

# Culture



# CULTURE

- **Culture** is language, beliefs, values, norms, behaviors, and material objects, TOGETHER shape a person's way of life
- **Society** refers to people who interact in a defined territory and share culture



# CULTURE



Born-what culture  
did you bring with  
you into this world?

Blue v. Pink

How were you carried home?



- Remember we take culture for granted
- *Our* speech, *our* gestures, *our* beliefs, *our* customs
- Assume they are “normal” or “natural”
- We came into life w/ nothing-no language, no religion, no money, no fighting, nothing
- Quickly acquired at young age, and now taken for granted

- **Material Culture** = jewelry, art, buildings, weapons, machines, eating utensils, clothing
- **Nonmaterial Culture** = way of thinking, beliefs, values, & assumptions about the world

# 5 Common Components to a Culture

1. Symbols
2. Language
3. Values
4. Beliefs
5. Norms

## Components of 1. Symbols

Anything that carries a particular meaning recognized by people who share a culture

**Gestures** = body's way to communicate

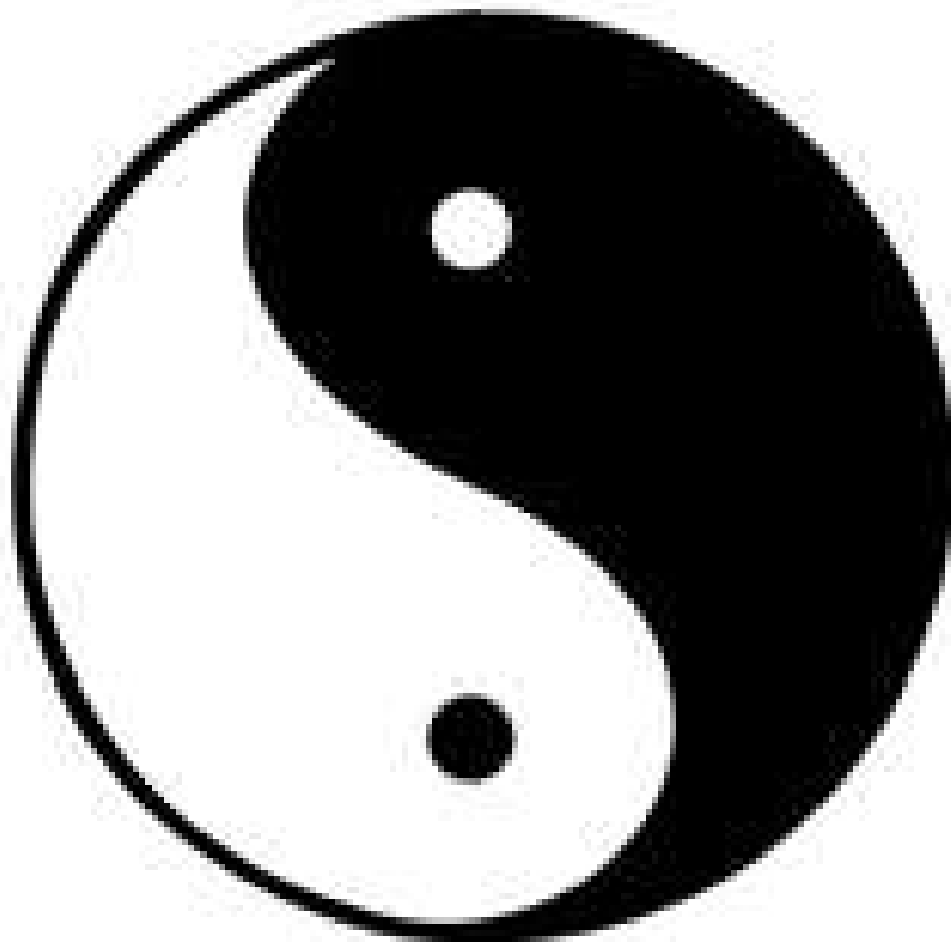
Imitating monkeys –Latin America

“mother is a blank”

