Chapter 1 : Cultural Concepts and Lessons

the idea that to be a full member of a culture or subculture, individuals have to learn to use, formally and informally, the patterns of cultural behaviour prescribed by that culture. Ethnicity an individual or group's heritage/ ancestral background based on biological and cultural criteria.

Populations Ataque de nervios Commonly reported symptoms include uncontrollable shouting, attacks of crying, trembling, heat in the chest rising into the head, and verbal or physical aggression. Dissociative experiences, seizurelike or fainting episodes, and suicidal gestures are prominent in some attacks but absent in others. A general feature of an ataque de nervios is a sense of being out of control. Ataques de nervios frequently occur as a direct result of a stressful event relating to the family e. People can experience amnesia for what occurred during the ataque de nervios, but they otherwise return rapidly to their usual level of functioning. Although descriptions of some ataques de nervios most closely fit with the DSM-IV description of panic attacks, the association of most ataques with a precipitating event and the frequent absence of the hallmark symptoms of acute fear or apprehension distinguish them from panic disorder. Ataques range from normal expressions of distress not associated with a mental disorder to symptom presentations associated with anxiety, mood dissociative, or somatoform disorders. Asian Indian Nervios Refers both to a general state of vulnerability to stress and to a syndrome evoked by difficult life circumstances. Nervios includes a wide range of symptoms of emotional distress, somatic disturbance, and inability to function. Nervios tends to be an ongoing problem, although it is variable in the degree of disability manifested. Nervios is a broad syndrome that ranges from cases free of a mental disorder to presentations resembling adjustment, anxiety, depressive, dissociative, somatoform, or psychotic disorders. Differential diagnosis depends on the constellation of symptoms, the kind of social events associated with onset and progress, and the level of disability experienced. Latin American Shenjing shuairuo A condition characterized by physical and mental fatigue, headaches, difficulty concentrating, dizziness, sleep disturbance, and memory loss. Other symptoms include gastrointestinal problems, sexual dysfunction, irritability, excitability, and autonomic nervous system disturbances. Chinese Susto espanto, pasmo, tripa ida, perdida del alma, or chibih An illness attributed to a frightening event that causes the soul to leave the body and results in unhappiness and sickness. Individuals with susto also experience significant strains in key social roles. Symptoms can appear days or years after the fright is experienced. In extreme cases, susto can result in death. Typical symptoms include appetite disturbances, inadequate or excessive sleep, troubled sleep or dreams, sadness, lack of motivation, and feelings of low self-worth or dirtiness. Somatic symptoms accompanying susto include muscle aches and pains, headache, stomachache, and diarrhea. Ritual healings focus on calling the soul back to the body and cleansing the person to restore bodily and spiritual balance. Susto can be related to major depressive disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, and somatoform disorders. Similar etiological beliefs and symptom configurations are found in many parts of the world. This syndrome is included in the official Japanese diagnostic system for mental disorders.

Chapter 2 : 5 Fundamental Concepts of Society and Culture by Lauren Naumovski on Prezi

Culture, on one hand, is an outcome of society and, on the other hand, society is able to survive and perpetuate itself because of the existence of culture. Culture is an ally of man in the sense that it enhances man's adaptability to nature.

Tylor in his book, Primitive Culture, published in Tylor said that culture is the complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. The study of culture has complex relationships that provide the societal information in the given society. This is the reason why Tylor explained it as complex whole as it provides the multi-dimension societal factors that is affected by the inter and intra-relationships of man in the social environment. The educational learning process of human beings in a given societal information. This can be learn in the parents later on revolves in the family then to the tribal community as it could adopt the sensory motors of the child in the environment. Basically, in the pedagogy of education the learning process is confined in the cognitive domain or simply the intelligence or the mental ability of the human beings. It directs the physiological response of the brain to mentally process that dictated in the sensory system as primarily directed by sight; felt by touch; listen by the sounds and taste by the smell. The mental capability must go hand in hand with the emotional or psychological attachment including intimacy and love. Primarily, the concept of culture revolves in the human society on its belief, art, morals, custom and other capabilities such as values, norms, traditions, mores, folkways, language , race, ethnicity, technology, fads, and laws. These social variables provide the unique definition of culture for the understanding and adjustment of life in a given societal condition. This article revolves the discussion on important concept of culture such as values, beliefs, norms, language, folkways, mores, laws, traditions and other similar concepts that will provide better understanding about the whole social experiences of man in the society. Tradition as a general term refers to the customs, rituals, belief, folklore, habits in a given ethnic group. When we speak about culture, the usual key concept is still on tradition because of the universality of the concept on the social experiences derive from that community. Folkways are the expected behavior being practiced in certain ethnic groups. They provide us the set of expected behavior to follow within the customs and habits in the ethnic groups. A good example of the folkways in the community is the courtship and dating, which prescribed certain behavioral practices that need to be followed as it is distinctly complement the kind of custom and habits they have in that ethnic group. Beliefs are the ideas , viewpoints and attitudes of the particular group of society. They are consists of fables, proverbs, myths, folklore ,traditions, superstition, education and etc. They also think and decide on particular course of action which they believe conform on the sets social experience in the society. Values are the common ethical standards in a civilized society wherein group members have the ability to distinguish what is right or wrong. These are approved sets of action to follow as part of societal life and violation of this act may require sanctions and punishment within the family or institutions of the society. Norms are the proper conduct of social behavior that should be followed in the society. Norms are unquestionable standards of what society consider as good and proper for social behavior. There are prescribe societal standards that should be followed because these are appropriate, legal, ethical and right actions. However, those who would not follow the set of societal standards are considered illegal, immoral, wrong, bad and improper. Language is a form of communication that represents the spoken and written words to convey information to an individual or group of people. The language also the best way to communicate specific group of people who have decipher and construct new form symbolic dialect that have been passed by one generation to another. These are in written forms, words, numbers even non-verbal communication such as facial expression and body movements and other sign languages. Mores are the long-established customs and traditions that have bearing in moral and ethical values of the society. They are the accepted customs of the society that prohibits following such as incest, infidelity or sex abuse. Laws are the rules, regulation and guiding policies of societal institutions. The violation of the laws means sanction or punishment for some wrongful acts by the individual such as homicide, murder, abortion, rape, robbery and other criminal acts. Basically, these are the common concepts as applied in sociology and anthropology to further study the nature

of man and society. It is usually the understanding of the social experiences as man interacts in the society. Generally, it is the way of life that would focus the how the people think, act and produce materials in its natural habitat. On the other hand, the sense of culture reflects the human products such as audio- visual arts and literary arts that revolved in the past history and civilization of the ethnic society. The grouping as one tribal community interacted to form a distinct and unique culture that defines them later as race.

