

Socio-Cultural: Norms

Inquiry Questions:

What determines our beliefs, behaviors and attitudes?

Who determines cultural and social norms?

What is culture

Behaviors, attitudes and identities that are common among a group of people who claim some form of unity with each other.



Natural Instinct

Humans have basic need to belong. Social groups protected early humans and continue to help us survive given environment.



Evolution of Man

Cultures are different from one another because of differences in where the culture evolved.

Our world has always been changing and we adapt (ie. new environmental issues, new technology, different resources, etc.). These regional adaptations result in a localized evolution of culture.



Surface Culture vs. Deep Culture

Surface culture easily observed

Deep culture accessible to
members but may be difficult to
understand for non-members

The Cultural Iceberg

Surface Culture

Food
Flags Festivals
Fashion Holidays Music
Performances Dances Games
Arts & Crafts Literature Language

Deep Culture

Communication Styles and Rules

facial expressions gestures eye contact
personal space touching
body language tone of voice
handling and displaying of emotion
conversational patterns in different social situations

Notions of:

courtesy and manners
friendship leadership
cleanliness modesty beauty

Concepts of:

self time past and future
fairness and justice
roles related to age, sex, class, family, etc.

Attitudes toward:

elders adolescents dependents
rule expectations work authority
cooperation vs. competition
relationships with animals age sin death

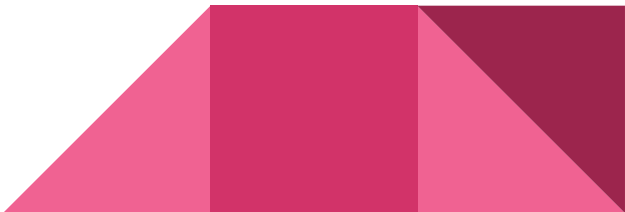
Approaches to:

religion courtship marriage raising children
decision-making problem-solving

Matsumoto (2007)

Defined culture as a unique meaning and information system, shared by a group and transmitted across generations.

Allows group to:

- Meet basic needs of survival
 - Coordinate socially to achieve existence
 - Transmit social behavior
 - Pursue happiness and well-being
 - Derive meaning from life
- 

Cultural Norms

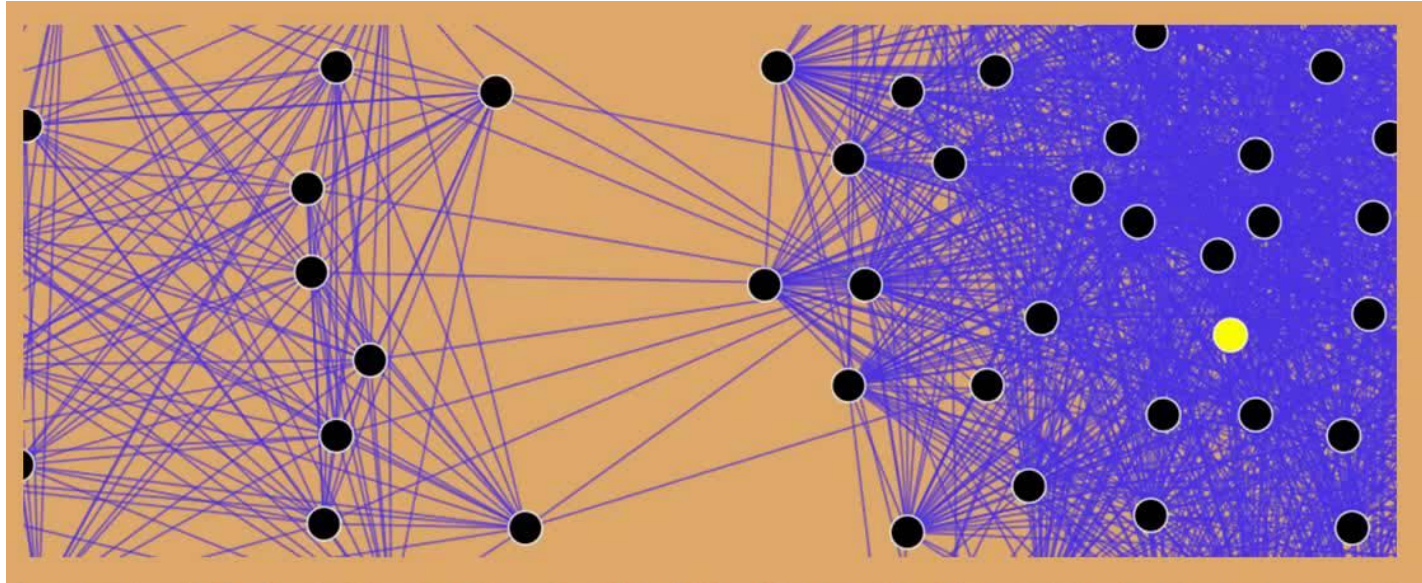
Culture is a generic term given to use of tools, practices and beliefs

