Definition of culture and its problems: animal, human or social culture (s).

Theories of culture.

Culture (s) in Anthropology.

Some examples throughout the human cultures:

- Galicia
- Australia
- North America
The word *culture*, from the Latin *colo*, –*ere*, with its root meaning "to cultivate", generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activity significance.

Different definitions of "culture" reflect different theoretical bases for understanding, or criteria for evaluating, human activity.

Anthropologists most commonly use the term "culture" to refer to the universal human capacity to classify, codify and communicate their experiences symbolically. This capacity is long been taken as a defining feature of the genus *Homo*.

However, primatologists such as Jane Goodall have identified aspects of culture among our closest relatives in the animal kingdom. Similarly, it has recently been determined that the Orca pods have culture specific vocalizations and tastes for food. Orcas used in theme parks are exclusively from pods that only feed on fish.
Definitions of culture.

- **Ways of looking at culture**
  - 1 Culture as civilization
  - 2 Culture as worldview
  - 3 Culture as symbols
  - 4 Culture as a stabilizing mechanism
"Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, 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."
Tylor 1958 [1871]: 1.
Definitions of culture

"... a part of the distinctive means by which a local population maintains itself in an ecosystem and by which a regional population maintains and coordinates its groups and distributes them over the available land." Rappaport (1968 [1980]: 233).
Definitions of culture

"... an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life"

Geertz 1973: 89.
Definitions of culture

“I use the term culture to refer collectively to a society and its way of life or in reference to human culture as a whole”

John H. Bodley, An Anthropological Perspective
Culture as a concept in Anthropology: result of biological evolution

Culture and Society
Culture is the totality of learned, socially transmitted behavior. It includes the ideas, values, and customs (as well as the sailboats, comic books, and birth control devices) of groups of people. A fairly large number of people are said to constitute a society when they live in the same territory, are relatively independent of people outside their area, and participate in a common culture. Members of a society share a common language, which facilitates day-to-day exchanges with others.

Cultural Universals
Cultural universals, such as language, are general practices found in every culture. Anthropologist George Murdock compiled a list of such universals, including athletic sports, cooking, courtship, dancing, family, games, music, religion, and sexual restrictions. The cultural practices listed by Murdock may be universal, but the manner in which they are expressed will vary from culture to culture.
Material and Nonmaterial Culture
Sociologist William F. Ogburn made a useful distinction between elements of material and nonmaterial culture. **Material culture** refers to the physical or technological aspects of our daily lives, including food items, houses, factories, and raw materials. **Nonmaterial culture** refers to ways of using material objects and to customs, beliefs, philosophies, governments, and patterns of communication. Generally, the nonmaterial culture is more resistant to change than the material culture is.

Language.
**Language** is an abstract system of word meanings and symbols for all aspects of culture. Language includes speech, written characters, numerals, symbols, and gestures of nonverbal communication. In contrast to some other elements of culture, language permeates all parts of society. While language is a cultural universal, differences in the use of language are evident around the world.
Elements of a culture

Types of Norms

*Formal norms* have generally been written down and involve strict rules for punishment of violators. By contrast, *informal norms* are generally understood but are not precisely recorded. *Mores* are norms deemed highly necessary to the welfare of a society, often because they embody the most cherished principles of a people. *Folkways* are norms governing everyday behavior whose violation raises comparatively little concern.

Sanctions

*Sanctions* are penalties and rewards for conduct concerning a social norm. Conformity to a norm can lead to positive sanctions such as a pay raise, a medal, a word of gratitude, or a pat on the back. Negative sanctions include fines, threats, imprisonment, and even stares of contempt. The most cherished values of a culture will be most heavily sanctioned, whereas matters regarded as less critical will carry light and informal sanctions.