Chapter 3 : The Concept of Culture â€" Centre for the Study of Culture and Society

Culture: distinguishes human beings from animals - refers to music, dance, literature, architecture and other creative activities - suggests tradition and heritage - denotes civilization - indicates the commonly shared ideas and practices of a group of people - suggests diversity We also think of a variety of activities as 'cultural'.

His use, and that of many writers after him, "refers to all the ways in which human beings overcome their original barbarism , and through artifice, become fully human. Thus a contrast between "culture" and " civilization " is usually implied in these authors, even when not expressed as such. In the words of anthropologist E. Tylor , it is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. This ability arose with the evolution of behavioral modernity in humans around 50, years ago, and is often thought to be unique to humans, although some other species have demonstrated similar, though much less complex, abilities for social learning. It is also used to denote the complex networks of practices and accumulated knowledge and ideas that is transmitted through social interaction and exist in specific human groups, or cultures, using the plural form. Change The Beatles exemplified changing cultural dynamics, not only in music, but fashion and lifestyle. Over a half century after their emergence, they continue to have a worldwide cultural impact. It has been estimated from archaeological data that the human capacity for cumulative culture emerged somewhere between ,â€", years ago. Alexander , has proposed a model of cultural change based on claims and bids, which are judged by their cognitive adequacy and endorsed or not endorsed by the symbolic authority of the cultural community in question. Cultural invention has come to mean any innovation that is new and found to be useful to a group of people and expressed in their behavior but which does not exist as a physical object. Humanity is in a global "accelerating culture change period," driven by the expansion of international commerce, the mass media, and above all, the human population explosion, among other factors. Culture repositioning means the reconstruction of the cultural concept of a society. These forces are related to both social structures and natural events, and are involved in the perpetuation of cultural ideas and practices within current structures, which themselves are subject to change. Social conflict and the development of technologies can produce changes within a society by altering social dynamics and promoting new cultural models , and spurring or enabling generative action. These social shifts may accompany ideological shifts and other types of cultural change. For example, the U. Environmental conditions may also enter as factors. For example, after tropical forests returned at the end of the last ice age , plants suitable for domestication were available, leading to the invention of agriculture , which in turn brought about many cultural innovations and shifts in social dynamics. War or competition over resources may impact technological development or social dynamics. Additionally, cultural ideas may transfer from one society to another, through diffusion or acculturation. In diffusion , the form of something though not necessarily its meaning moves from one culture to another. For example, hamburgers , fast food in the United States, seemed exotic when introduced into China. Diffusion of innovations theory presents a research-based model of why and when individuals and cultures adopt new ideas, practices, and products. Acculturation has different meanings, but in this context it refers to replacement of the traits of one culture with those of another, such as what happened to certain Native American tribes and to many indigenous peoples across the globe during the process of colonization. Related processes on an individual level include assimilation adoption of a different culture by an individual and transculturation. The transnational flow of culture has played a major role in merging different culture and sharing thoughts, ideas, and beliefs. Early modern discourses German Romanticism Johann Herder called attention to national cultures. Immanuel Kant â€" formulated an individualist definition of "enlightenment" similar to the concept of bildung: Against this intellectual cowardice, Kant urged: Sapere aude, "Dare to be wise! Moreover, Herder proposed a collective form of bildung: During the Romantic era , scholars in Germany , especially those concerned with nationalist movementsâ€"such as the nationalist struggle to create a "Germany" out of diverse principalities, and the nationalist struggles by ethnic minorities against the Austro-Hungarian Empire â€"developed a more inclusive notion of culture as " worldview " Weltanschauung.

Although more inclusive than earlier views, this approach to culture still allowed for distinctions between "civilized" and "primitive" or "tribal" cultures. In , Adolf Bastian â€" argued for "the psychic unity of mankind. Franz Boas â€" was trained in this tradition, and he brought it with him when he left Germany for the United States. In the 19th century, humanists such as English poet and essayist Matthew Arnold â€" used the word "culture" to refer to an ideal of individual human refinement, of "the best that has been thought and said in the world. Another facet of the Romantic movement was an interest in folklore , which led to identifying a "culture" among non-elites. This distinction is often characterized as that between high culture , namely that of the ruling social group , and low culture. In other words, the idea of "culture" that developed in Europe during the 18th and early 19th centuries reflected inequalities within European societies. Matthew Arnold contrasted "culture" with anarchy ; other Europeans, following philosophers Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau , contrasted "culture" with "the state of nature. Just as some critics have argued that the distinction between high and low cultures is really an expression of the conflict between European elites and non-elites, other critics have argued that the distinction between civilized and uncivilized people is really an expression of the conflict between European colonial powers and their colonial subjects. These critics considered folk music as produced by "the folk," i. Equally, this view often portrayed indigenous peoples as " noble savages " living authentic and unblemished lives, uncomplicated and uncorrupted by the highly stratified capitalist systems of the West. In the anthropologist Edward Tylor â€" applied these ideas of higher versus lower culture to propose a theory of the evolution of religion. According to this theory, religion evolves from more polytheistic to more monotheistic forms. This view paved the way for the modern understanding of culture. Martin Lindstrom asserts that Kulturbrille, which allow us to make sense of the culture we inhabit, also "can blind us to things outsiders pick up immediately. Sociology of culture The sociology of culture concerns culture as manifested in society. For sociologist Georg Simmel â€" , culture referred to "the cultivation of individuals through the agency of external forms which have been objectified in the course of history. Culture can be any of two types, non-material culture or material culture. The term tends to be relevant only in archeological and anthropological studies, but it specifically means all material evidence which can be attributed to culture, past or present. Cultural sociology first emerged in Weimar Germany â€" , where sociologists such as Alfred Weber used the term Kultursoziologie cultural sociology. Cultural sociology was then "reinvented" in the English-speaking world as a product of the " cultural turn " of the s, which ushered in structuralist and postmodern approaches to social science. This type of cultural sociology may be loosely regarded as an approach incorporating cultural analysis and critical theory. Cultural sociologists tend to reject scientific methods, instead hermeneutically focusing on words, artifacts and symbols. As a result, there has been a recent influx of quantitative sociologists to the field. Thus, there is now a growing group of sociologists of culture who are, confusingly, not cultural sociologists. These scholars reject the abstracted postmodern aspects of cultural sociology, and instead look for a theoretical backing in the more scientific vein of social psychology and cognitive science. Part of the legacy of the early development of the field lingers in the methods much of cultural sociological research is qualitative , in the theories a variety of critical approaches to sociology are central to current research communities , and in the substantive focus of the field. For instance, relationships between popular culture , political control, and social class were early and lasting concerns in the field. Cultural studies In the United Kingdom , sociologists and other scholars influenced by Marxism such as Stuart Hall â€" and Raymond Williams â€" developed cultural studies. Following nineteenth-century Romantics, they identified "culture" with consumption goods and leisure activities such as art, music, film, food , sports, and clothing. They saw patterns of consumption and leisure as determined by relations of production , which led them to focus on class relations and the organization of production. These practices comprise the ways people do particular things such as watching television, or eating out in a given culture. It also studies the meanings and uses people attribute to various objects and practices. Specifically, culture involves those meanings and practices held independently of reason. In the context of cultural studies, the idea of a text includes not only written language , but also films , photographs , fashion or hairstyles: The last two, in fact, have become the main focus of cultural studies. A further and recent approach is comparative cultural studies , based on the disciplines of comparative literature and cultural studies. The British version of

