

Chapter 2 Culture and Society

2.1 Multiple Choice Questions

2.1.1 Culture

- 1) According to your text, _____ is the foundation for both the material basis of social life as well as for ideas, beliefs, and values.
- A) Functionalism
 - B) The sociological perspective
 - C) The sociological imagination
 - D) Culture

Answer: D

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 2) The Sociological Perspective
- A) Enables us to see how we are both shaped by and shape our societies
 - B) Focuses on how we can help people in need
 - C) Stresses that social research must be value free
 - D) Notes how quantitative research is more factual than qualitative

Answer: A

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 35*

Skill: comprehension

- 3) The things people make and use and their physical environment make up
- A) Material Culture
 - B) Concrete Society
 - C) Cultural Consumerism
 - D) Nonmaterial culture

Answer: A

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 4) Nonmaterial culture consists of
- A) People's physical environment such as their houses, neighborhood, and region
 - B) Ideas and beliefs people develop about their lives and world
 - C) Things people make and use
 - D) The sociological perspective

Answer: B

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 5) Our human nature is shaped by
- A) The sociological imagination
 - B) The sociological perspective
 - C) Culture
 - D) Structural functionalism

Answer: C

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 6) The text cites the example of the Yanomamo in Brazil, where “everybody knows” that people are violent and aggressive, and thus
- A) They raise people to be peaceful to try to counteract that tendency
 - B) They raise people to be violent and aggressive
 - C) Their culture stresses a balance between peacefulness and violence
 - D) Their laws provide strict punishments for violence.

Answer: B

Diff: difficult *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 7) The complex set of behaviors, attitudes, and symbols that individuals use in their daily relationships with others is called
- A) Society
 - B) The sociological perspective
 - C) Culture
 - D) Structural functionalism

Answer: C

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 55*

Skill: knowledge

- 8) The vast differences that can exist between the world's many cultures illustrate what concept?
- A) The sociological perspective
 - B) Globalism
 - C) Cultural diversity
 - D) McDonaldization

Answer: C

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 9) Cultures _____ in how they go about basic activities such as eating, sleeping, producing goods, and raising and educating children.
- A) Are remarkably similar to each other
 - B) Vary dramatically
 - C) Are static when compared geographically, but dynamic by time.
 - D) Are static when compared by time, but not geographically.

Answer: B

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 10) Cultures vary
- A) By time but not place
 - B) By place but not time
 - C) By both time and place
 - D) By neither time nor place

Answer: C

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 11) Charles is an American who moved to China. Charles felt disorientation and uncertainty of what was culturally expected when he moved. What did Charles experience?
- A) Cultural materialism
 - B) Culture shock
 - C) Cultural disconnect
 - D) Culture disorientation

Answer: B

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*

Skill: knowledge

- 12) _____ is a group of people within a culture who share some distinguishing characteristic, belief, value, or attribute that sets them apart from the dominant culture.
- A) Subculture
 - B) Counterculture
 - C) Reform culture
 - D) Material culture

Answer: A

Diff: easy Page Ref: 39

Skill: Knowledge

- 13) Countercultures are subcultures that
- A) Count more people among their membership than other subcultures.
 - B) Are opposed to the dominant culture.
 - C) Enable people to feel “one” with members of the dominant culture yet still somewhat “different” from them
 - D) Typically exist in harmony with the dominant culture

Answer: B

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 39

Skill: Knowledge

- 14) Susan believes that, in comparison to United States culture, Latin American food is disgusting and Chinese customs are gross. Susan is being
- A) Culturally relativistic
 - B) Culturally shocking
 - C) Ethnocentric
 - D) Ethnonegative

Answer: C

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 37

Skill: application

- 15) Sociologists must constantly guard against _____ because it can bias our understandings of other cultures.
- A) Ethnocentrism
 - B) Cultural shock
 - C) Cultural relativism
 - D) Human nature

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 38

Skill: knowledge

- 16) Social scientists generally take a position of cultural relativism,
- A) a stance that all cultures are equally valid in the experience of their own members.
 - B) which proposes analyzing cultures relative to the researchers’ own culture.
 - C) a recognition of the functionalist perspective to cultural structures.
 - D) In keeping with the cultural principles of Locke, Comte, and Marx.

