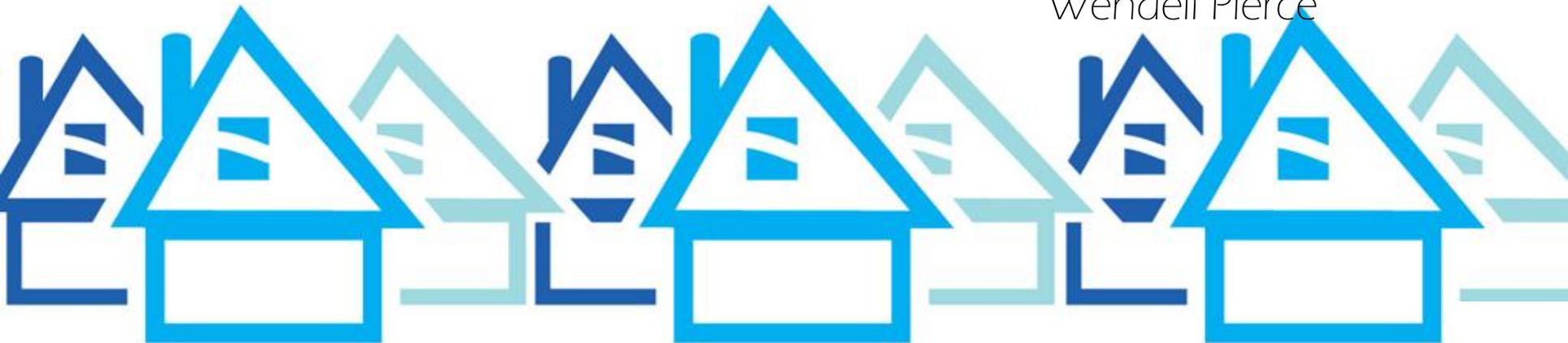




# Culture Part II

Culture is the intersection of people and life itself. It's how we deal with life, love, death, birth, disappointment ... all of that is expressed in culture.

Wendell Pierce





# Nonmaterial Culture: Values

- ...collective conceptions of what is good, desirable and proper or bad, undesirable and improper in a culture
  - criteria for evaluating actions of others
  - influence people's behavior
- **ideal vs. real culture**: the ideal values and norms of people vs. the values and norms that people actually follow
- **culture war**: struggle between two or more sets of conflicting cultural values





# Nonmaterial Culture: Values

- **value cluster**: values that together form a larger whole ... for example, the value cluster that surrounds success: hard work, education, efficiency, etc
- **value contradiction**: values that contradict one another ... to follow one means to come into conflict with another ... related to social change in that with major events, thoughts on values can change (civil war, women's liberation movement , etc) ... for example, the value of group superiority contradicts freedom, democracy and equality





# Nonmaterial Culture: Values

- **values as blinders**: Because values are lenses through which we see the world, we often see what life should be like and not what it actually is.
- Americans value individualism so highly that they see almost everyone as free and equal in pursuing the goal of success. This blinds them to the importance of the circumstances that keep people from achieving success. Instead of taking into account the fact that some people have obstacles in their pursuits for success - such as family poverty, lower education and dead-end jobs - Americans see unsuccessfulness as people being lazy and not putting out enough effort.





# Values in US Society

- achievement and success
- individualism
- activity and work
- efficiency and practicality
- science and technology
- progress
- material comfort
- morality
- humanitarianism
- freedom
- democracy
- equality
- racism and group superiority
- education
- religiosity
- romantic love





# Emerging Values in US Society

- leisure
- self-fulfillment
- physical fitness
- youthfulness
- concern for the environment





# Nonmaterial Culture: Norms

- ...established standards of behavior maintained by a society
  - to be significant, must be widely shared and understood
  - subject to change as political, economic and social conditions of a culture are transformed (changing attitudes about marijuana)



- **taboo**: norm so strongly ingrained that even the thought of its violation is greeted with revulsion
- **moral holidays and places**: times and places where norms are temporarily suspended (Mardi Gras)