cultural studies had originated in the s and s, mainly under the influence of Richard Hoggart, E. This included overtly political, left-wing views, and criticisms of popular culture as "capitalist" mass culture ; it absorbed some of the ideas of the Frankfurt School critique of the " culture industry " i. This emerges in the writings of early British cultural-studies scholars and their influences: In the United States, Lindlof and Taylor write, "Cultural studies [were] grounded in a pragmatic, liberal-pluralist tradition. This strain of thinking has some influence from the Frankfurt School , but especially from the structuralist Marxism of Louis Althusser and others. The main focus of an orthodox Marxist approach concentrates on the production of meaning. This model assumes a mass production of culture and identifies power as residing with those producing cultural artifacts. In a Marxist view, those who control the means of production the economic base essentially control a culture. They criticize the Marxist assumption of a single, dominant meaning, shared by all, for any cultural product. The non-Marxist approaches suggest that different ways of consuming cultural artifacts affect the meaning of the product. This view comes through in the book Doing Cultural Studies: Feminist cultural analyst, theorist, and art historian Griselda Pollock contributed to cultural studies from viewpoints of art history and psychoanalysis. The writer Julia Kristeva is among influential voices at the turn of the century, contributing to cultural studies from the field of art and psychoanalytical French feminism. The second covers the variables that represent the "social orientation" of societies, i. These variables include gender egalitarianism, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism and human orientation. In , a new approach to culture was suggested by Rein Raud , [12] who defines culture as the sum of resources available to human beings for making sense of their world and proposes a two-tiered approach, combining the study of texts all reified meanings in circulation and cultural practices all repeatable actions that involve the production, dissemination or transmission of meanings , thus making it possible to re-link anthropological and sociological study of culture with the tradition of textual theory.

Chapter 4 : Sociological concepts of culture and identity | Flourish Itulua-Abumere - racedaydvl.com

This chapter makes two main points. First, concepts and categories are fundamental to understanding culture and cultural change. Second, understanding cognition as an embodied or situated process (as occurring within the context of sociocultural processes) is necessary to improve our understanding of the role of concepts and categories in human cognition.

These included erect posture; a favorable brain structure; stereoscopic vision; the structure of the hand, a flexible shoulder; and year round sexual receptivity on the part of the female. None of these biological characteristics alone, of course, accounts for the development of culture. Even in combination, all they guarantee is that human beings would be the most gifted members of the animal kingdom. The distinctive human way of life that we call culture did not have a single definite beginning in time any more than human beings suddenly appearing on earth. Culture evolved slowly just as some anthropoids gradually took on more human form. Unmistakably, tools existed half a million years ago and might be considerably older. If, for convenience, we say that culture is , years old, it is still difficult day has appeared very recently. The concept of culture was rigorously defined by E. According to him culture is the sum total of ideas, beliefs, values, material cultural equipments and non-material aspects which man makes as a member of society. Tylarian idea can be discerned in a modern definition of culture - culture is the man-made part of environment M. From this, it follows that culture and society are separable only at the analytical level: Culture, on one hand, is an outcome of society and, on the other hand, society is able to survive and perpetuate itself because of the existence of culture. It is because of the adaptive value of culture that Herskovits states that culture is a screen between man and nature. Culture is an instrument by which man exploits the environment and shapes it accordingly. In showing affection, the Maori rub noses; the Australians rub faces; the Chinese place nose to cheeks; the Westerners kiss; some groups practice spitting on the beloved. Or, consider this; American men are permitted to laugh in public but not to cry; Iroquois men are permitted to do neither in public; Italian men are permitted to do both. Since this is true, physiological factors have little to do with when men laugh and cry and when they do not do either. The variability of the human experience simply cannot be explained by making reference to human biology, or to the climate and geography. Instead, we must consider culture as the fabric of human society. Culture can be conceived as a continuous, cumulative reservoir containing both material and non-material elements that are socially transmitted from generation to generation. Culture is continuous because cultural patterns transcend years, reappearing in successive generations. Culture is cumulative because each generation contributes to the reservoir. An inherent paradox exists within the social heritage where culture tends to be both static and dynamic. Humans, once having internalized culture, attach positive value judgments to it and are more or less reluctant to change their established ways of life. Through most of recorded history men have apparently considered that change per say is undesirable and that the ideal condition is stability. The prospect of change can seem threatening, yet every human culture is subject to and does experience change. Those who speak of a generation gap portray two generations at odds with each other. According to this view, the parent generation embodied the dynamic dimension. We contend that if, in fact, a generation gap does exist in modern societies, and the differences are of degree and not of substance. Part of the social heritage of almost every modern society is the high value placed on progress. Parents encourage young people to seek progress, and progress is a form of social change. Debates between generations in modern societies are seldom about whether any change should occur. The debates are usually about how such change should occur, how fast it should occur, and which methods should be used for bringing about change.

Chapter 5 : Concepts and culture - Oxford Scholarship

5 Fundamental Concepts of Society and Culture Persons Every person is a unique individual who develops in a social and environmental setting in which he or she is influenced by, and interacts with, other persons and groups.

