

**Subculture**

A group within a larger culture that shares a specific cultural pattern that differs from that of the larger culture core

Based on: age, sex, race, ethnicity, occupation, region, religion

The Importance of Subculture

- leads to differences in enculturation
- social conflict: individual misconduct is often the result of a clash of subcultures
- can be a source of identity and leads to a feeling of belonging in an impersonal, ruthless world
- can help get one ahead

Ex. Italians go to an Italian funeral home and cemetery. The Polish use a Polish business, etc.

**Social Groups**

An aggregation of individuals acting together in a joint effort to satisfy certain common needs while sharing a common identity

Out-groups- groups we do not belong to

In-groups- groups we belong to and interact with

- Primary groups: we are intimately tied to these such as family, clique, platoon, guerilla cell
- secondary groups: we are more formally and impersonally associated with these such as unions, professional groups, etc.

Surface Culture	Deep Culture
Language	World view
Rituals/celebrations	Ethics
Clothing	Life goals
Architecture	Social aspirations
Cuisine/foods	Religious assumptions
Gender roles	
Social manners	
Status symbols	
Technology	

**Cultural Limitations**

Failure to realize the limitations of culture can be maladaptive:

- Consumerism and waste
- Energy inefficiency
- Destruction of local communities
- Benefits a few elites at the expense of others
- Promotion of unhealthy life styles for profit

Failure to understand the limitations of the biosphere can lead to:

- The demise of the human species
- The destruction of the life support system for the whole planet

Politization and commercialization and resultant inequality:

- Gives individual rulers and leaders cultural incentive to promote perpetual growth to enhance personal power
- This creates a vicious cycle in which growth gives leaders power to produce more growth until the system collapses

### Culture and Biology Interact

-Human biological capabilities and limitations developed over billions years of evolution

-all humans have evolved a capacity for culture but no specific culture

-without the evolution of the brain, culture could not have emerged and developed

-symbols and learning activities depend on physical composition and organization of the brain

-sociocultural activities only occur because of our evolved minds that enable us to learn and build on earlier culture

-anatomical and physiological adaptations are important for culture such as vocal tract, bipedal posture, manual abilities, throwing/aiming projectiles

-While culture cannot override millions of years of evolution, it can influence biology by channeling it.

-All children are programmed by genetics to be able to learn the language through a series of stages but not a specific language.

-We are hardwired for living in social groups by our biology (avoid danger, find food and water, build alliances, and positive affect).

-Today's "me-ism" (too much concentration on me) and careless consumption deny codependency and community.

-Culture has reduced checks on population, challenging natural balances.

-Culture has exploded over the past few thousand years, while our biology has changed little.

### Culture's Influence of Biology

Gene frequencies can be affected by cultural practices:

- Rule of mating and mate selection
- Caste/class relations
- Migration
- Survival of pathological genotype (ex. PKU, cystic fibrosis, etc.)
- War, invasions

Cultural practices that impact developmental plasticity:

- Exposure to exercise (loss/gain of muscle)
- Nutritional inputs
- Growth and development

- Exposure to disease
- Exposure to violence (personal TV, etc.)
- Poverty and differential mortality

Cultural practices that alter or modify individual biological features:

- Plastic surgery
- Skull shaping
- Scarring or tattoos
- Broken nose from activities
- Tanning

Cultural practices that reshape the biophysical environment and modify biological adaptation:

- Housing, clothing, etc.
- Environmental contamination leading to fetal loss, autism, cancer, and other disabilities
- Group or individual movement from one ecosystem to another
- Ecosystem destruction for profit
- Materialistic, wasteful use of resources