# Nonmaterial Culture: Norms

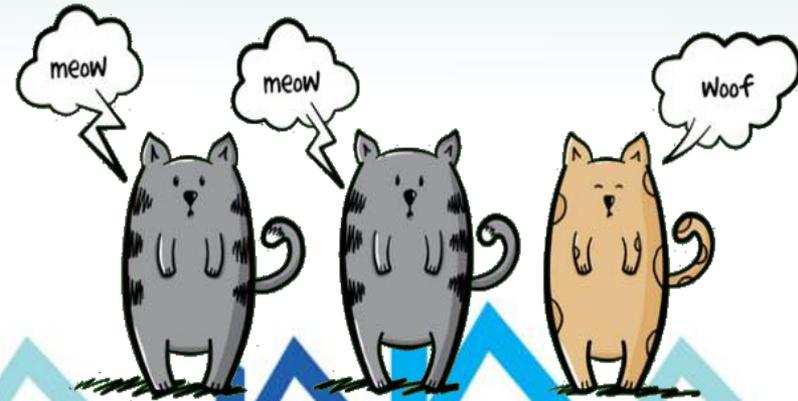
- types of norms
  - **formal norms**: generally written down, specify strict punishments for violations
  - **informal norms**: generally understood but not precisely recorded
  - **mores** [MORE-rays]: norms deemed highly necessary to the welfare of a culture because they embody the most cherished principles of a people
  - **folkways**: are relatively weak norms which are only mildly enforced in a society (manners, appropriate dress, etc)





# Nonmaterial Culture: Norms

- Norms **prescribe** (state authoritatively or as a rule that an action should be carried out) and **proscribe** (denounce or condemn) behavior.
- Why do we follow social codes of behavior?
  - indoctrination
  - habituation
  - desire for group identification
  - recognition of the utility of the codes
  - rewards and punishments





# Nonmaterial Culture: Enforcing Norms

## ENFORCEMENT OF SOCIAL NORMS

**internalization:** how a norm becomes part of a person's personality, causing them to conform to society's expectations

**sanctions:** rewards or punishments used to enforce conformity to norms

**positive:**  
action that rewards a particular kind of behavior

**negative:**  
punishment or the threat of punishment to enforce conformity

**formal:** reward or punishment by a formal organization or regulatory agency, such as a school

**informal:**  
spontaneous expression of approval or disapproval by an individual or group



# Nonmaterial Culture: Enforcing Norms

<b>Norms</b>	<b>Sanctions</b>	
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<i>Formal</i>	Salary bonus	Demotion
	Testimonial dinner	Firing from a job
	Medal	Jail sentence
	Diploma	Expulsion
<i>Informal</i>	Smile	Frown
	Compliment	Humiliation
	Cheers	Belittling





# Cultural Universals

- All societies have developed certain common practices and beliefs - courtship, marriage, family, divorce, funerals, games, religion - although the specific customs associated with activities differ between groups.
- Most human cultures change and expand through innovation and diffusion.





# George Murdock's Cultural Universals

- age-grading
- athletic sports
- bodily adornment
- calendar
- cleanliness training
- community organization
- cooking
- cooperative labor
- cosmology
- courtship
- dancing
- decorative art
- divination
- division of labor
- dream interpretation
- education
- eschatology
- ethics
- ethno-botany
- etiquette
- faith healing
- family feasting
- fire-making
- folklore
- food taboos
- funeral rites
- games
- gestures
- gift-giving
- government
- greetings
- hair styles
- hospitality
- housing
- hygiene
- incest taboos
- inheritance rules
- joking
- kin groups
- kinship names
- language
- law
- luck / superstitions
- magic
- marriage
- mealtimes
- medicine
- obstetrics
- penal sanctions
- personal names
- population policy
- postnatal care
- pregnancy
- property rights
- propitiation of supernatural beings (atoning sacrifice)
- puberty customs
- religious ritual
- residence rules
- sexual restrictions
- soul concepts
- status differentiation
- surgery
- tool-making
- trade
- visiting
- weather control
- weaving