Why is understanding culture important if we are community builders? What kind of cultural community can you envision for yourself? As community builders, understanding culture is our business. No matter where you live, you are working with and establishing relationships with people--people who all have cultures. Here is one viewpoint. It includes groups that we are born into, such as race, national origin, gender, class, or religion. It can also include a group we join or become part of. For example, it is possible to acquire a new culture by moving to a new country or region, by a change in our economic status, or by becoming disabled. When we think of culture this broadly we realize we all belong to many cultures at once. How might this apply to you? Why is culture important? It influences their views, their values, their humor, their hopes, their loyalties, and their worries and fears. So when you are working with people and building relationships with them, it helps to have some perspective and understanding of their cultures. We are all human beings. We all love deeply, want to learn, have hopes and dreams, and have experienced pain and fear. This chapter will give you practical information about how to understand culture, establish relationships with people from cultures different from your own, act as an ally against racism and other forms of discrimination, create organizations in which diverse groups can work together, overcome internalized oppression, and build strong and diverse communities. This section is an introduction to understanding culture, and will focus on: What culture is The importance of understanding culture in community building Envisioning your cultural community How to get started in building communities that encourage diversity. But first, it is important to remember that everyone has an important viewpoint and role to play when is comes to culture. The world is becoming increasingly diverse and includes people of many religions, languages, economic groups, and other cultural groups. It is becoming clear that in order to build communities that are successful at improving conditions and resolving problems, we need to understand and appreciate many cultures, establish relationships with people from cultures other than our own, and build strong alliances with different cultural groups. Additionally, we need to bring non-mainstream groups into the center of civic activity. In order to build communities that are powerful enough to attain significant change, we need large numbers of people working together. If cultural groups join forces, they will be more effective in reaching common goals, than if each group operates in isolation. Each cultural groups has unique strengths and perspectives that the larger community can benefit from. We need a wide range of ideas, customs, and wisdom to solve problems and enrich community life. Bringing non-mainstream groups into the center of civic activity can provide fresh perspectives and shed new light on tough problems. Understanding cultures will help us overcome and prevent racial and ethnic divisions. Racial and ethnic divisions result in misunderstandings, loss of opportunities, and sometimes violence. Racial and ethnic conflicts drain communities of financial and human resources; they distract cultural groups from resolving the key issues they have in common. People from different cultures have to be included in decision-making processes in order for programs or policies to be effective. Without the input and support of all the groups involved, decision-making, implementation, and follow through are much less likely to occur. An appreciation of cultural diversity goes hand-in-hand with a just and equitable society. Students feel more accepted, they feel part of the school community, they work harder to achieve, and they are more successful in school. If we do not learn about the influences that cultural groups have had on our mainstream history and culture, we are all missing out on an accurate view of our society and our communities. As you think about diversity, it may be helpful to envision the kind of cultural community you want to build. In order to set some goals related to building relationships between cultures, resolving differences, or building a diverse coalition, it helps to have a vision of the kind of cultural community you hope for. What kind of cultural community do you envision? Can you imagine the kind of cultural community you want to live or work in? People have very different views of what a multicultural society or community should be like or could be like. In the past few decades there has been a lot of discussion about what it means to live and work together in a society that is

diverse as ours. People struggle with different visions of a fair, equitable, moral, and harmonious society. How will the world be unified as a cohesive whole, if people separate into many different cultural groups? In order to be a part of that dream, must I assimilate? Why does racism persist in places that are committed to equality and liberty? How can I protect my children from the harmful influences in the larger culture? How can I instill my children with the moral values of my own religion or culture, but still expose them to a variety of views? Are there structural problems in our government or economic system that serve to divide cultural groups? How can they be changed? Should I put my community building and civic energies into my own cultural community, rather than the mainstream culture? Where can I have the biggest influence? Can oppression be stopped by legislation, or does each person have to overcome their individual prejudice, or both? Why do immigrants have to hold onto their own cultures and languages? If my group is excluded, what can I do? How do I protect my children from being targeted by racism or sexism other forms of discrimination if I live in a diverse society? If each person overcame their own prejudices, would all the divisions disappear? How do I overcome my prejudices? Is prejudice a thing of the past? What do you think about these questions? Which issues do you struggle with? What other issues are important to you or your cultural group? As you envision the kind of diverse community, you and your neighbors may want to consider these kinds of questions. These are some of the real and tough questions that people grapple with on a daily basis. These questions point to some of the tensions that arise as we try to build harmonious, active, and diverse communities in a country as a complex as ours. There are no easy answers; we are all learning as we go. So, what kind of community do you envision for yourself? How will diversity be approached in your community? If you could have your ideal community right now what would it look like? Here are some questions that may help you think about your community: Who lives in your community right now? What kinds of diversity already exists? What kinds of relationships are established between cultural groups? Are the different cultural groups well organized? What kind of struggles between cultures exist? What kind of struggles within cultural groups exist? Are these struggles openly recognized and talked about? Are there efforts to build alliances and coalitions between groups? What issues do different cultural groups have in common? These are some of the questions that can get you thinking about your how to build the kind of community you hope for. What other issues do you think are important to consider? What are your next steps? So, you may ask, "How do we get started? Helpful tips to start building a diverse community In the book, Healing into Action, authors Cherie Brown and George Mazza list principles that, when put into practice, help create a favorable environment for building diverse communities. The following guidelines are taken from their principles: In order for people to commit to working on diversity, every person needs to feel that they will be included and important. Each person needs to feel welcomed in the effort to create a diverse community. And each person needs to know that their culture is important to others. Blaming people as a way of motivating them is not effective. People are more likely to change when they are appreciated and liked, not condemned or guilt-tripped. Treating everyone the same may be unintentionally oppressive. Although every person is unique, some of us have been mistreated or oppressed because we are a member of a particular group. If we ignore these present-day or historical differences, we may fail to understand the needs of those individuals. Often people are afraid that recognizing differences will divide people from each other. However, learning about cultural differences can actually bring people closer together, because it can reveal important parts of each others? It can show us how much we have in common as human beings. People can take on tough issues more readily when the issues are presented with a spirit of hope. We are bombarded daily with newspapers and TV reports of doom and gloom. People have a difficult time functioning at all when they feel there is no hope for change. You will be more effective if you have a group of people around you that works together closely.

Chapter 6 : A Brief History of the Culture Concept

This is an excellent and well-researched book on creativity and innovation, and how they can be fostered in individuals and organizations by facilitating "intersection" of diverse disciplines, cultures, life experiences, worldviews, etc.