Values

*Values* are collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable, and proper or bad, undesirable, and improper in a culture. Values influence people’s behavior and serve as a criterion for evaluating the actions of others. There is often a direct relationship between the values, norms, and sanctions of a culture.
Integration, subcultures and cultural sock

Cultural integration

*Cultural integration* refers to the bringing together of conflicting cultural elements, resulting in a harmonious and cohesive whole. In a well-integrated culture, various norms, values, and customs will support one another and fit together well. Often the process of cultural integration is enforced from the top; less powerful members of society have little choice but to accept the dictates and values of those in control.

Subcultures

A *subculture* is a segment of society which shares a distinctive pattern of mores, folkways, and values which differ from the pattern of the larger society. The existence of many subcultures is characteristic of complex societies such as the United States. Members of a subculture participate in the dominant culture, while at the same time engaging in unique and distinctive forms of behavior. Frequently, a subculture will develop an *argot*, or specialized language, which distinguishes it from the wider society.

Culture Shock

All of us, to some extent or other, take for granted the cultural practices of our society. As a result, it can be surprising and disturbing to realize that other cultures do not follow the American way of life. *Culture shock* can be set off either by the physical items of an unfamiliar culture or by the ways that people act. Yet we can experience culture shock even in our own society.
Ethnocentrism
Sociologist William Graham Sumner coined the term *ethnocentrism* to refer to the tendency to assume that one's culture and way of life are superior to all others. The ethnocentric person sees his or her own group as the center or defining point of culture and views all other cultures as deviations from what is "normal." The conflict approach to social behavior points out that ethnocentric value judgments serve to devalue groups and contribute to denial of equal opportunities.

Cultural Relativism
While ethnocentrism evaluates foreign cultures using the familiar culture of the observer as a standard of correct behavior, *cultural relativism* views people's behavior from the perspective of their own culture. It places a priority on understanding other cultures, rather than dismissing them as "strange" or "exotic." Unlike ethnocentrism, cultural relativism employs the kind of value neutrality in scientific study that Max Weber saw as so important.
Culture and the Dominant Ideology
Functionalists maintain that stability requires a consensus and the support of society's members; consequently, there are strong central values and common norms. Conflict theorists concur with functionalists that a common culture may exist, but they argue that it serves to maintain the privileges of some groups while keeping others in a subservient position. The term dominant ideology is used to describe a set of cultural beliefs and practices that help to maintain powerful social, economic, and political interests. From a conflict perspective, the social significance of the dominant ideology is that a society's most powerful groups and institutions control not only wealth and property; even more importantly, they control the means of producing beliefs about reality through religion, education, and the media.

Multiculturalism
As the racial and ethnic profile of student populations has changed, there has been increasing debate over the proper curriculum materials that should be used in school and college classrooms. Advocates of multiculturalism insist that school and college curricula should be revised to give greater emphasis to the contributions and experiences of African Americans, other racial and ethnic minorities, women, and nonwestern peoples. Viewed from a functionalist perspective, the traditional canon of western culture promotes stability, social solidarity, and consensus by helping to define the common values of the United States. By contrast, conflict theorists might view the western canon as central to a dominant ideology that serves the interests of society's most powerful groups and institutions.
Australian Aboriginal culture is complex and extraordinarily diverse. It is one of the world's longest surviving cultures, which goes back at least 50,000 years (some think it is closer to 150,000 years).

There were over 500 different clan groups or 'nations' around the continent, many with distinctive cultures and beliefs. Hundreds of languages and dialects existed (although many are now extinct), as well as a variety of different customs and rituals, art forms, styles of painting, forms of food, and hunting habits.

A common heritage

Before Europeans came to Australia, the very distinctive and culturally unique groups that made up Aboriginal Australia shared a number of common traits.

Hunters and gatherers

All of Australia's Aboriginals were semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers, with each clan having its own territory from which they 'made their living'. These territories or 'traditional lands' were defined by geographic boundaries such as rivers, lakes and mountains. They all shared an intimate understanding of, and relationship with, the land. It was the basis of their spiritual life.

