

Discussion: Is cultural pluralism good for a society? Why or why not?

Variations



- **Culture shock** is a sense of confusion, uncertainty, disorientation, or anxiety that accompanies exposure to an unfamiliar environment.
- We react to differences in personal hygiene, privacy, food, and personal space.

Popular Culture

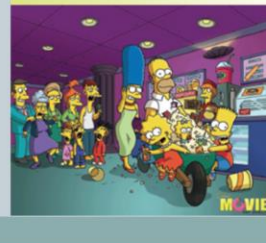
The Simpsons was once considered a countercultural icon. It's now been on the air for more than two decades and is the longest running sitcom in the history of American television. Can *The Simpsons* still be considered countercultural, or is it now part of the dominant culture?



Popular Culture

- **High Culture:** Cultural expression of societies highest social classes.
- **Popular culture** refers to the beliefs, practices, activities, and products that are widely shared among a population in everyday life.
- **Mass media:** television, music, magazines, radio, advertising, sports, fashions, movies

The Simpsons was once considered a countercultural icon. It's now been on the air for more than two decades and is the longest running sitcom in the history of American television. Can The Simpsons still be considered countercultural, or is it now part of the dominant culture?



Discussion: How are we influenced by television? By advertising? By music? By clothing fashions?

Popular Culture

- **Cultural imperialism** involves the cultural values and products of one society influencing or dominating another society.
- American fast food restaurants, toys, music, and advertising are available in most countries of the world.



Cultural Change



- Culture is transmitted to new generations.
- New behaviors and beliefs adapt to existing ones through **cultural integration**.
- Life would be chaotic and unpredictable without cultural integration.

Cultural Change

- **Discovery:** exploration that results in new products
 - Penicillin prolongs lives.
- **Invention:** the process of creating new things
 - DVD was invented in 1995.
- **Innovation:** turning inventions into mass-market products
 - Henry Ford began mass producing automobiles.
- **Diffusion:** the process through which components of culture spread from one society to another
 - Rock and Roll

Diffusion is not the same as cultural imperialism.

Cultural Change



Cultural lag refers to the gap when nonmaterial culture changes more slowly than material culture.

- Cell phones were invented before our norms for when to use them.
- Reproductive technologies are available but there is still confusion about the moral issues.

Perspectives

- **Functionalists** focus on culture as a cement that binds society.
 - Strengths?
 - Weaknesses?
- **Conflict theorists** argue that culture can generate enormous inequality.
 - Strengths?
 - Weaknesses?

Perspectives

- **Feminist scholars** focus on gender differences.
 - Strengths?
 - Weaknesses?
- **Symbolic interactionists** study how people interpret and transmit culture.
 - Strengths?
 - Weaknesses?

Table 3.3

Sociological Perspectives of Culture

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE	FUNCTIONALIST	CONFLICT	FEMINIST	SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONIST
Level of Analysis	Macro	Macro	Macro and Micro	Micro
Key Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar beliefs bind people together and create stability. • Sharing core values unifies a society and promotes cultural solidarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture benefits some groups at the expense of others. • As powerful economic monopolies increase worldwide, the rich get richer and the rest of us get poorer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and men often experience culture differently. • Cultural values and norms can increase inequality because of sex, race/ethnicity, and social class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural symbols forge identities (that change over time). • Culture (like norms and values) helps people merge into a society despite their differences.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking the same language (English in the United States) binds people together because they can communicate with one another, express their feelings, and influence one another's attitudes and behaviors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the English language reinforces negative images about gender ("slut"), race ("honky"), ethnicity ("jap"), and age ("old geezer") that create inequality and foster ethnocentrism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using male language (e.g., "congressman," "fireman," and "chairman") conveys the idea that men are superior to and dominant over women, even when women have the same jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can change the language they create as they interact with others. Many Americans now use "police officer" instead of "policeman," and "single person" instead of "bachelor" or "old maid."

Perspectives—Application

Identify the sociological perspective.

- Similar beliefs create solidarity.
- Culture benefits the wealthy.
- Core values unify a society.
- Women and men experience culture differently.
- Language shapes our views and behaviors.

Similar beliefs: functionalism

Culture benefits: conflict

Core values: functionalism

Women and men: feminism

Language: interactionism

Key Terms	
Culture	Cultural universals
Society	Ideal culture
Material culture	Real culture
Nonmaterial culture	Ethnocentrism
Symbol	Cultural relativism
Language	Subculture
Values	Counterculture
	Multiculturalism
Norms	Culture shock
• Folkways	High culture
• Mores	Popular culture
• Taboos	Cultural capital
• Laws	Mass media
Sanctions	Cultural imperialism
Rituals	Cultural integration
	Cultural lag

Chapter Review



1. What is culture?
2. Describe the building blocks of culture.
3. In what ways are cultures similar and different?
4. How are we influenced by popular culture?
5. How do cultures persist and change?
6. Discuss the different perspectives on culture.



SUMMARY

- Culture shapes our attitudes and behaviors
- The building blocks of culture are symbols, language, values, and norms
- There are diversities and similarities across and within cultures
- Social class affects our participation in high culture and popular culture
- Technology has influenced cultural changes