The concept of culture is among the most widely used notions in sociology. Normally, one can presume culture to be equivalent to higher things of the mind such as art, literature, music and painting. However, in the perspective of sociologist it goes beyond such activities. Culture refers to the ways of life of the members of society, or of groups within a society. It includes how they dress, their marriage customs, language and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits Giddens, Cultural sociology is one of the main major and most popular areas of the American Sociological Association. The sociology of culture developed from the intersection between sociology, as shaped by early theorists like Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, and with the rising specialization of anthropology where researchers lead the way of ethnographic approach for unfolding and examining different diversity of cultures around the world Macionis and Gerber, Culture can be conceptually distinguished from society but there are very close connections between these notions. A Society is a system of interrelationships which connects individuals together. All societies are united by the fact that their members are organized in structured social relationships according to a unique culture. No cultures could exist without societies. But equally, no society could exist without culture. We would have no language in which to express ourselves, no sense of self-consciousness, and our ability to think or reason would be severely limited Giddens, ; Itulua-Abumere, Elements of culture - Symbols: Symbols are those illustrations that are used to represent a particular meaning of something that people who share the same culture can easily recognize Lawley, - Language: A system of symbols that permits people to communicate with one another Swartz, - Values: Culturally defined principles of desirability, goodness, beauty and many other things that serves as broad guidelines for social living Griswold, - Beliefs: Certain words that people hold to be true Swidler, - Norms: Rules and expectations by which a society directs the conducts of its members. The two types of norms are mores and folkways. Mores are norms that are widely observed and have a great moral significance. Folkways are norms for routine, casual interaction Corchia, quoted in Wikipedia, Cultural diversity Cultural beliefs are one of the things that differ among cultures. However they are other things that differ among cultures. The diversity of human behavior and practices is also remarkable. For example, in the modern West we regard children aged twelve or thirteen to be too young for marriage. But in some cultures, marriages and arranged between children of that age as a matter of course. Jews do not eat pork, while Hindus eat pork but avoid beef. Westerners regard kissing as a normal part of sexual behavior, but in many other cultures the practice is either unknown or regarded as disgusting. All these different traits of behavior are aspects of broad cultural differences that distinguish societies from one another Giddens, Culture plays an important role in perpetuating the values and norms of a society; however it also offers significant opportunities for resourcefulness and change. Subcultures and countercultures groups which largely discard the widespread values and norms of society can promote views which show alternatives to the leading culture. Social movements or groups of people sharing common lifestyles are powerful forces of change within societies. In this way subcultures allow freedom for people to express and act on their opinions, hopes and beliefs. Giddens, Every culture has its own unique patterns of behavior, which seem alien to people from other cultural backgrounds. When you travel to a different country, you usually get different sensation and feeling because most of what you see, hear and even eats can be very different from what you do in your own country. Aspect of your daily life style which you unconsciously take for granted in your own culture may not be part of everyday life in other parts of the world. Even in countries which share the same language, everyday habits, customs and behaviors may be quite different. The expression culture shock is an apt one. Sometimes people feel disoriented when they become immersed in a new culture. This is because they have lost the familiar reference points which help them understand the world around them and have not yet learned how to navigate in the new culture. Giddens, Identity The concept of identity in sociology is a multifaceted one, and can be approached in a number of ways. These understandings are formed in relation to certain attributes that hold

priority over other sources of meaning. Some of the main sources of identity include gender, sexual orientation, nationality, or ethnicity and social class. They are two types of identity often spoken of by sociologist which are social identity and self-identity or personal identity. These forms of identity are analytically distinct, but are closely related to one another. Social Identity refers to the characteristics that are attributed to an individual by others. Social identities can include student, mother, Anglican, homeless, doctor, Asian, married and so forth. Many individuals have social identities comprising more than one attribute. A person could simultaneously be a mother, a doctor and a Christian. Social identities therefore involve a collective dimension. They mark ways that individuals are the same as others. Shared identities predicated on a set of common goals, values, or experiences can form an important base for social movements. Feminist, environmentalists, supporters of nationalist movements are examples of cases in which a shared identity is drawn on as a powerful source of meaning Giddens, Self identity personal identity set us apart as distinct individuals. Self identity refers to the process of self development through which we formulate a unique sense of ourselves and our relationship to the world around us. Normally, self identity symbolizes the answer to "who am I" Myer, Furthermore, self identities work together with self esteem, self knowledge and social self to make up the self. Future represents a person idea of what they might become, what they would like to become, or what they are afraid of becoming. The insight which individuals have about their past or future selves is associated with the insight of their current self. Worldviews about the self in relation to others differs across and within cultures Swann et al, Relationships, memberships, groups for instance tend to be secondary to the self. Another aspect is Self-assessment. Within these social comparisons, one will find upward e. In such circumstance where we feel threatened, it is not rare to make justification for why we are not performing to meeting up to standard to the same degree as others, thereby protecting our self identity. In Asian cultures, an interdependent observation of the self is more common and these cultures often practice identity fusion more regularly Swann et al, Previous studies have shown that this identity fusion can have positive and negative consequences. The positive impact that identity fusion can have on individuals is that they feel that their way of life is significant. On the other hand, such strong interdependence can attract to disastrous event if care is not taken. Swann et al, Conclusion The concept of culture is one of the most important notions in sociology. This article explains how culture plays an important role in perpetuating the values and norms of a society. Culture also offers significant opportunities for resourcefulness and change. Cultural values and norms often change over time. Talking about identity, we are our own best resources in defining who we are, where we have come from and where we are going. The decision we take in our everyday lives about what we wear, eat, how to behave and how to spend time help to make us who we are. Through our capacity as self conscious, self aware human beings, we constantly create and recreate our identities. La logica dei processi culturali. Sociology, 4th edition , Cambridge: Polity Press Fleming, J. II Hierarchical facet model for revised measurement scales". Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 46 2: Cultures and Societies in a Changing World. The Christian and Culture. Infant and Child Development, 19 4. Sociology, 7th edition , Toronto: Pearson Canada Markus, H. Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. American Psychologist 41 9: Social psychology 10th ed. The benefits of being a big fish in a big pond: Contrast and assimilation effects on academic self-concept. Learning and Individual Differences, 20 5. It feels like yesterday: Self-esteem, valence of personal past experience, and judgments of subjective distance. Whitehouse, Harvey; Bastian, Brock 1 January A theory of identity fusion. Psychological Review 3: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu. University of Chicago Press. American Sociological Review, Vol. Basking in projected glory: The role of subjective temporal distance in future self-appraisal.

Chapter 7 : 7 cultural concepts we don't have in the U.S. | MNN - Mother Nature Network

Fundamental concepts about culture and family dynamics should be understood by providers so they may best address how the unique family experience of an individual patient affects decision-making, compliance, and successful treatment outcomes.