It was this affinity with their surroundings that goes a long way to explaining how they survived for so many millennia. They understood and cared for their different environments, and adapted to them.
Tool technology: While their tools varied by group and location, Aboriginal people all had knives, scrapers, axe-heads, spears, various vessels for eating and drinking, and digging sticks. Not all groups had didgeridoos and, contrary to popular belief, many did not have boomerangs. Some groups developed more tools than others.

Cultural diversity: Languages. There were between 200 and 250 aboriginal languages spoken, with many different dialects, producing up to 700 varieties. This makes Aboriginal Australia one of the most linguistically diverse areas on the planet. Within the space of 80 kilometres you can still pass through the territories of three languages 'less closely related than English, Russian and Hindu.' (The Oxford Companion to Australian History, 1998)

Language is vitally important in understanding Aboriginal heritage as much of their history is an oral history. Interestingly, various oral histories have been backed up by geological data, such as the flooding of Port Phillip Bay which occurred about 10,000 years ago.

Land: At the core of belief. Land is fundamental to the well-being of Aboriginal people. The 'dreamtime' stories explain how the land was created by the journeys of the spirit ancestors.

Living within the landscape: For Aboriginal people all that is sacred is localised in the landscape:

Our story is in the land ... it is written in those sacred places ... My Children will look after those places, that's the law. Bill Neidjie, Kakadu elder

The relationship between a clan and its 'territory' involves certain rights, such as the right to use the land and its products. With these rights comes a duty to tend the land through the performance of ceremonies.

We cultivated our land, but in a way different from the white man. We endeavored to live with the land; they seemed to live off it. I was taught to preserve, never to destroy.
Aboriginal Australians.
Aboriginals’ Australia
Faces of Aboriginal Australians
Songlines, or Yiri in the Walpiri language, are tracks across the landscape created by mythical Aboriginal ancestors.

The Songlines emerge as invisible pathways connecting all over Australia: ancient tracks made of songs which tell of the creation of the land. The Aboriginals' religious duty is ritually to travel the land, singing the Ancestors' songs: singing the world into being afresh. *The Songlines* is one man's impassioned song
Aboriginal art covers the walls of Nourlangie Rock, located in Kakadu National Park. The national park is a UNESCO World Heritage site in Australia's Northern Territory.
Australian aboriginal Art
Native Americans in the United States are the indigenous peoples within the territory that is now encompassed by the continental United States, including parts of Alaska down to their descendants in modern times. They comprise a large number of distinct tribes, states, and ethnic groups, many of which are still enduring as political communities. Some of these other indigenous peoples in the United States, including the Inuit, Yupik Eskimos, and Aleuts. In Canada they are known as First Nations.

Though cultural features, including language, garb, and customs vary enormously from one tribe to another, there are certain elements which are encountered frequently and shared by many tribes.

Early hunter-gatherer tribes forged stone weapons from around 10,000 years ago; as the age of metallurgy dawned, newer technologies were used and more efficient weapons produced. Prior to contact with Europeans, most tribes used similar weaponry. The most common implement were the bow and arrow, the war club, and the spear. Quality, material, and design varied widely.

Large mammals such as the mammoth were largely extinct by around 8,000 B.C., and the Native Americans were hunting their descendants, such as bison. The Great Plains tribes were still hunting the bison when they first encountered the Europeans. The acquisition of the horse and horsemanship from the Spanish in the 17th century greatly altered the natives' culture, changing the way in which these large creatures were hunted and making them a central feature of their lives.
Native American Cultures, tribes:

American Indian Tribes, c. 1600

Source: Adapted from George Peter Murdock, Ethnographic Bibliography of North America, 3d ed. (New Haven, 1963).
Native North American: classical
A potlatch was a ceremony among certain American Indian tribes, including tribes on the Pacific Northwest coast of the United States and the Canadian province of British Columbia. Such tribes included the Haida, Nuxalk, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakiutl (Kwakwaka'wakw). The potlatch took the form of a ceremonial feast traditionally featuring seal meat or salmon. In it, hierarchical relations within and between groups were observed and reinforced through the exchange of gifts, dance performances, and other ceremonies. The host family demonstrated their wealth and prominence through giving away their possessions and thus prompting prominent participants to reciprocate when they hold their own potlatches.
Native Americans’ Art

