

Defining Cultural Variations

- Sociologists focus on similarities and differences between different cultures
- Sociologists try to examine differences in culture in an unbiased manner and try to focus on the principles of the culture for what they are



Cultural Universals

- Cultural Universals are commonalities that almost all cultures share
- There are differences in how they are expressed by different cultures, but they are all present in some way or another

Arts and Leisure

athletic sports, dancing, decorative art, games, music

Basic Needs

clothing, cooking, housing

Beliefs

body adornment, dream interpretation, folklore, funeral rites, religious ritual, weather control

Communication and Education

education, greetings, language

Family

courtship, family feasting, kin groups, marriage

Government and Economy

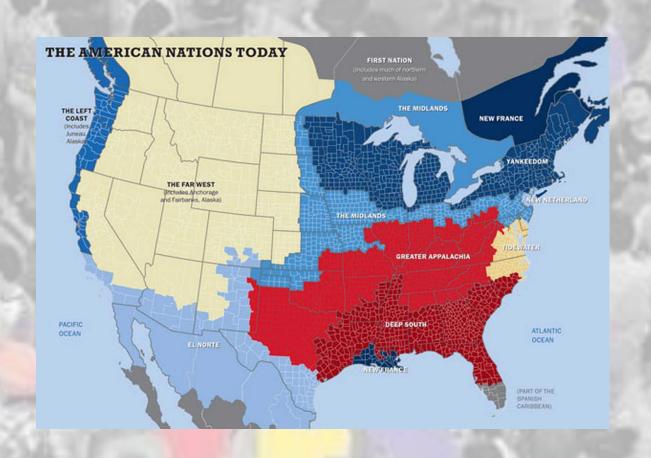
calendar, division of labor, government, law, property rights, status differentiation, trade

Technology

medicine, toolmaking

Subculture

- Within cultures there are differences between ages, genders, politics, ethnicities, and geography
- Regional variations develop within larger cultures as subcultures
 - Subcultures not a threat to larger culture
 - Ex. Midwest culture as part of American Culture



Counterculture

- Countercultures are groups that go directly against the main culture
- Designed to challenge the values of the culture
 - Ex. Goths, Hippies, etc...
 - Described as Anti-Conformists



Responses to Variation

- Ethnocentrism Judging another culture based off the values and principles off your own culture – Cultures labeling cultural traits as "wrong"
- Xenophobia Viewing foreigners as a threat or a danger – Leads to the rejection or hatred of groups of people
- Ethnic/Cultural Conflict Rejection or persecution against cultural or ethnic groups that can lead to conflict
- <u>Racism</u> The persecution or denial of rights to a person because of their perceived physical differences





Cultural Diffusion

- Cultural Diffusion is the spread of a cultural trait from a originating hearth
 - Can spread from a variety of methods
 - Spread by cultural elites
 - Spread by movement of people from one area to another
 - Spread by contact from one person to another