The study of cultural and social anthropology is discussed under the heading Anthropology ; the development of the concept of culture and its applications are reviewed in Culture and Personality ; Diffusion ; Ecology ; Evolution ; History , article on Culture History ; Social structure. Culture patterns and configurations are described in Integration , article on Cultural integration , and in the biography of Benedict. Other utilizations of the concept are reviewed in Political culture and Stratification, social , article on class culture. The biographies of Boas ; Kroeber ; Malinowski ; and Tylor should also be consulted. His definition does not distinguish social organization and social institutions from a general concept of culture. With these many focuses, the three axioms of ninetenth-century anthropologyâ€"the psychic unity of mankind, the unity of human history, and the unity of cultureâ€" began to fade away. If such unities existed, it was thought, they would have to be laboriously pieced together from the comparative and intensive studies of many individual societies and cultures. Such universal principles could not be invoked as explanatory postulates. In its relativized form, anthropology did not, however, devote itself exclusively to the study of Tylorian culture. This separation was probably first dramatized in a famous debate between W. Rivers, the teacher of Radcliffe-Brown, and A. Kroeber on the proper interpretation of L. This rivalry is still very much alive, although some anthropologists have tried to moderate it with peacemaking formulas and with new, integrated theories. It has mobilized the major factions in modern anthropology and sociology, so that in Great Britain , Malinowski and his followers are regarded as students of culture and of cultural anthropology, while Radcliffe-Brown and his followers are regarded as students of social structure and of social anthropology. In the United States the contrast between culture and social structure has symbolized the institutional rivalry between anthropologists and sociologists. Not until did the dean of American anthropologists, A. British social anthropologists usually set themselves off from American anthropologists who have, with few exceptions, until recently emphasized studies of culture and cultural anthropology Murdock ; Firth Bronislaw Malinowski wrote the article on culture for the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences , placing emphasis on culture as a functioning, active, efficient well-organized unity, which must be analyzed into component institutions in relation to one another, in relation to the needs of the human organism, and in relation to the environment, man-made as well as natural. Similarly, in the s and s, much of British social anthropology became the common sense of a younger generation of American anthropologists. Behind this rivalry there are, of course, intellectual issues; however, in order to separate the genuine issues from the spurious, we cannot take at face value what the members of one school say about the views of another, nor can the chapter headings in an ethnographic monographâ€"religion and art, family and marriageâ€"tell us whether the material is treated in a framework of culture patterns or of social structure. The decisive criterion is the general framework of theory which is used for the interpretation and explanation of a particular set of facts. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn of several hundred definitions of culture and their heroic effort to arrive at a summary formulation which, they believed, would be acceptable to most social scientists: Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional i. For as Kroeber and Kluckhohn observed, while the logical construct of culture is based on the study of behavior and behavioral products and makes behavior intelligible, culture is not behavior nor the investigation of behavior in all its concrete completeness. Part of culture consists in norms for or standards of behavior. Still another part consists in ideologies justifying or rationalizing certain selected ways of behavior. Irving Hallowell, himself one of the first anthropologists to apply learning theory to the study of culture, has come to a somewhat similar conclusion in a recent discussion of personality, culture, and society in behavioral evolution: But even if we accept the Kroeber and Kluckhohn definition of the culture concept, as they themselves say:

Essentially this general theory emphasizes the study of pattern, form, structure, and organization in culture rather than discrete culture traits and culture content. While influenced by biological analogies, the pattern theory is also closely affiliated with the nineteenth-century German school of cultural history and with gestalt psychology. Different spheres of social life differ in susceptibility to patterning, and culture patterns differ in degrees of consciousness and complexity as well as in kind. The simplest patterns are the explicit and more or less objective patterns of behavior expressed in customs of dress, diet, work, and salutation, and in artifacts. Then there are the more complex patterns underlying social, political, and economic organization and the systems of religion, language, law, philosophy, science, and the arts. Acknowledging that they may have psychological correlates in personality traits, he preferred to analyze these total cultural patterns in cultural and historical terms. The totality of human culture also contains an element of patterning that provides the general framework for individual cultures and represents a historical summation of those cultures which have segregated themselves out as crystallized historical configurations of culture. There are no absolute units or natural boundaries for cultural-historical studies. Culture patterns tend to persist as organized bodies of custom in spite of changes in items of culture content. Changes in individual items can be explained as selections and rejections consistent with the cultural patterns. But the patterns themselves are also subject to change. Another important kind of pattern change has been analyzed by Kroeber in his Configurations of Culture Growth In this and in later discussions Kroeber showed that the rise and the decline of civilizations can be viewed as phases in the growth and realization of stylistic configurations. Pattern theory assumes that culture is created by individuals and groups and interacts with them as well as with the environment. However, these interactions of biology, psychology, and geography are the given conditions and starting points for cultural growth but not its determinants. The end result of this historical process, at any given time, is an associated set of patterns, a precipitate of the history of a particular group, of its past choices, conscious and unconscious. Culture pattern theory has also been used in acculturation studies Spicer and in studies which try to relate culture patterns to personality structure reviewed in Singer ; and in Mead or to changes in environment and demography Steward Applications of pattern theory tend to avoid causal hypotheses, because culture is so intricate, multiple and cumulative that there seems no point in looking for specific external causes of specific cultural forms, either in deterministic laws or in cross-cultural statistical correlations. The primary research task of a pattern theorist is to delineate culture patterns and, beyond that, to compare and classify types of patterns as well as to distinguish the most fundamental and constant patterns from the secondary and variable ones. Social structure as a theory of culture The theory of social structure was first developed in an important series of papers by Radcliffe-Brown in the s and s and has since been considerably extended. It is assumed as a working hypothesis that each structural system is a functional unity in which all the component parts contribute in a harmonious way to its existence and continuity. The study of how particular types of social structure change into new structural types forms a third branch of the theory of social structure. This study requires assistance from history and archeology to trace the actual processes in the formation and transformation of particular structural types. In practice, Radcliffe-Brown and others at first restricted social anthropology to a comparative study of the social structure and social physiology of contemporary nonliterate and simple societies. Since primitive societies were assumed not to have histories or historical records, the study of structural change was also restricted to cases of contact with civilized societies. Smith or to restudy the same society at different periods as in the work of Redfield, Firth, and others ; the study of structural conflicts in simple societies was undertaken and the assumption of stability was dropped Leach, Gluckman, Fallers ; and studies of the social structures of peasant and modern communities and of civilizations were begun Red-field, Warner, Geertz, Firth, Schneider, M. These developments have broadened social anthropology and have brought it closer to the original universal scope of the theory of social structure. The expansion of social anthropology to include macrostructural studies of peasant societies, modern communities, and civilizations has gone more smoothly in comparative social morphology than in social physiology. The reasons for this are obviousâ€"it is relatively easier to trace networks of social relations, social classes, and social groups in a large-scale society than it is to demonstrate how such a macrostructural system constitutes a functioning, integrated unity. To demonstrate the existence of such a functional unity requires consideration of