Giving the finger-Brazil \$13,000 fine

“A-OK” refers to human body part, not mentioned in public

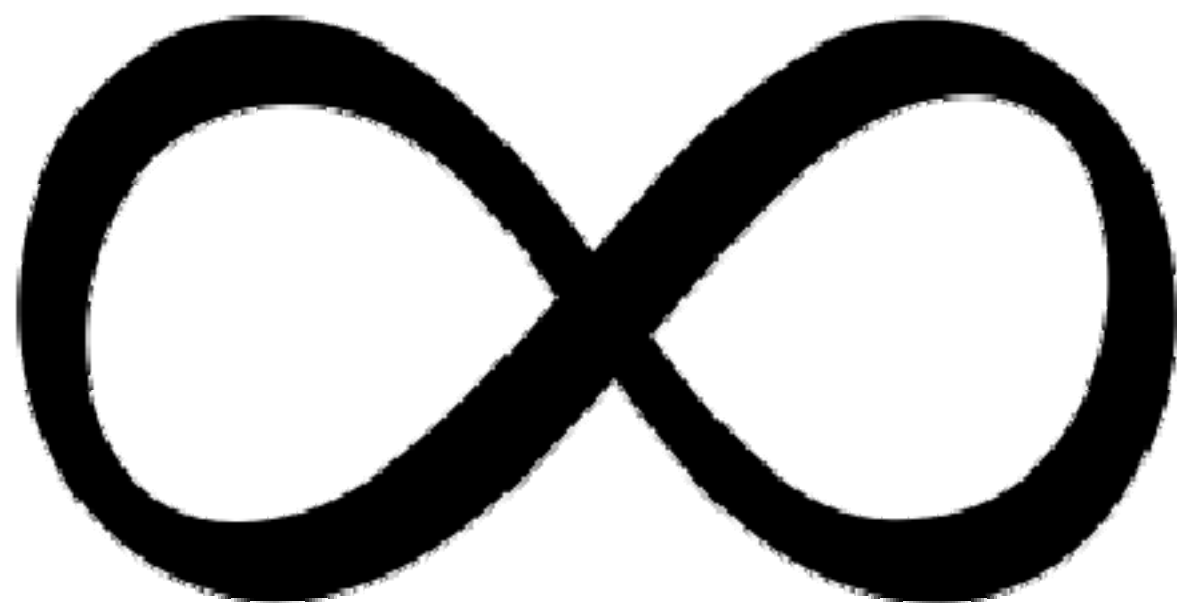




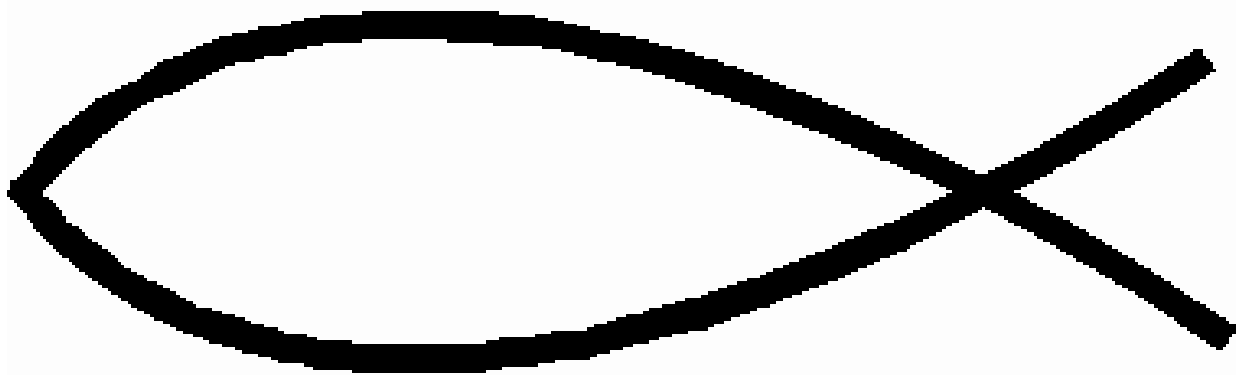
- **YIN YANG:** A Chinese Tao picture of universal harmony and the unity between all opposites: light/dark, male/female, etc. Yin is the dark, passive, negative female principle. Yang is the light, active, positive principle. Since it represent monism (all is one) and pantheism (all is God), it opposes Christianity, which shows us that there is only one God (monotheism), and only in Christ can we be one. This picture the yin yang on a ring and earrings illustrates its popularity. It fits the consensus process, the vision of global unity, and the blending of opposing energies at the heart of Holistic Health.



- **PEACE SYMBOL** or **NERO'S CROSS**: A broken, upside-down cross. To Roman emperor Nero, who hated and persecuted the early Christians, it meant destruction of Christianity. Revived in the sixties by hippies and others who protested nuclear weapons, Western culture, and Christian values, it now symbolizes a utopian hope for a new age of global peace and earth-centered unity. But many of heavy metal rock fans would agree with Nero and use it to mock Christ and His followers.



