

Chapter 3 Project

Purpose

The values, shared beliefs, and practices of a group of people define its culture. Understanding these aspects within the context of different cultures will help you use your sociological imagination to empathize with people whose culture might be different from yours. **The purpose of this assignment is to help you connect the various aspects of culture and better understand how media reflects U.S. culture and society.**

Directions

You will be selecting two different media sources and examining how those sources define and represent the culture they adhere to.

1. Select two sources (television shows or movies) depicting various aspects of a culture (e.g., norms, values, races, and ethnic groups).
2. Define each of the major components of culture.
3. Write an analysis of each media's impact on the culture by:
 - a. Analyzing the sources based on the aspects of culture given in the chapter
 - b. Considering how these elements relate to aspects of the culture
 - c. Considering examples of types of culture (material and nonmaterial) that are present in your sources (e.g., media, cars, values)

Answer the following questions:

- a. How do the components of the culture identified in your sources combine to create a group that is different from or similar to other groups you would expect to see in mainstream American culture?
- b. How might these sources impact their audience?
- c. How do these sources impact you as an individual?
- d. How do these sources impact or influence society?
- e. What aspects of culture overlap in the two sources?

Here are some helpful suggestions to consider while you complete this project:

- Take notes while you are watching your sources and note your observations.
- Write for the uninformed reader. Assume your reader has not seen your sources and did not assign the project.
- Begin by describing the sources you are analyzing. Write a brief summary of each source and its plot.
 - Describe the setting (the time period and place).
 - Describe the relationships in detail (e.g., single person, married, children).
 - Describe the racial/ethnic composition of the source. Analyze its impact. Does it add to or take away from the message/goal? Why or why not?
 - Describe the gender composition of the source. Is it predominately male, female, or nonbinary? Analyze the impact that gender has on the source.
- Your concluding paragraph should sum up your argument clearly and concisely.

Please adhere to the following requirements:

- Your analysis should be three to five pages.
- You should cite your sources using APA citation formatting.

- You should use APA style to format your analysis.
 - You should use 11-point Calibri, Arial, or Georgia or 12-point Times New Roman.
 - Margins should be 1 inch on all sides.
 - All text should be left aligned.
 - You should use double spacing between lines and single spacing between sentences.

Materials

Access to a television/computer and cable or streaming service

Checklist

- ☐ Uses two different media sources
- ☐ Defines the major components of culture
- ☐ Includes a complete analysis
 - Analyzing each source's representation of the different aspects of culture
 - Giving examples of material and nonmaterial representations of culture for each source
 - Answering all given questions
 - How the representation of culture is different or similar to mainstream American culture
 - How each source impacts the audience
 - How each source impacts you
 - How each source influences society
 - How the aspects of culture overlap
- ☐ Three to five pages in length
- ☐ Utilizes APA style and citations



Chapter 3 Writing Assignment

Purpose

You can learn much about a person by asking about their beliefs, values, and practices. They can inform why the person thinks a certain way and give you more empathy for that point of view. **The purpose of this assignment is to help you better understand how culture directly relates to your personal life through conducting a cultural interview.**

Directions

Part 1

First, you will examine the various aspects of culture by answering the following questions:

- Define culture and subculture.
- Describe aspects of material culture. (Define necessary terms used to describe material culture.)
- Describe aspects of nonmaterial culture. (Define necessary terms used to describe nonmaterial culture.)

Part 2

Second, you will conduct a cultural interview with a friend, classmate, or coworker. Have the interviewee answer the following questions:

- What is your race? Ethnicity?
- What is your religion?
- Where were you born?
- How long have you lived in America?
- Is English your first language?
- Are you multilingual? What language do you speak with your family?
- What are your parents' races/ethnicities?
- Are your parents married? Divorced? Did you grow up in a single-parent family?
- What are three of your family values?
- Give three examples of your family's customs, traditions, and holidays.
- What are your parents' occupations?
- What are your parents' highest levels of education?

Part 3

Next, analyze the answers you received and compare and contrast the interviewee's cultural values with your own. How are you similar? How are you different? How do you feel about those differences and similarities?

Part 4

Finally, answer the following questions as you reflect on the impact and effect of culture on your life:

- Why is culture important to you?
- Why is culture important in America?
- How does culture impact everyday life for you?
- How does culture impact daily American life?
- How does culture impact friendships and relationships when the cultures are similar?
- How does culture impact friendships and relationships when the cultures are different?

Record your interview and the answers, and write an essay to address Parts 1, 3, and 4. Your essay should meet the following requirements:

- Your analysis should be three to four pages.
- You should use APA style to format your analysis.
 - You should use 11-point Calibri, Arial, or Georgia or 12-point Times New Roman.
 - Margins should be 1 inch on all sides.
 - All text should be left aligned.
 - You should use double spacing between lines and single spacing between sentences.

Materials

None required

 Checklist**Part 1**

- ☐ Defines culture and subculture
- ☐ Describes material culture
- ☐ Describes nonmaterial culture

Part 2

- ☐ Interview questions and answers are included and completed.

Part 3

- ☐ Includes comparisons between the interviewee's culture and your own
- ☐ Includes contrasts between the interviewee's culture and your own
- ☐ Includes reflection on how similarities and differences make you feel

Part 4

- ☐ Answers all questions:
 - Culture's importance to you
 - Culture's importance in America
 - Culture's impact on everyday life
 - Culture's impact on daily American life
 - Culture's impact on friendships and relationships when cultures are similar
 - Culture's impact on friendships and relationships when cultures are different

Essay Requirements:

- ☐ Three to four pages in length
- ☐ APA style and format
 - 11-point Calibri, Arial, or Georgia or 12-point Times New Roman
 - 1-inch margins
 - All text is left aligned
 - Double spacing between lines
 - Single spacing between sentences