the results of different approaches, such as economics, political science , literary studies, and art history , each of which has made some specialized aspect or subsystem of the total society its peculiar subject matter. Structural changes, on the other hand, are easier to trace at this level because of the longer time perspectives and data provided by historical and archeological studies. The boundaries and identity of the unit of study also became more problematic when social anthropology moved beyond the primitive isolate. Radcliffe-Brown was very much aware of this difficulty: If this is so, what then is a unit society, asks Radcliffe-Brown? Is a Chinese village a society, or is it merely a fragment of the Republic of China? Thus, finding the suitable and convenient unit of society becomes a matter of the problem at hand and the resources one has available for dealing with it. This avoidance is based on the claim that social anthropology studies social structure, not culture. This claim is misleading. In fact, the theory of social structure both explicitly and implicitly incorporates a concept of culture. Radcliffe-Brown, who occasionally writes in this vein e. In the study of social structure the concrete reality with which we are concerned is the set of actually existing relations, at a given moment of time, which link together certain human beings. It is on this that we can make direct observations. But it is not this that we attempt to describe in its particularityâ€¦. What we need for scientific purposes is an account of the form of the structure. At the very heart of the theory of social structure we find the concept of culture as a set of rules, implicit or explicit, of standardized modes of behavior and thought. This conception of a value as any object of any interest, derived from the American philosopher R. This leads Radcliffe-Brown to the position that valuesâ€"and their correlative interests â€"are the determinants of social relations, and hence of social structure. The foundations of the theory of social structure are thus two intangibles â€"social values and psychological interests. Culture patterns and social structure as parallel and as complementary There is a striking formal parallelism between the theory of culture patterns and the theory of social structure. Both are holistic theories in the sense that they try to cover all aspects of society and cultureâ€"law, politics, economy, technology, kinship and social organization, art, literature, language, religion, philosophy, science, and so on. Both theories are universalistic: Each theory defines its basic concepts in such a way that it is possible to deal with different levels and hierarchies of pattern and structures, including the possibility of a single world-wide culture pattern and a world-wide network of social relations. It was in the latter connection that both the theory of culture patterns and that of social structure came to be thought of as essentially theories of the primitive isolate. As both theories were extended to peasant villages and to modern urban communities, however, the primitive isolate gradually faded as a natural unit; thus liberated, both theories were applied to morphological, functional, and historical studies of both the culture patterns and the social organization of civilizations. The parallels between the theory of culture patterns and the theory of social structure are numerous and striking. Both theories have explanatory aims, although each finds different factors to be primary. This, therefore, is the parallelism between the two theories; the difference arises from the fact that the pattern theory does not specify which aspects of culture and society are most likely to form basic patternsâ€"they may be matters of religion, technological invention, or ideasâ€"while the structural theory assigns basic explanatory value to social relations. The difference between the two concepts is not that one is an abstraction and the other a concrete, observable unit of behavior, for both are abstractions of regularities from observations of actual behavior, whether these regularities are implicit and unconscious or explicit and verbalized. Radcliffe-Brown himself in an earlier paper acknowledged this when he wrote: In human society the social structure as a whole can only be observed in its functioning. Some of the features of social structure, such as the geographical distribution of individuals and groups can be directly observed, but most of the social relations which in their totality constitute the structure, such as relations of father and son, buyer and seller, ruler and subject, cannot be observed except in the social activities in which the relations are functioning. If â€¦ society is taken to be an organized set of individuals with a given way of life, culture is that way of life. If society is taken to be an aggregate of social relations, then culture is the content of those relations. Society emphasizes the human component, the aggregate of people and the relations between them. Culture emphasizes the component of accumulated resources, immaterial as well as material, which the people inherit, employ, transmute, add to, and transmit. Eggan explains the major differences between British social anthropology and American ethnology in terms of the emphasis given to one or the other side of this

complementarity: The British social anthropologists tend to think of themselves as sociologists concerned primarily with the social structures and institutions of primitive societies, or they utilize social structure as a frame for the organization and interpretation of cultural phenomena; most American ethnologists consider culture as the major concept and point of departure and subordinate social structure to it, if they utilize this concept at all, preferring to operate with concepts of culture pattern and cultural form, ibid. Social institutions partake of both aspects: Eggan suggests that the actual field studies by British social anthropologists and American ethnologists show fewer differences than their theoretical formulations would lead one to expect. This is probably true, but leaves the theoretical formulations in doubt. For if social structure and culture pattern are complementary abstractions, then it follows that a theory of social structure must also make a place for the concept of culture pattern and that a theory of culture patterns must make a place for the concept of social structure.

Chapter 8 : Cultural Differences in Family Dynamics | Dimensions of Culture

Culture and Concepts of Power Carlos J. Torelli University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus Sharon Shavitt University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.

Nov 3, While the end of life experience is universal, the behaviors associated with expressing grief are very much culturally bound. Though difficult to ask, there are crucial questions that need to be part of conversations between doctors and nurses and families. What does the family consider to be the roles of each family member in handling the death? Who should the doctor talk to about test results or diagnosis? Are certain types of death less acceptable for example, suicide or are certain types of death especially hard to handle for that culture for example, the death of a child â€" this example may seem too obvious, but in countries with high infant mortality, there are indeed different attitudes about the loss of children. There is perhaps no area where reliance on cultural reference books is less useful. The degree of acculturation is absolutely paramount in determining the beliefs and traditions a family will follow when coping with impending death, post-death arrangements and mourning. While we can find many similarities across cultures, such as wearing black as a sign of mourning, there are always exceptions. In China, for example, white is the color of death and mourning. Part of why the degree of acculturation is highly significant is that blending belief systems becomes more pronounced in highly acculturated persons. There are places in the world where accommodation is made for multiple faiths. For example, in Nigeria there is a triple heritage of Christianity, Islam, and ancestor worship2. Similar blending can be found in Caribbean nations and Mexico where Catholicism can be mixed with indigenous folk beliefs like Voodoo and Curanderismo. Another layer of expectation comes with living in the United States culture and relying on the Western medical culture. And when a death actually occurs, some individuals suddenly choose to break with tradition entirely, often creating chaos within families. What follows in this article are some important points of consideration, but the list is introductory in nature at best. There is a strong focus on religions because religion can be thought of as a cultural system of meaning that helps to solve problems of uncertainty, powerlessness, and scarcity that death creates. In placing death within a religious perspective, bereaved persons find meaning for an event that for many is inexplicable. Readings from the Koran or Bible are important parts of the recognizing the departure of a loved one from this life. Similarly, in the Jewish faith, there is the expression mourners recite a few minutes before a funeral begins: Succeeding at this brings reward, failing at it brings punishment. The traditions around death and dying differ greatly across all three major monotheistic religious systems as well as within different branches of each faith, i. They are highly nuanced and very hard for outsiders to understand thoroughly. The premise of ancestor worship is based on understanding that the course of life is cyclical not linear. Ancestor worship in various forms can be found in many parts of the world and is very strong in parts of Africa and Asia. Many Native Americans and Buddhists alike believe that the living co-exist with the dead. A central theme in all ancestor worship is that the lives of the dead may have supernatural powers over those in the living world â€" the ability to bless, curse, give or take life. In some cultures, worship of the dead is important, and includes making offerings of food, money, clothing, and blessings. In Mexico, there is The Day of the Dead Dia de los Muertos , a holiday that focuses on gatherings of family and friends to pray for and remember those who have died. The intent of the celebration is to encourage visits by the souls of the departed so that those souls will hear the prayers and the comments of the living directed at them. It makes sense that in cultures where ancestor worship is common, the acceptance of organ donation and cremation may be low. Hinduism does not have roots springing from a single scripture, founder or sacred place. It is more like an umbrella term describing a set of philosophies and ways of life. Buddhism has a single founder, but the Buddha is not prayed to in the same sense as a God or Allah. Buddhism is also a set of philosophies for living. There are marked differences between the two, or course, but in both death is not seen as the end of life; it is merely the end of the body we inhabit in this life. Where a given person will be born again is a result of the past and the accumulation of positive and negative action, and the result of karma. Followers of both traditions keep in mind the impermanence of life. The transition of a soul to a new life is very important so both