Cultural norms- unique set of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors specific to a particular culture



Enculturation

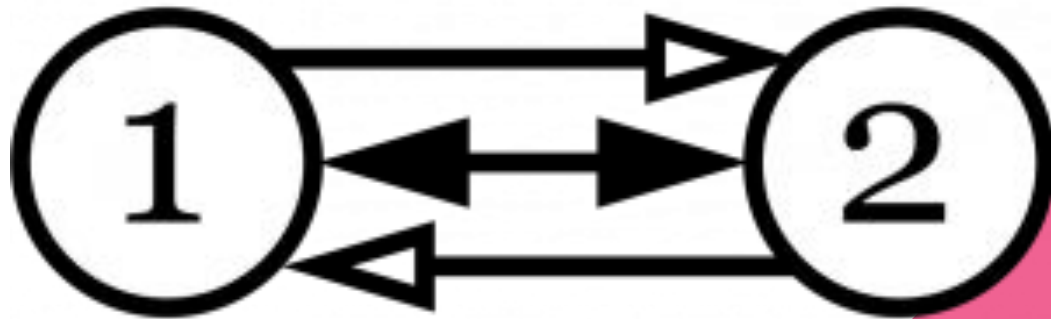
Process by which individuals learn their culture (ie. observation, formal instruction or direct experience)



Individual & Culture

Individuals and Society exist in a bidirectional relationship.

Cultures and their norms grow out of the behavior of individuals but individuals' behavior is shaped by culture.



Gatekeeper Theory

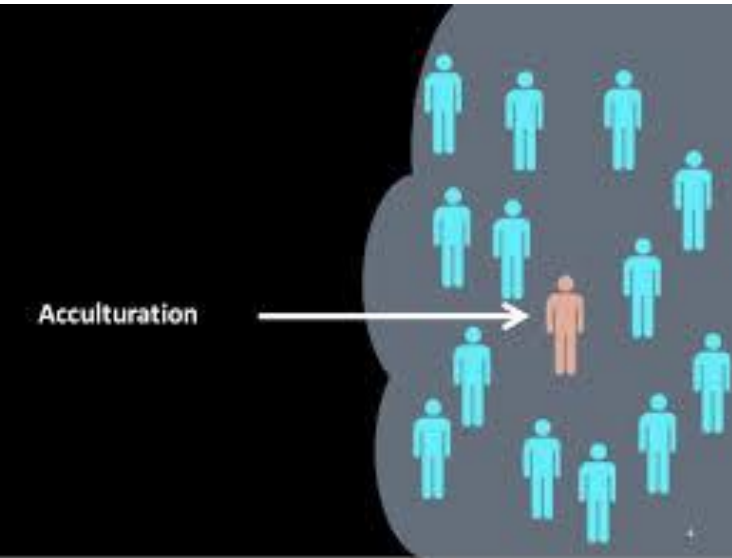
Gatekeepers are those in society who decide what information is shared to groups (ie. parents, politicians, religious leaders, news editors, teachers, social media influencers)



Acculturation

Process of psychological and cultural change as a result of contact and interaction between cultures

Globalization has increased intercultural contacts leading to growing cultural conflicts (ie. immigration debates in America)