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 38

Skill: knowledge

- 17) Many sociologists hold that some values such as human rights are (or should be) _____.
- A) Relational
 - B) Sociological
 - C) Symbolic
 - D) Universal

Answer: D

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 38

Skill: comprehension

- 18) Ethnocentrism is based on the belief that
- A) one's culture is superior to others.
 - B) one's culture is equal to others.
 - C) one's culture is inferior to others.
 - D) there are no cultural differences.

Answer: A

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 37*

Skill: Knowledge

- 19) *What would best describe U.S. government policy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries regarding Native Americans?
- A) ethnocentrism
 - B) culture shock
 - C) cultural relativism
 - D) multiculturalism.

Answer: A

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 37-38*

Skill: comprehension

2.1.2 Elements of Culture

- 20) _____ consist(s) of people make and what they make it with, such as food and cooking implements.
- A) Symbols
 - B) Rituals
 - C) Material culture
 - D) Value culture

Answer: C

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 40*

Skill: Knowledge

- 21) The cross is an example of a _____ whose meaning differs in different cultures.
- A) Symbol
 - B) Value
 - C) Norm
 - D) Subculture

Answer: A

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 40*

Skill: comprehension

- 22) What, according to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, shapes our perception?
- A) Norms
 - B) Technology
 - C) Roles
 - D) Language

Answer: D

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 42*

Skill: knowledge

- 23) Why was the title Ms. created?
- A) To parallel the title Mr., which does not convey a man's marital status.
 - B) To refer to older unmarried women, since the term "spinster" has fallen out of fashion.
 - C) To replace the term Mrs., which, as an abbreviation for Mistress, conveys an extramarital relationship.
 - D) As a translation of the French term, M., for Monsieur.

Answer: A

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 42*

Skill: knowledge

- 24) What element of culture reflects routine behavior used to express the sense of cultural belonging?
- A) language
 - B) material culture
 - C) symbols
 - D) rituals

Answer: D

Diff: easy Page Ref: 43

Skill: knowledge

- 25) Amy leads her high school class in the Pledge of Allegiance every morning. Amy's actions are an example of what element of culture?
- A) Ritual
 - B) Sanction
 - C) Law
 - D) Material culture

Answer: A

Diff: easy Page Ref: 43–44

Skill: Application

- 26) For dedicated students, going to class, studying, and completing assignments are behaviors that exemplify
- A) Values
 - B) Symbols
 - C) Mores
 - D) Norms

Answer: D

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 44–46

Skill: application

- 27) Which of these is an example of a more in the United States?
- A) Murder
 - B) Be kind to children, animals, and the elderly
 - C) Eat eggs with ketchup
 - D) Drive at or below the speed limit

Answer: B

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 44–46

Skill: application

- 28) How does a law differ from a norm?
- A) Laws are norms that are written down
 - B) Laws are the strongest norms
 - C) Only laws can restrict our activities
 - D) Only norms can be punished by agents of the state

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 45

Skill: comprehension

- 29) Which of the following is correct concerning the Core American values specified by sociologist Robin Williams in 1970?
- A) The values are all very consistent with each other and with other major American values
 - B) Each of the values is contrasted with an opposite American value
 - C) The core values are almost all religious values
 - D) The core values described in 1970 no longer apply to the contemporary United States.