traditions observe specific rituals at the time of dying and the handling of the body. The corpse of a Buddhist should not be touched for hours after breathing ceases as the spirit lingers on for some time. Hindus believe the body of the dead must be bathed, massaged in oils, dressed in new clothes, and then cremated before the next sunrise. It follows that cremation would be acceptable in a faith where the soul will be released to find another body to inhabit. In collectivist cultures, the good of the individual is often so enmeshed with the good of the family or in-group that family members may have a greater say in health care decisions than the patient does in some circumstances. In many countries, family members may become very upset if a physician reveals bad news directly to the patient. Families and patients may place great value on the right NOT to know! This is completely at odds with the standards set forth in the Patient Self Determination Act http: The health care system needs to be flexible enough to accommodate communication patterns that look different from those within the informed-consent tradition which insists doctors and nurses tell patients everything. So, a key question in cross-cultural health care situations would be: Who do you want me to talk to about test results or diagnosis? In some cultures, showing grief, including wailing, is expected of mourners because the more torment displayed and the more people crying, the more the person was loved. In other cultures, restraint is expected. Death should be seen as a time of liberation and not sorrow, and one should bear up under misfortune with strength and acceptance. One never does anything to make someone else uncomfortable. Language and cultural barriers obviously compound the challenges of being professionally appropriate and compassionate. Patients and families may be in need of compassion, advice, and guidance from doctors and nurses, but often the realities of a given situation include a press for time and both physical and emotional exhaustion among providers and families. It happens â€” sometimes we simply fail, in the moment, to express sufficient sensitivity and warmth when critical decisions must be made. The clinical facts are immediate and demand logical linear thinking which is natural for those trained in the Western medical tradition. For many cultures, such a direct approach may seem harsh, and decisions about something like organ donation might be experienced as inhumane immediately upon death. The questions suggested in this article can be used to ease some of the communication challenges and facilitate more openness between health care professionals and families around death and dying. Of course they should be tailored to the context of a given situation. How Death Imitates Life: Cultural Influences on Conceptions of Death and Dying. The University of Washington. Retrieved April 16, from http: The Case of Nigeria. Retrieved April 17, from www. Culture and Response to Grief and Mourning , Sept. Pediatr Nurs 32 1 ,

Chapter 9 : High-context and low-context cultures - Wikipedia

The following are some cultural concepts and lessons found in the Four Winds racedaydvl.com lessons were chosen for having particular significance for Native American students.

The Concept of Culture Info 1. The lesson will take you through a discussion of the following topics: These include dance programmes, announcements of exhibitions in art galleries, music concerts, religious programmes and book release functions. The highlights include classical Indian dance, Hindu temple architecture and sculpture where one begins and the other ends is often hard to define , the military and urban architecture of the Mughals, miniature painting, and mesmeric Indian music. Religion, cultural diversity, food, classical Indian dance, music, temples, sculpture and architecture, all denote "Indian culture". If you read these lines carefully, you will also notice that these are the descriptions that make India an ancient cultural space. From these statements we get an idea of the commonly held notions about culture. Let us now try to figure out what we mean by culture in our everyday conversations. Western music, Indian classical music, dance, dumb charades, Mad Ads, personality contests, fashion parades and cooking competitions. We see photographs in newspapers and TV coverage of protests where claims are made in the name of culture. Often communal conflicts are seen as conflicts generated by the difference between various religious communities. Click on the following links to refresh your memory of the recent cultural conflicts: Click here for pictures of the demolition of Babri Masjid Also see images of communal conflict from Godhra. We can see traces of this usage in the context of microbiology and biotechnology: For example, "Diagnostic tests available for influenza include viral culture, serology and rapid antigen testing" Microbiology. Or, "We deliver pure cultures to industry and research purposes. Identification of strains also belongs to our services" from a biotechnological firm. We come across a similar use of the term even today. The reference here is often to the individual. Romantic poets like Wordsworth who are bent on improving the relationship of the mind with Nature seem to be addressing such a distinction. Culture as a Way of Life: Williams identifies another area of usage for the word culture: Click on anthropology to understand how this usage has evolved. Culture and the Representational Practices: Williams himself sees an important difference in the meanings that the term has acquired within various disciplinary contexts: It is especially interesting that in archaeology and in cultural anthropology the reference to culture is primarily to material production, while in history and cultural studies the reference is primarily to signifying or symbolic systems. This often confuses but even more often conceals the central question of the relations between "material and symbolic production, which in some recent argument -- cf. This also clubs, as Williams rightly points out, the material and the symbolic systems. Clicking on the following link will take you to the book. See link Stuart Hall, who was instrumental in creating a new space for the study of culture, thinks that it is important to understand the relationship between signs, systems of signs and the concepts that a culture share. This is what he has to say about signs in a book edited by him, called Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices: Signs are organized into languages and it is the existence of common languages which enable us to translate our thoughts concepts into words, sounds and images, and then to use these, operating as a language, to express meanings and communicate thoughts to other people. All these are included in a system of representation. If we accept that people who have a common cultural background share ideas and concepts, then we understand the need to look at cultural practices in our world in ways quite different from the ones that we are so far used to.