# Cultural Change: Innovation

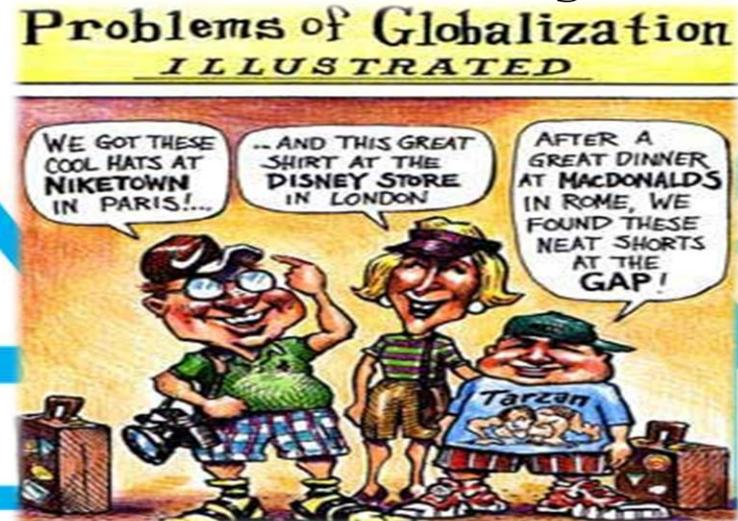
- ...process of introducing a new idea or object to a culture
- Innovation may take the form of either discovery or invention.
  - **discovery**: making known or sharing existence of an aspect of reality
  - **invention**: when existing cultural items are combined into a form that did not exist before
- **culture lag**: period of maladjustment when nonmaterial culture is still struggling to adapt to new material conditions





# Cultural Change: Diffusion

- ...process by which a cultural item spreads from group to group or society to society
- **cultural leveling**: process by which cultures become similar to one another ... occurs with travel, communication and exposure to mass media
- **globalization**: worldwide integration of government policies, cultures, social movements and financial markets through trade and the exchange of ideas





# Cultural Change: Diffusion

- **technology**: cultural information about how to use the material resources of the environment to satisfy human needs and desires
  - accelerates the diffusion of scientific innovations
  - transmits culture





# Culture and the Dominant Ideology

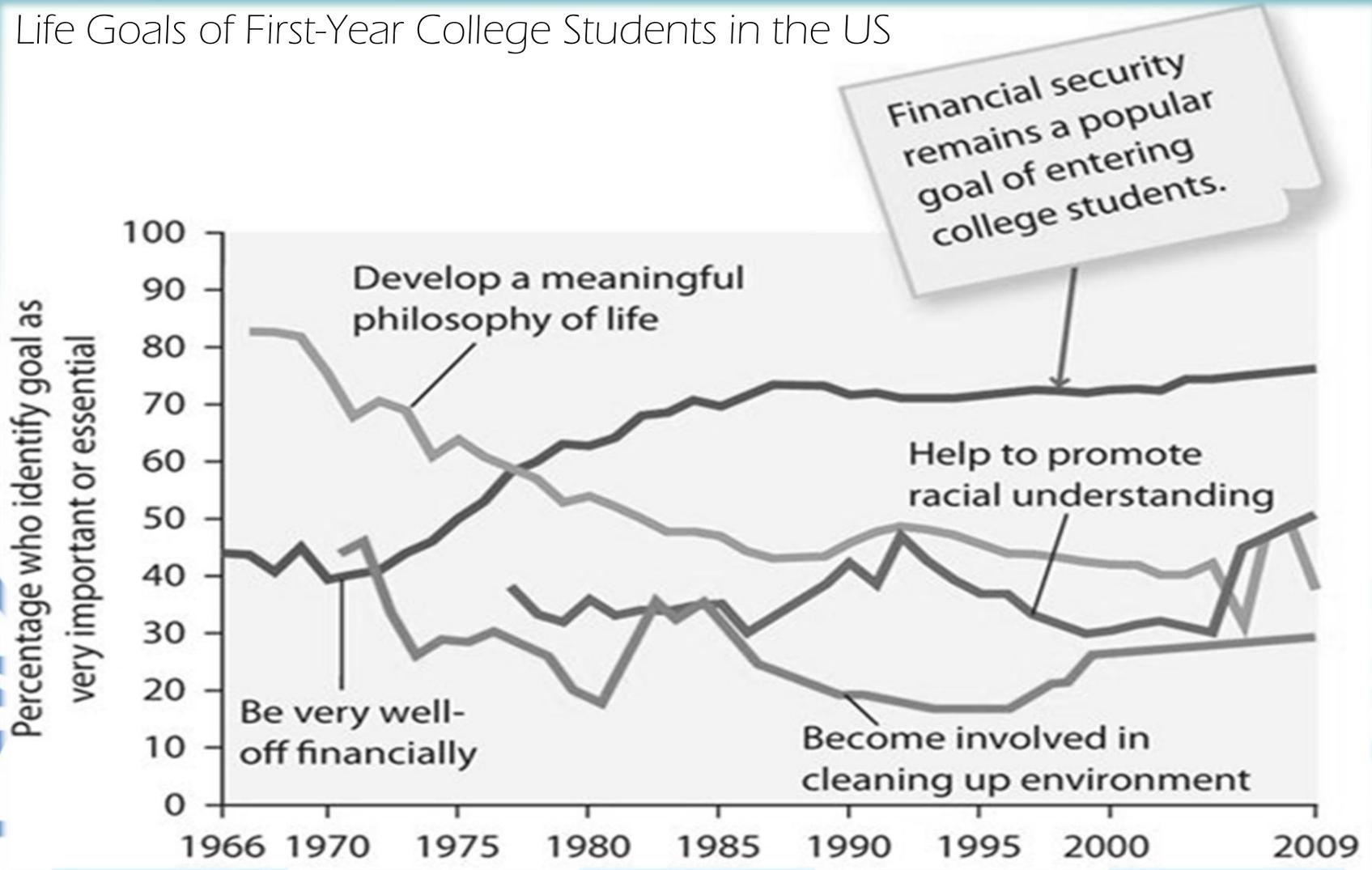
- ...the set of cultural beliefs and practices that help to maintain powerful social, economic and political interests
  - control wealth and property
  - control the means of producing beliefs about reality through:
    - religion
    - education
    - the media