**Infinity**



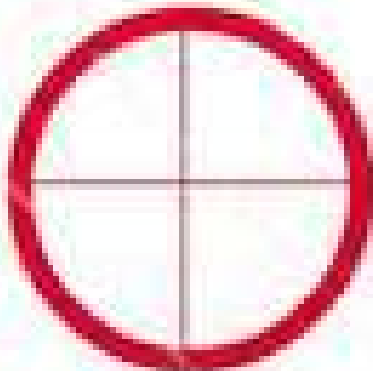
- Christians were often put to death for practicing their faith, so they worshiped in secret places. A fish painted on the outside door of a house let other Christians know that they would be safe and welcome inside. The Christian fish symbol is now often used to identify Christians and/or Christian businesses



- **SPHINX:** Ancient Egyptian and Babylonian *guardian of sacred places* --an idol with human head and a lion's body. The Greek sphinx would devour travelers who failed to answer her riddle. According to *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (by Arthur Waite, xii) the masonic sphinx "is the guardian of the Mysteries and *is the Mysteries* summarized in a symbol

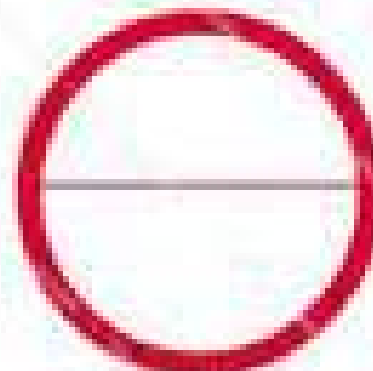


**WORLD TRIAD:** Originally an oriental symbol, it was "adopted by western **Gnostics** as an emblem of cosmic creativity, the **threefold nature of reality or fate**, and the eternally **spiraling cycles of time**... In Japan it was *maga-tama* or *mitsu tomoe*, the world soul.... In Bhutan and Tibet, it is still known as the **Cosmic Mandal**



**EARTH**

**AIR**



**WATER**

**FIRE**



## 2. Language

Allows culture to exist, a social and shared past; allows communication

Share perspective and understanding

*Verbal-not hidden, can't read your minds*

*Importance of Oral Traditions*

*Internet Slang-make a list*

*Gaming slang*

**3/4 Values & Beliefs** = standards  
which people judge desirability,  
goodness, and beauty

- What do you Value? Cherish?  
Pride?
- Values then determine our beliefs  
systems

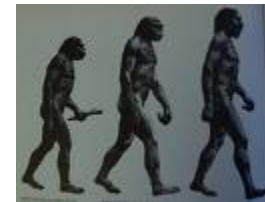


*I value success, I believe hard work pays off*

*I value freedom, I believe that criminals  
should pay the price for the crime they  
committed*

# Key Values in US Culture

1. Equal opportunity
2. Achievement and Success
3. Material Comfort
4. Activity and Work
5. Practicality and Efficiency
6. Progress
7. Science
8. Democracy and Free Enterprise
9. Freedom
10. Group Superiority



# Material Comfort

- Boys may come and boys  
may go  
And thats all right you  
see  
Experience has made me  
rich  
And now theyre after me,  
cause everybodys

(chorus)

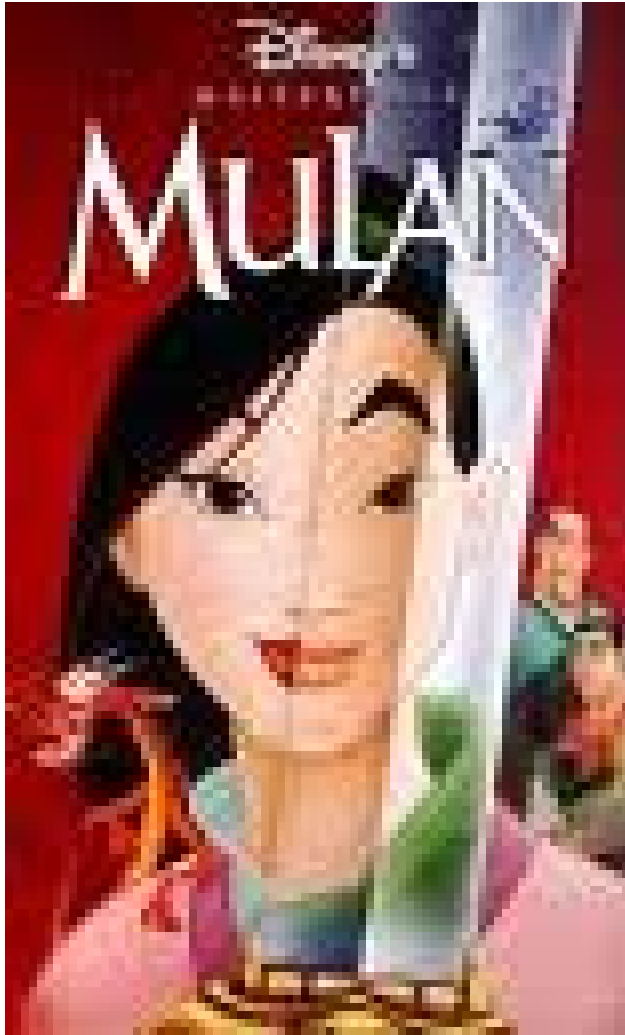
A material, a material, a  
material, a material  
world