- Puget Sound Native American Whale Totem (Washington State, USA)
- Chilkat Blanket
  - Unknown artist (Tlingit)
  - Mountain goat wool, cedar bark, hide
  - Length 162 cm, width 140 cm.
  - Mid to late 1800s
Villages are ordinarily small and isolated, the parish being the common denominator among the widely dispersed villages of a locality. Annual precipitation is moderately high, exceeding the 1000 mm. in most places, but it is only of limited benefit, because the badly eroded soil retains little moisture. The terrain favours animal husbandry over cultivation, and the former is the premier agriculture activity; nonetheless, the farm population is large and fairly evenly dispersed, resulting in the subdivision of the countryside into small landholdings, or “minifundios”. Families generally own and cultivate the “minifundios”, and the inability of those farms to support a growing population has resulted in a higher than average migration from Galicia since the 18th century. Overseas emigration was higher during between 1920 and 1935, while emigration since World War II has been to the industrialized countries of Europe (mainly to Germany, Switzerland and France) but also to the Spanish areas of Madrid, the Basque Country and Catalonia.

Rural population is lately getting older for the migration from rural areas to the cities on the coast.

Primary production (agriculture, forestry and fishing) dominates the region’s economy. Subsistence farming prevails among the “minifundios”, with potatoes and corn among the leading crops and pigs among the leading livestock. Underemployment plagues the agriculture sector, and large numbers of migrant labourers periodically leave Galicia in search of seasonal work elsewhere in Spain. Galicia’s industrial sector is not well developed, and most of it centres on the processing of primarily commodities. Fish processing is of particularly importance, and sawmills are widespread. The installation of a petroleum refinery in A Coruña has stimulated industrial development in that province, while Ferrol and Vigo have major shipbuilding works. The mountains of the region produce considerable quantities of timber. Galicia’s economy remains underdeveloped, however, accounting for a disproportionately small percentage of Spain’s gross domestic product.
Galicia’s cultura and distinctive language have developed in relative isolation, showing a great affinity with Portuguese by proximity, and with Celtic cultures because former Celtic settlements. The cultural and political dominance of the old kingdom of Galicia by the kingdom of Castile has since submerged the literary uses of Galician.

Franco’s dictatorship (1939–1975) has persecuted Galicia’s culture and Galician language besides Galician was the mother language of the majority of rural inhabitants of Galicia. After 1975 and towards today, Galician and Spanish are the official languages of the Autonomous Community of Galicia.

Galicia has been historically isolated from the rest of Europe. In the 21st century coexist with a population of around four millions of inhabitants: an subsistence agriculture, a strong fishing sector in permanent crisis, a short industrialization concentrated in four coast towns, and a growing up services sector (with tourism as the main drive). Christian Roman Catholicism has been the main religious Church, being during the Franco’s dictatorship the official unique allowed believe.
Galicia in pictures?
Galician’s art

- Noticias dos homes, Luis Seoane

Cruceiro de Hio, Pontevedra
“Every 22nd, 23rd and 24th of June peoples under a spell or possessed come to the sanctuary to heal out the “meigallo”. The ritual stipulates that first the ills must resist the entrance inside the church, swearing and cursing at the same time. Relatives must share this evil aptitude and with the surrounding people they must together reprimand and rebuke the devil. The ill must kiss the saint icon once the mass is over to cause cure. This is a critical moment because the evil could enter any other present body. In order to avoid that evil influence people present must close their mounts. The faithful believers cover their own mouths or they try to avoid the yells of the possessed with a holy water wet handkerchief” (Vaqueiro 1998: 333)