# Culture and the Dominant Ideology



Life Goals of First-Year College Students in the US





# Cultural Variation

- **cultural relativism**: the belief that the behaviors and customs of any culture must be viewed and analyzed by the culture's own standards
  - understanding cultures on their own terms
  - confronting contrasting views of reality
- **ethnocentrism**: tendency to assume that one's own culture and way of life represents the norm or is superior to all others
- **xenocentrism**: belief that products, styles or ideas of one's society are inferior to those that originate elsewhere





# Cultural Variation



Why might this map be considered ethnocentric?



# Cultural Variation

- **adaptation**: all societies manage to come to terms with their external environment and with the internal difficulties presented by communal life even when it might seem to uninformed or prejudiced outsiders that the beliefs and practices of a given community operate inefficiently or counterproductively
- **sick cultures** (Robert Edgerton): societies, just like individuals, can be pathological, and no amount of either political correctness or moral relativism can “reframe” or excuse many cultural rules
- **culture shock**: feeling disoriented, uncertain, out of place or fearful when immersed in an unfamiliar culture
- **Sociobiologists** assert that many cultural traits are rooted in genetic makeup ... a view not widely shared.





# Cultural Variation: Subcultures

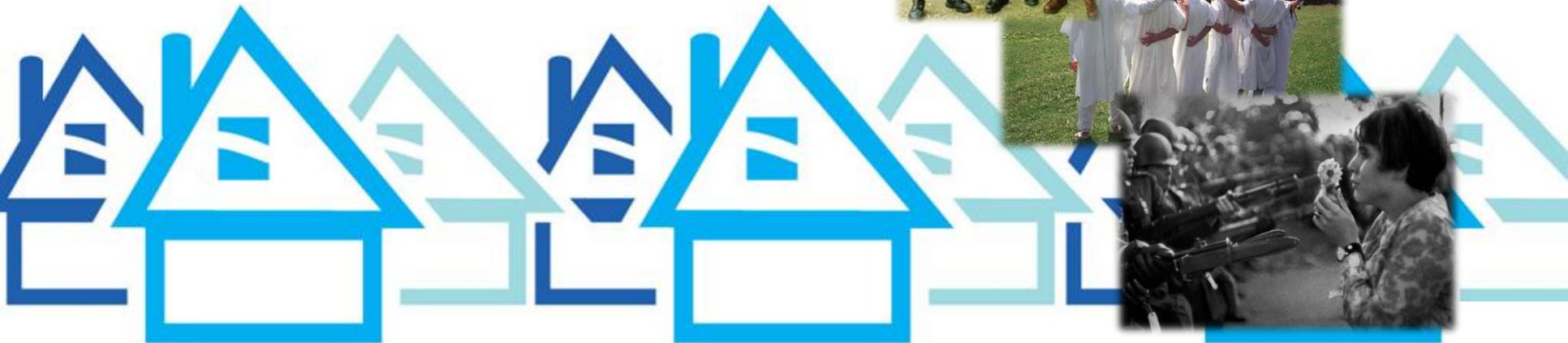
- ...a culture within the dominant culture
  - category of people who share distinguishing attributes, beliefs, values and/or norms that set them apart in some significant manner from the dominant culture
  - **argot**: specialized language that distinguishes a subculture from the wider society