Example: Honor Culture

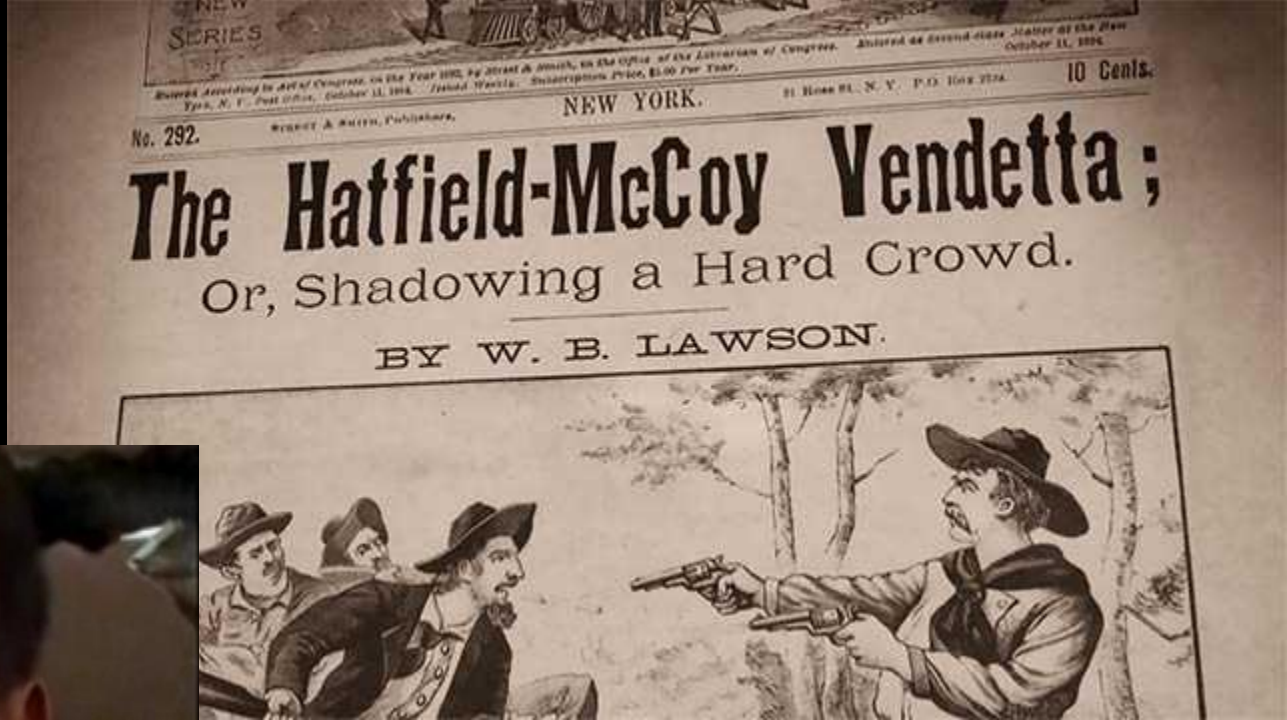
Societies in which individuals (usually men) place a high value on strength and social reputation.

Insults to reputation, family and/or property are met violently
(ie. the Southern United States, major urban inner cities, Middle East)





WHAT YOU SAY BOUT MY MAMA?



Samurai's Bushido Code

Seppuku (aka harakiri) meaning “belly cutting” was a form of ritual suicide meant to bring an honorable death



Origins of Honor Culture

Areas without clear authority; requires more aggressive defense of one's own self, family, and possessions.

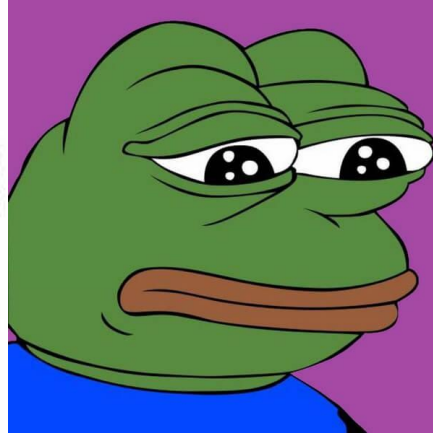
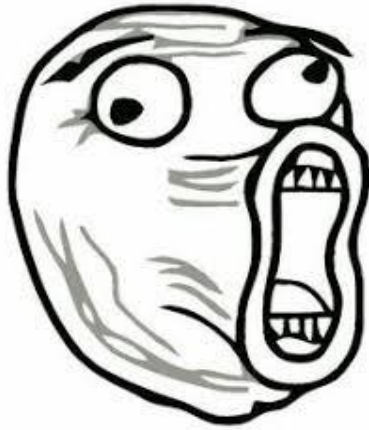
Children who grow up in these chaotic and violent environments tend to socialize to engage in the same behaviors.



Memetics and Cultural Transmission

Richard Dawkins (1976) coined the term “meme” as a “unit of culture” (an idea, belief or behavior)

Ideas spread similar to genetics, growing from person to person. Memetics is like genetics, the study of how these ideas propagate themselves in society.



Memetics and Cultural Transmission

Example: God meme (religious practices)

Idea of God (regardless of denomination) has existed for millenia in society

Provides great psychological advantages:

- Meaning of life
- Mental health
- Reduce vice
- Encourage good behavior



Meme Battle

Republican - Democrat

Fundamentalism - Modernism

Capitalism - Communism

Democracy - Socialism

Islam - Christianity



Exit Slip:

To what degree do you see the following statement about society playing out in the real world? Explain.

Humans are the vehicle through which memes compete for social viability. Human behavior then is manipulated by ideas (ie. Russian trolls manipulating 2016 election through social media posts).