Answer: B

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 47–48

Skill: comprehension

- 30) *A society's _____ determine whether an action is right or wrong.
- A) values
 - B) norms
 - C) laws
 - D) mores

Answer: A

Diff: easy Page Ref: 45

Skill: knowledge

2.1.3 Cultural Expressions

- 31) Which of the following is true about the cultural universals identified by anthropologist George Murdock ?
- A) They are identical in all societies.
 - B) Cultural universals are almost always associated with religious beliefs.
 - C) They are broad categories that allow for variation.
 - D) Cultural Universals generally lead to peace within and between cultures.

Answer: C

Diff: difficult Page Ref: 50

Skill: comprehension

- 32) To a sociologist, culture is
- A) Neither local nor universal
 - B) Both local and universal
 - C) Local, but not universal
 - D) Universal, but not local

Answer: B

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 50

Skill: comprehension

- 33) The common use of the word “culture” as having highly refined sensibilities, knowing fine wines, great literature, and classical music, is
- A) synonymous with “high culture”
 - B) the same as “low culture”
 - C) a “cultural universal”
 - D) the opposite of “cultural capital”

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 50

Skill: knowledge

- 34) Culture that is associated with more affluent and elite groups may be referred to as
- A) High culture
 - B) Low culture
 - C) Popular culture
 - D) Universal culture

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 50

Skill: knowledge

- 35) Popular culture is often associated with
- A) Upper class elites
 - B) Cultural universals
 - C) Middle and working classes
 - D) Counter cultures

Answer: C

Diff: easy Page Ref: 50

Skill: knowledge

- 36) The contrast illustrated in expressions such as “see films” and “watch movies,” or in activities such as yachting and bowling, exemplify
- A) the globalization of culture
 - B) cultural change
 - C) cultural imperialism
 - D) the difference between high culture and popular culture

Answer: D

Diff: easy Page Ref: 51

Skill: application

- 37) Comic books have been recently been the subject of major museum shows, and thus
- A) exemplify how popular culture can move into high culture
 - B) are cultural universals
 - C) present an example of cultural capital
 - D) are an example of a fad

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 50

Skill: comprehension

- 38) Hula Hoops, the twist, beliefs in UFOs, and “in” Internet sites are examples of
- A) high culture
 - B) norms
 - C) values
 - D) fads

Answer: D

Diff: easy Page Ref: 53

Skill: knowledge

- 39) Which of the following is an example of a fashion?
- A) The opera
 - B) Pet rocks
 - C) Tattooing
 - D) “in” places on the Internet

Answer: C

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 53

Skill: application

- 40) Changes in popular culture typically come from
- A) Government
 - B) Cultural elites — that is, those who are culturally dominant
 - C) The wealthy
 - D) Groups excluded from the cultural elites

Answer: D

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 53

Skill: comprehension

- 41) In the United States, changes in popular culture often originate among
- A) African Americans, young people, and gays and lesbians
 - B) European Americans, the middle aged, and middle class
 - C) High-ranked members of the military, government, and corporate worlds
 - D) The cultural elite, who are culturally dominant

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 53

Skill: comprehension

- 42) Which of these exemplifies a change in popular culture that originated from a marginalized group?
- A) Earrings worn by men
 - B) McDonald's in China
 - C) Use of the internet
 - D) Imported luxury cars

Answer: A

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 53*

Skill: application

- 43) U.S. exports of popular culture by corporations such as Nike, Disney, and Coca-Cola, are examples of
- A) Cultural Universals
 - B) Cultural Dominance
 - C) The Diversity of popular culture
 - D) Globalization of popular culture

Answer: D

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 53*

Skill: knowledge

- 44) The deliberate imposition of a country's culture on another country is called
- A) Cultural Imperialism
 - B) Cultural Relativism
 - C) Cultural Pluralism
 - D) Cultural Diversity

Answer: A

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 54*

Skill: Knowledge

- 45) One reason that the global spread of American products is criticized as imperialist is because
- A) The profits are returned to the American corporations
 - B) Most people do not like American products
 - C) Citizens of most countries that sell these products do not aspire to an American lifestyle
 - D) It is imposed by governments that require citizens to consume these products.