# Cultural Variation: Countercultures

- ...group with norms and values conspicuously and deliberately at odds with the dominant culture
- group that strongly rejects dominant societal values and norms and seeks alternative lifestyles





# US Hippie Counterculture of the 1960s

- **symbols:** peace symbols, colorful clothing, long hair
- **language:** Hippies developed their own terms for drugs (i.e. acid) and had their own expressions such as groovy and far out.
- **values:** equality, peace, love, live life to the fullest, be yourself, be happy, worship of money and power is bad, reject institutional authority, be free.
- **norms:** importance of being authentic, peaceful, and loving ... rejected formal laws that denied personal freedom ... taboo to worship money and the corporate capitalist lifestyle





# US Hippie Counterculture of the 1960s

## mainstream values

- conform to rules
- materialism
- militarism
- strict discipline
- repress sexuality
- obey authority
- social hierarchy
- property development
- future orientation
- drugs are bad

## hippie values

- freedom
- spiritualism
- peaceful passivism
- go with the flow
- celebrate sexuality
- question authority
- equality of all people
- environmentalism
- be in the now
- sex, drugs, Rock and Roll





# Cultural Diversity

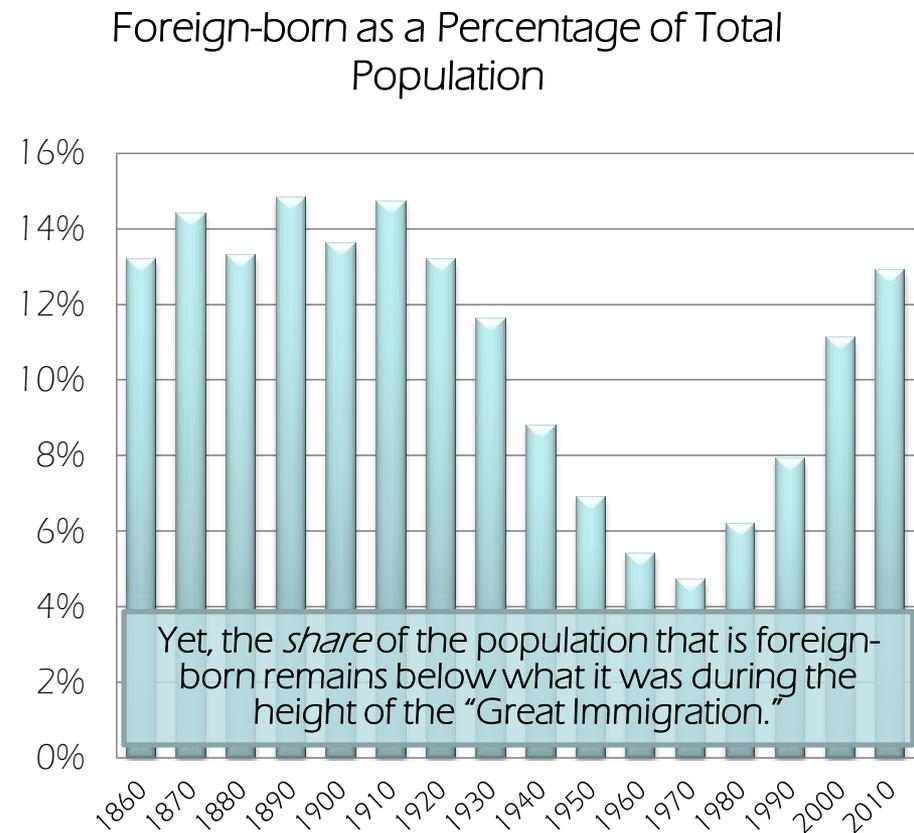
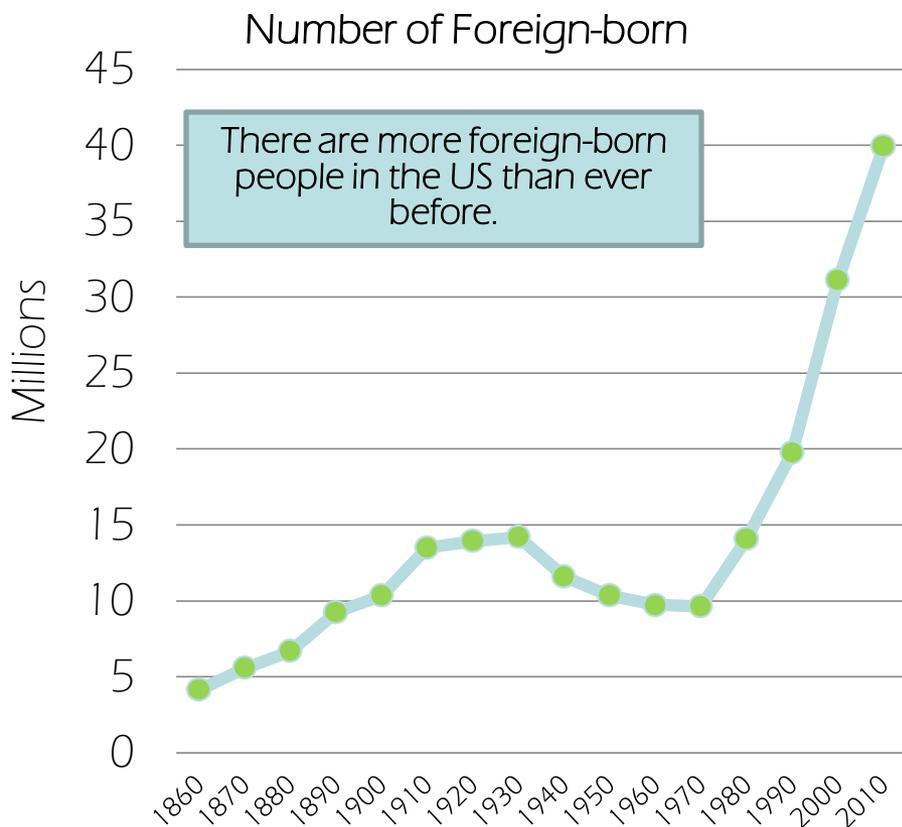
- ...wide range of cultural differences found between and within nations
  - can be a result of natural circumstances (climate, geography) or social circumstances (technology, demographics)
  - Societies can be **homogeneous** (consisting of members of the same culture) or **heterogeneous** (consisting of dissimilar or diverse cultures).
- When societal tensions arise, especially in heterogeneous societies, people look for others on whom they can place blame, singling out persons or groups who are outsiders or who don't belong.





# Cultural Diversity in the US

Many think that there is more diversity in the US today than ever before. These graphs show that cultural diversity has been increasing but remains below what the country experienced between 1860 and 1920.





# Cultural Diversity in the US

- Many Lao Hmong (a US ally) war refugees resettled in the US following the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos during the Vietnam War.
- Thousands of Lao Hmong fled persecution, human rights violations, military attacks, ethnic cleansing and religious freedom violations.
- Several thousand Hmong were granted asylum as official refugees in the US.
- Many Americans do not realize how the Hmong got here, think they are flooding US borders to get welfare benefits, and so have treated them with prejudice and hostility.