# Freedom



<http://homepage.usask.ca/~jjs142/movielist.htm>



Disney's influence on  
our culture

- What is Beauty? Defined based on what standards?
- Youtube (African Body Modification (aka Beauty))



## 5. Norms = rules and expectations of behavior

- Classroom norms “raising a hand”
- Church
- Sports event
- Marriage before family
- Joining a grp out of the blue



# Violate a Norm Assignment

- You may also violate any other norm you choose, as long as you don't risk harming yourself or others, and as long as your behavior doesn't reflect badly on the school or this class (if you're not sure, please consult with me).
- For example, you should not do anything that breaks a law, disrupts a class or public event, involves sexual behavior or sexually explicit speech, hurts or threatens others, or includes taking or damaging other people's property -- *such norm violations will result in a score of zero*

- Wearing a bright neon pink outfit on Friday-Black & Orange Day
- A boy wearing a baby carrier wrap w/ a doll for a hour walking thru the mall
- Saying “Yes Sir, No Ma’am” ONE full school day
- Standing in front of class reciting Pledge of Allegiance
- Putting items into someone else’s cart at Walmart (be carefull w/ this one!!!!!!!)

# Assignment

- Turn in a description of the norm you violated, the way you felt, and the reactions people had to you (limited in length to one typewritten double-spaced page using 1" margins and Times New Roman 12-point font).
- For example, you might describe whether the experience was uncomfortable, fun, liberating, scary, or something else.
- Or you might discuss the social psychology of other people's reactions to you.

A delicacy is any food that a specific culture considers rare or especially valuable



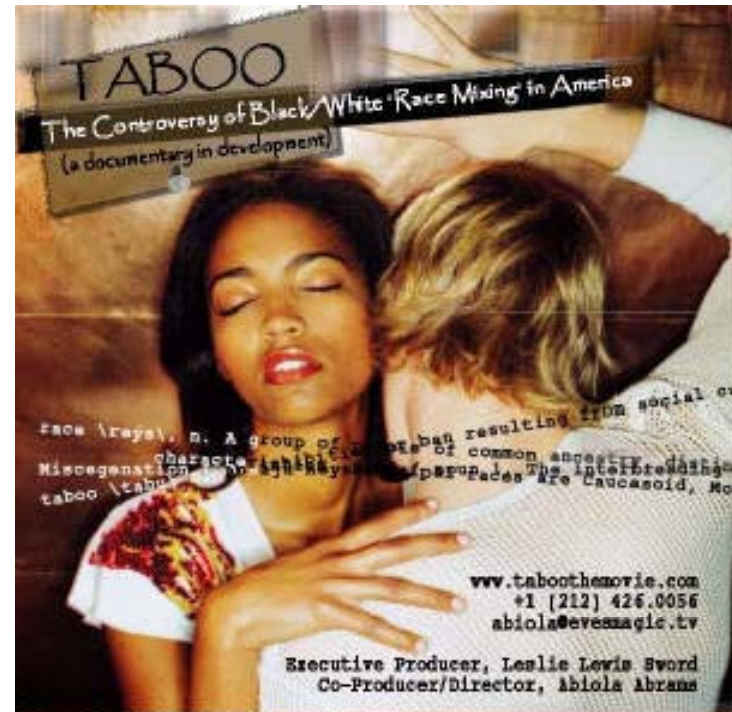
<http://www.bootsnall.com/articles/09-09/10-weird-food-delicacies-from-around-the-world.html?print=1>

- <http://www.culinaryschools.org/cuisine/10-disgusting-delicacies/>



# TABOO

- Discussion of sexuality, cannibalism, incest, discussion of racial differences, etc.



- For those you have traveled
- Difference in transportation, water, homes, proper hygiene, eye contact, gestures
- We judge, we expect certain things, we might become disoriented, or we might try to push our culture onto someone else
- We assume our way of doing things is superior to other ways of life-therefore we JUDGE



- **Subculture**: group of people with a culture (whether distinct or hidden) which differentiates them from the larger culture to which they belong.



- IF a particular subculture is characterized by a systematic opposition to the dominant culture, it may be described as a counterculture



- **Counterculture**: go against mainstream culture (hippies)



# Survey

Is there such a thing as American Culture?

One time “melting pot” was a common phrase, are we still a melting pot of multiple cultures?

Handwritten is OK, 1 page

# Why you “settled”?

- 10 people
- Job-laid off, relocation, career change
- Pie chart