Answer: A

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 54*

Skill: comprehension

- 46) *High culture attracts audiences drawn from more _____.
- A) invisible cultures
 - B) affluent groups
 - C) low culture groups
 - D) popular cultures

Answer: B

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 50-51*

Skill: knowledge

2.1.4 Cultural Change

- 47) Cultures
- A) Constantly change at different rates
 - B) Change at a constant rate
 - C) Change only sometimes
 - D) Do not change at all

Answer: A

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 55*

Skill: knowledge

- 48) Which of the following tends to change more rapidly?
- A) Cultural institutions such as family or religion
 - B) Cultural beliefs and values
 - C) Material culture
 - D) Each of these changes at the same rate

Answer: B

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 55

Skill: comprehension

- 49) The phenomenon that some parts of culture (e.g. material) change more rapidly than others (institutions, values) is referred to by sociologist William Ogburn as culture
- A) imperialism
 - B) materialism
 - C) diversity
 - D) lag

Answer: D

Diff: easy Page Ref: 55

Skill: knowledge

- 50) Technology changes rapidly, as shown by cell phones, text messaging, and instant messaging. However, norms governing appropriate behavior have not yet caught up to these changes. This delay is referred to as
- A) Technological Lag
 - B) Cultural delay
 - C) Culture lag
 - D) Normative delay

Answer: C

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 55

Skill: knowledge

- 51) Cultural diffusion refers to
- A) new culture spreading through society
 - B) The delay between technological innovation and norms governing its use
 - C) The deliberate imposition of one culture's elements on another country
 - D) The movement of populations through a society

Answer: A

Diff: easy Page Ref: 56

Skill: knowledge

- 52) Cultural diffusion occurs
- A) primarily within a specific society
 - B) simultaneously with population movement
 - C) both within societies and across national boundaries
 - D) primarily through conquest which deliberately transforms the culture of the colonized.

Answer: C

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 56-57

Skill: comprehension

- 53) *Generally, culture lag is a(n) _____ process.
- A) gradual
 - B) immediate
 - C) fast
 - D) hidden

Answer: A

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 55

Skill: knowledge

2.1.5 Culture in the 21st Century

- 54) Which of the following is NOT a reason why studying culture is important to sociology?
- A) Studying culture helps provide ways for sociology to understand the world
 - B) Cultures are easy to study
 - C) Understanding concepts such as culture, values, and norms helps to understand the context in which individual experiences take place.
 - D) Cultural diversity helps define American society

Answer: B

Diff: easy Page Ref: 57

Skill: comprehension

2.2 Fill-In Questions

2.2.1 Culture

- 1) _____ is the foundation for both the material basis of social life as well as for ideas, beliefs, and values.

Answer: Culture

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 36

Skill: knowledge

- 2) The _____ enables us to see how we are both shaped by and shape our societies.

Answer: sociological perspective

Diff: moderate Page Ref: 35

Skill: knowledge

- 3) The things people make and use and their physical environment make up their _____.

Answer: material culture

Diff: easy Page Ref: 36

Skill: knowledge

- 4) _____ culture consists of ideas and beliefs people develop about their lives and world.

Answer: Nonmaterial

Diff: easy Page Ref: 36

Skill: knowledge

- 5) The belief in American freedom is an example of _____ culture

Answer: nonmaterial

Diff: easy Page Ref: 36

Skill: knowledge

- 6) _____ refers to the vast differences that exist between the world's many cultures.

Answer: cultural diversity

Diff: easy Page Ref: 36

Skill: knowledge

- 7) A person who goes to a different culture and feels disorientation and uncertainty experiences _____

Answer: culture shock

Diff: easy Page Ref: 36

Skill: knowledge

- 8) A White Supremacist or Neo Nazi group that opposes the dominant culture is a _____

Answer: counterculture

Diff: easy Page Ref: 39

Skill: knowledge

- 9) When studying different cultures, social scientists constantly guard against the perspective of _____ because it can bias the understanding of other cultures.