# Cultural Diversity in the US

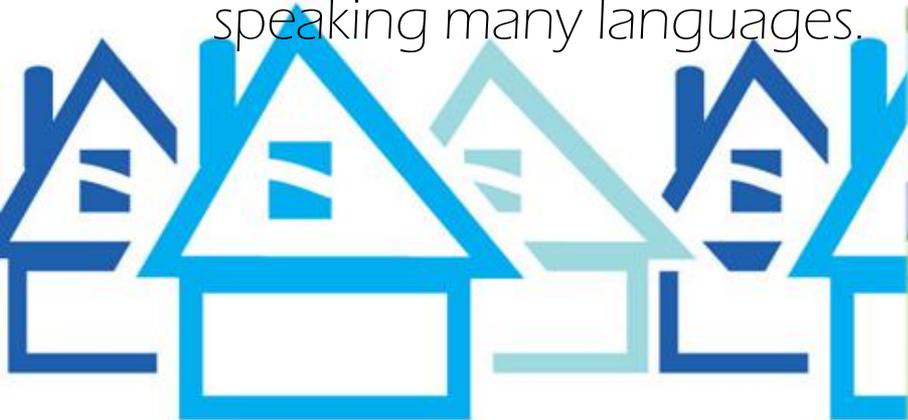
- Among refugees in the US struggle with the culture.
  - The youth have assimilated much of US culture, even at the risk of losing touch with their heritage.
  - For the older generation, adopting the new ways has been painful.
  - The language is a great barrier since many had no schooling or reading skills prior to coming to the US.
  - Simple things like going to a store or walking through town can be terrifying experiences for the elderly.
- In areas with high concentrations of Hmong refugees, cultural clashes have been a particular problem.



# Culture and Social Policy: Bilingualism



- ...use of two or more languages in a particular setting, such as the workplace or school
- A program of bilingual education may instruct children in their native language while gradually introducing them to the language of the host society.
- Languages know no political boundaries.
  - Minority languages are common in many nations.
  - Schools throughout the world must deal with incoming students speaking many languages.



# Culture and Social Policy: Bilingualism



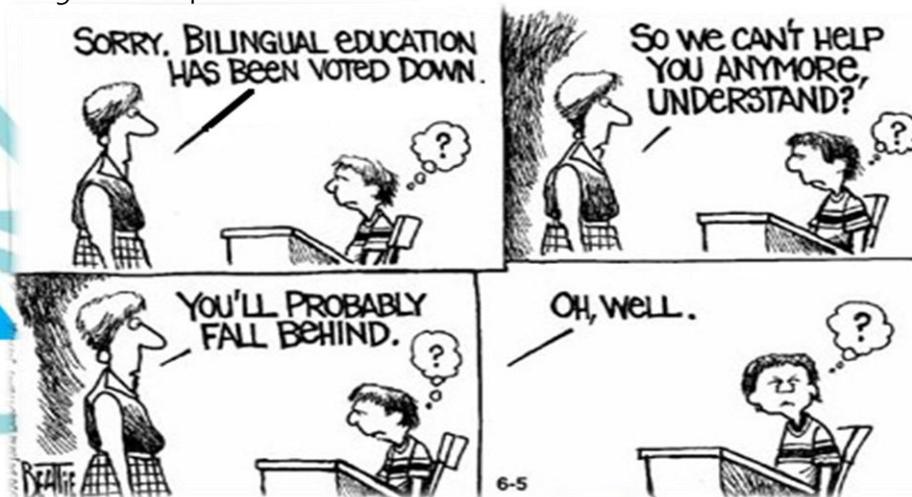
- Nations vary dramatically in their tolerance for a variety of languages.
- In many nations, language dominance is a regional issue.
- Do bilingual programs in the US help these children to learn English?
  - It is difficult to reach firm conclusions because bilingual programs in general vary so widely in their approaches.
  - Policymakers in the US have been somewhat ambivalent in dealing with the issue of bilingualism.