Answer: ethnocentrism
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 38
 Skill: knowledge

- 10) Sociologists generally take a position of _____, a position that all cultures are equally valid in the experience of their own members.

Answer: cultural relativism
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 38
 Skill: knowledge

- 11) _____ can be relatively benign, as a quiet sense of superiority or cultural disapproval, or it can be aggressive, as when people try to impose their values on others by force.

Answer: ethnocentrism
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 38
 Skill: comprehension

2.2.2 Elements of Culture

- 12) _____ is an organized set of symbols with which we can think and communicate with others.

Answer: Language
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 41
 Skill: knowledge

- 13) In the thirteenth century, infants who were deprived of _____ by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II all died.

Answer: language
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 41
 Skill: knowledge

- 14) _____ are representations that suggest and stand in for something more complex and involved.

Answer: Symbols
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 40
 Skill: knowledge

- 15) The behaviors of decorating a tree at Christmas and lighting a menorah at Hanukkah are examples of _____.

Answer: rituals
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 43
 Skill: application

- 16) While _____ are the ethical foundations of culture, _____ are the behavioral rules that support those ethics.

Answer: values, norms
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 44–46
 Skill: knowledge

2.2.3 Cultural Expressions

- 17) _____ culture is associated with more affluent and elite groups.

Answer: High
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 50
 Skill: knowledge

- 18) Popular culture is typically associated with the _____ and _____ classes.

Answer: Middle and Working
Diff: moderate Page Ref: 50
Skill: knowledge

- 19) Hula hoops, the twist, and other short-lived, popular, and widespread behaviors, styles, or modes of thought are called _____.

Answer: fads
Diff: easy Page Ref: 52
Skill: knowledge

- 20) Changes in _____ culture often originate among marginalized groups such as African Americans, young people, and gays and lesbians.

Answer: popular
Diff: easy Page Ref: 53
Skill: knowledge

- 21) The _____ of popular culture is exemplified by exports of U.S. products manufactured by corporations such as Nike, Disney, and Coca-Cola.

Answer: globalization
Diff: easy Page Ref: 53
Skill: knowledge

- 22) _____ refers to the deliberate imposition of a country's culture on another country.

Answer: Cultural Imperialism
Diff: moderate Page Ref: 53
Skill: knowledge

2.2.4 Cultural Change

- 23) _____ culture often changes more rapidly than institutions or values.

Answer: material or popular
Diff: easy Page Ref: 55
Skill: knowledge

- 24) The phenomenon whereby some parts of culture change rapidly and other parts catch up is called _____.

Answer: culture lag
Diff: moderate Page Ref: 55
Skill: knowledge

2.2.5 Culture in the 21st Century

- 25) Most industrialized societies, including the United States, are characterized by cultural _____.

Answer: diversity
Diff: easy Page Ref: 57
Skill: knowledge

2.3 True/False Questions

2.3.1 Culture

- 1) In terms of basic activities such as eating, sleeping, and raising children, cultures around the world are remarkably similar.

Answer: False (they are very different)
Diff: moderate Page Ref: 36
Skill: knowledge

- 2) A person who believes that, in comparison to United States culture, Latin American food is disgusting and Chinese customs are gross, is taking the position of ethnocentrism.

Answer: True
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 37
 Skill: knowledge

- 3) Cultural relativism is based on the concept of judging each culture relative to our own.

Answer: False (it is based on seeing each culture relative to what works for THAT culture)
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 37
 Skill: comprehension

2.3.2 Elements of Culture

- 4) In the United States, wearing clothes with an unusual combination of patterns, such as plaids with stripes, is a violation of a more.

Answer: False (folkway, not more)
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 43
 Skill: application

- 5) Many of American culture's major values are contradictory or seem opposite.

Answer: True
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 47–48
 Skill: comprehension

2.3.3 Cultural Expressions

- 6) The common use of the word “culture” as having highly refined sensibilities such as knowing fine wines and appreciating great literature and classical music is often synonymous with high culture.

Answer: True
 Diff: moderate Page Ref: 50
 Skill: knowledge

- 7) Changes in popular culture generally come from the cultural elite.

Answer: False (no, from the working or middle classes or marginalized groups)
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 53
 Skill: knowledge

2.3.4 Cultural Change

- 8) Institutions and values typically change at a faster rate than material or popular culture.

Answer: False (no, more slowly — this is termed culture lag)
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 55
 Skill: knowledge

- 9) Cultural diffusion refers to how new culture can spread through society.

Answer: True
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 56
 Skill: knowledge

2.3.5 Culture in the 21st Century

- 10) It is important for sociology to study culture because the understanding of cultural elements such as values and norms help the sociologist understand the world he or she is studying.

Answer: True
 Diff: easy Page Ref: 57
 Skill: comprehension

2.4 Short Answer Questions

2.4.1 Culture

- 1) What are the two main components of culture? Describe and give an example for each.

Answer: Material (things people make — blue jeans, music, literature, food.....) and Nonmaterial (ideas and beliefs — students might cite American values such as individualism or freedom, or examples such as “do not cheat”.....)

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 36*
Skill: knowledge

- 2) What are subcultures and countercultures and how do they differ?

Answer: subcultures and countercultures are groups of people within a culture who share some distinguishing characteristics (beliefs, values, attributes) that distinguish them from the dominant culture. Countercultures are subcultures that are in opposition to the dominant culture.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 39*
Skill: knowledge

- 3) Explain the difference between cultural relativism and ethnocentrism. Which is preferred in sociology, and why?

Answer: cultural relativism refers to the perspective that cultures are equally valid to their own members; ethnocentrism refers to the belief that one’s culture is superior to the culture(s) of others. Cultural relativism is preferred, because ethnocentrism is a biased perspective.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 37*
Skill: comprehension

2.4.2 Elements of Culture

- 4) What is the relationship between values and norms?

Answer: values are the ethical foundations of culture, and norms are the behavioral rules that correspond to those values, or norms are cultural rules defining how people should act, while values are the ideas that justify those rules.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 44–45*
Skill: comprehension

- 5) Identify four of the six elements of culture.

Answer: any four of the following — material culture, language, symbols, rituals, norms, values

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 40–49*
Skill: knowledge

- 6) List four pairs of American values that are contradictory or opposite.

Answer: individualism and community, science and religion, activity and leisure, material comfort and distrust the rich, humanitarianism and entitlement, and others from table 2.2 pg 48 or others from the student’s own examples (e.g. competition and cooperation)

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 48*
Skill: knowledge

2.4.3 Cultural Expressions

- 7) What is popular culture and how it is different from high culture? Give an example of each.

Answer: Popular culture is the culture of the masses, the middle class and working class. Examples: rock, rap, or hip-hop music, popular TV shows..... High culture is characteristic of more affluent and largely White groups. Examples: opera, art museums.....

Diff: easy *Page Ref: 50*
Skill: knowledge

- 8) Briefly explain, with an example, the concept of cultural imperialism.

Answer: cultural imperialism refers to the deliberate imposition of one country's culture on another country. Example: U.S. corporations profiting from their products being sold in other countries. Some students may come up with their own examples, such as the "export" of Democracy.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 53*

Skill: comprehension

2.4.4 Cultural Change

- 9) Explain two ways that cultures can change.

Answer: technology or invention can lead to changes in popular or material culture; diffusion refers to the spread of culture through a population; with conquest a conquered group can be forced to change its religion or other aspects of its culture; globalism leads to cultural diffusion.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 55–57*

Skill: comprehension

2.4.5 Culture in the 21st Century

- 10) Why is it important for sociology to understand culture?