# Culture and Social Policy: Bilingualism

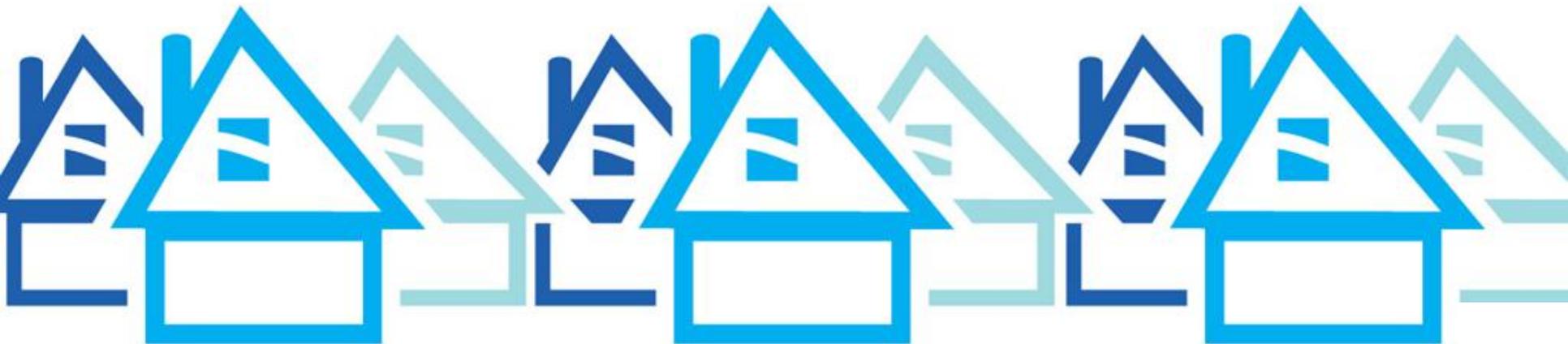
- **sociological insights:** For a long time, people in the US have demanded conformity to a single language.
- coincides with the functionalist view that language serves to unify members of a society
- Recent decades have seen challenges to forced obedience to our dominant ideology.
- Conflict theory helps us understand some attacks on bilingual programs.





# Culture and Social Policy: Bilingualism

- *policy initiatives*: Bilingualism has policy implications largely in two areas.
  - efforts to maintain language purity
  - programs to enhance bilingual education





# What is culture?

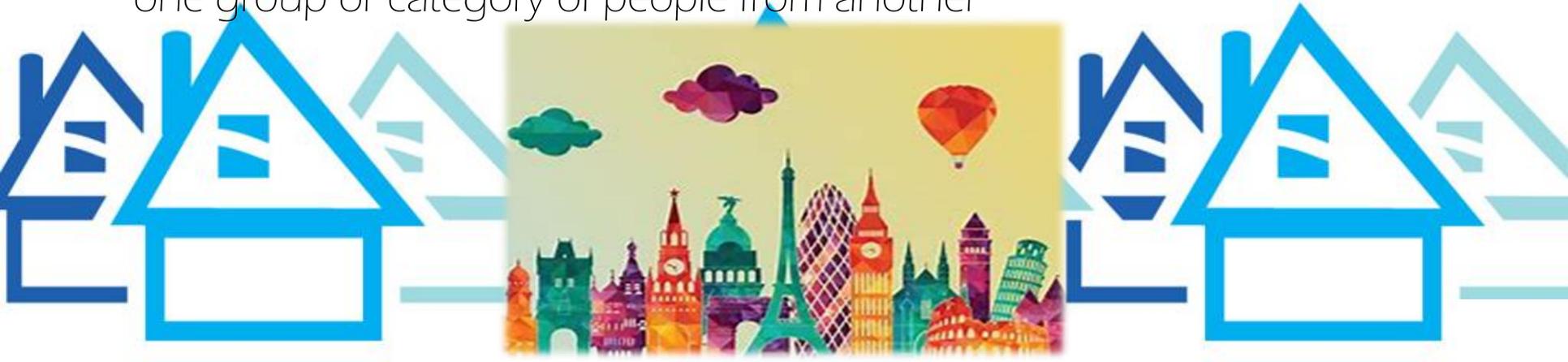
- the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving
- Culture is communication, communication is culture.
- the totality of a person's learned, accumulated experience which is socially transmitted, or more briefly, behavior through social learning
- traditional ideas and especially their attached values





# What is culture?

- patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts
- may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand, as conditioning influences upon further action
- the sum total of the learned behavior of a group of people that is generally considered to be the tradition of that people and is transmitted from generation to generation
- a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another



The End