Answer: because understanding elements of culture such as values and norms helps put individual behaviors and experiences into context.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 57*

Skill: comprehension

2.5 Essay Questions

- 1) Explain the perspective of ethnocentrism. What problem can an ethnocentric perspective lead to. Identify and explain the perspective that is preferred in sociology instead of ethnocentrism

Answer: Ethnocentrism refers to the belief that one's culture is superior to the culture(s) of others. Ethnocentrism is a biased perspective in which other cultures are condemned. Ethnocentrism could include a sense of superiority or forceful imposition of cultural values on another society. Cultural relativism, the perspective that all cultures are equally valid to their own members, is preferred because sociologists can be open minded about the beliefs and practices of other cultures.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 37–39*

Skill: comprehension

- 2) What are the six elements of culture? Please describe each and give an example of each element.

Answer: The six elements of culture are: material culture, symbols, language, rituals, norms, and values. Material culture consists of what people make and what they make it with, for example food, shelter, tools. A symbol is anything carries additional meaning, for example, an American Flag carries additional meanings about freedom and democracy, or a cross can have religious meaning to Christians or terror in the case of a cross burned on a lawn. Language is an organized set of symbols by which we are able to think and communicate with others — any language we speak or read or sign with is an example. Rituals are how members of a culture engage in a routine behavior to express their sense of belonging to the culture. Examples include graduation, pledging allegiance to the flag, funerals, etc. Norms are the rules that a culture develops that define how people should act and the consequences of failing to act as expected. Examples of norms include being obedient, being polite, what to wear in certain situations, how to order food in a restaurant. Values are the ethical foundations of a culture, its ideas about right and wrong. Examples could include individualism, competition, cooperation, freedom, materialism.....

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 40–49*

Skill: Knowledge

- 3) Discuss, with examples, language as an element of culture. How does language shape our perceptions and convey cultural attitudes about gender or race and ethnicity?

Answer: A good answer will include examples of how language shapes perceptions, such as the Hopi having no verb tenses so they can't communicate past or future, Hebrew doesn't distinguish between "jelly" and "Jam" so an Israeli doesn't understand the difference until learning English, the French discuss "pain in the liver" while we may not understand how they can tell which organ is in pain, after learning the word "gentrification" an Argentinean perceived and could describe his city differently. A good answer will also include examples of how language conveys cultural attitudes about gender or race and ethnicity, such as how "man" and "he" are used as terms to include women and men are gender biased, how Chairman and Policeman imply the position's gender, how "Ms." was developed to provide a marriage-neutral equivalent to "Mr.," and examples that convey ideas about different groups, such as "a black mark," "good guys wear white hats," "a Chinaman's chance," "to Jew down," and the Obamas being called "uppity" which refers to not knowing one's place. (The Eskimos having many words for snow may be cited as an example, but this is a myth students should know from the box on page 43.)

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 41–43*
Skill: application

- 4) Discuss, with examples, the difference between high culture and popular culture. With whom is each associated? How are these concepts related to different classes? Which is more likely to be preserved, by whom, and why?

Answer: high culture refers to "refined" culture such as fine wines, opera, classical music, and great literature. High culture is generally associated with more elite or affluent classes and Whites. Popular culture refers to popular entertainment (spectator sports, movies, television), less "highbrow" literature (novels, comic books), and popular music, and is more typically associated with working and middle classes. High culture is conserved by the elite or dominant classes because only they may have the training for or appreciation of high culture.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 50–54*
Skill: comprehension

- 5) Give examples of at least four pairs of American values that are inconsistent and explain how we can hold opposite values at the same time. What perspective in sociology is exemplified by these contrasts?

Answer: beliefs such as equality and group superiority are inconsistent, as are beliefs in humanitarianism and achievement, activity and leisure, science and religion, and other examples from the text. We can hold opposite values at the same time because we apply them situationally. For example, we value success but don't care how it is achieved, we may value freedom more for ourselves (it's ok for our friends to be gay) but not others (we may be less tolerant of homosexuality in general), we believe science can save us but also believe in salvation through religion. These contrasts exemplify the both/and perspective.

Diff: difficult *Page Ref: 46–49*
Skill: analysis

2.6 Open Book Questions

- 1) Refer to the box on page 37, What does America think. How is respondents' social class related to responses to the statement "The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like Americans"? Which response is the most frequently chosen? Members of which social class are most likely to strongly agree with the statement? Members of which class are most likely to strongly disagree? Support your answers with the appropriate percents from the table. How do you explain this relationship?

Answer: Agreement with the statement goes down as social class goes up. More respondents (about a third) neither agreed nor disagreed. The lower class is the most likely to strongly agree, with 27.5% of its members strongly agreeing, and the upper class is most likely to strongly disagree, a response chosen by 13.5% of its members. This could be explained by differences in education, travel, and/or exposure to other cultures, all of which are greater for higher social classes.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 37*
Skill: analysis

- 2) Discuss Figure 2.1 "American Attitudes about Nonmarital, Heterosexual Sex, 1972–2006." What does this figure and the discussion on the same page of the text suggest about change in cultural values and norms?

Answer: Figure 2.1 suggests that cultural values and norms change over time. The views about heterosexual nonmarital sex have changed over time to become more accepting even though there is still a large percentage of Americans (29% in 2006) who believe it is always wrong. While the percent answering that it is Always or Almost Always wrong has dropped dramatically from 49% in 1972 to 29% in 2006, the percent answering Wrong Only Sometimes has dropped slightly from approximately 24% to 19%, and the percent answering Not Wrong at all has increased from approximately 26% to 40% in the same period. This shows the change in American values that correspond with the increase in cohabitation cited in the text, from about 10 percent of couples cohabitating before marriage to the norm of approximately 57% today.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 49-Figure 2.1*
Skill: Analysis

- 3) Discuss the Us vs Them figure on page 56, "Cell Phones per 1,000 People." What does the figure show, and what does it demonstrate about culture, technology, and inequality?

Answer: Figure 2.2 shows the number of cell phones per thousand people in different countries. The highest is Luxembourg with approximately 1,500 cell phones per 1,000 people (1.5 per person!). The United Kingdom and five other countries (the UK is ranked 7th) also have more than one cell phone per person. The United States is ranked 53rd in cell phones per person. In contrast, India has fewer than one phone per five people (fewer than 200 per 1,000), and Iraq, ranked 201st, has fewer than one per ten people (fewer than 100 per 1,000). This shows a global cultural divide between wealthier and poorer countries in technology use, which relates to both the ability to communicate quickly and to afford and support this communication technology. Wealthier countries have greater access to technology while poorer countries have less access.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 56*
Skill: Analysis

- 4) Refer to the pictures of the flags on pages 41 and 49, as well as discussion of flags on pages 40 and 45. In what way can flags be both symbols of patriotism and symbols of opposition? How can a flag be both a sign of pride and unity for some, while for others a symbol of racism and oppression? What sociological perspectives are illustrated by these contrasts?

Answer: flags can be a symbol of patriotism (waving the American flag) or opposition (burning the American flag). Is burning the flag protected freedom, or is it treason? The confederate flag is for some a sign of Southern pride and unity (order/functionality) as well as a cultural tradition; for others, it is a symbol of racism and oppression (conflict). Waving flags from a different nation may show pride in origin or may be seen as treasonous. Flags are also used at international sporting events, where they demonstrate unity with others supporting the same country or team, and opposition with those supporting the other country or team. All of these examples exemplify the both/and perspective, that the same symbol can simultaneously have contradictory meanings.

Diff: moderate *Page Ref: 40, 41, 45, 49*

Skill: analysis