

## **Human nature and Cultural Diversity**

Why as a common species do we differ so much from each other?

### **Evolution and Behavior**

- ☞ Universal behaviors come from our biological similarity

*Natural Selection* – the evolutionary process by which nature selects traits that best enable organisms to survive and reproduce in particular environmental niches

- ☞ has also been used by psychologists today

*Evolutionary Psychology* – the study of the evolution of behavior using principles of natural selection

- ☞ studies psychological traits and social behaviors that enhance the preservation and spread of one's genes

EX: how we choose a mate, our tendency to be social beings, to depend on others for social support, etc...

Some universal characteristics:

- ☞ ranking by authority and status
- ☞ disgust for incest and other sexual relations with our immediate family
- ☞ to live in a community; join groups; to conform
- ☞ religion

Some cultural differences

- ☞ we value kinship and family closeness, interdependence; they value independence
- ☞ some cultures kiss to greet, shake hands, we “mano”
- ☞ westerners treat dogs as family, we look at them as pulutan
- ☞ we eat with our hands, etc...

*Culture* – the enduring behaviors, ideas, attitudes, and traditions shared by a large group of people and transmitted from one generation to the next

- ☞ it determines how we socialize with other people
- ☞ influences our both our attitudes and behavior

### **Cultural Diversity**

- ☞ suggests that behavior is socially programmed, not biologically

How might globalization affect cultural diversity?

*Acculturation* – eclectic; you do not lose your cultural identity

*Enculturation* – becoming absorbed in another's culture

- ☞ a double-edged sword; fuels both hate and acceptance of varying cultures

\*\*\* Myers: since we are bound to eventually socialize with people from different cultural backgrounds, it is IMPORTANT that we understand how culture INFLUENCES us and the ways by which cultures DIFFER

☞ all cultures have an accepted idea about appropriate behavior

*Norms* – rules for accepted and expected behavior

EX: pagkakamay vs fine dining

*Personal Space* – the buffer zone we like to maintain around our bodies. Its size depends on our familiarity with whoever is near us

☞ in unfamiliar situations and with unfamiliar people, the BUFFER ZONE is LARGER compared to familiar situations and people

### **Cultural Similarity**

1. *The friendship rules:*

☞ respect the friend's privacy

☞ make eye contact

☞ do not divulge things said in confidence

2. *People talk to higher-status people respectfully*

☞ Forms of address communicate not only social distance but also social status

3. *Advances in intimacy are often suggested by the higher-status person*

### **Cross-cultural Psychology (Harry Triandis)**

☞ Within each culture, people may exhibit individualist and collectivist behavior (attitudes), which is DEPENDENT on the CONTEXT of the socialization

EX: 911 triggered cooperation among NYers characterized as being strongly individualists

☞ Problem with generalization based on studies conducted using decontextualized methods; SP!

☞ Replications of studies (generalizing results) may not be applicable cross-culturally

☞ Testing culturally biased theories and constructs on other cultures

EX: studies on attitudes in west, whereas norms, duties and obligations are prioritized in the east

☞ Constructs are construed differently in other cultures

EX: discipline, dependence, intelligence, utang ng loob

- ☞ Work with theoretical frameworks that are etic, and find constructs that can be analyzed emic

EX: Hunger as an etic theoretical framework; broken down to what people eat, how they, when, and with who (emic).

- ☞ Replicating means using the same methodologies with different cultures and quantifying to find what is responsible for the variations; more than just triangulation

## SOCIAL ROLES

- ☞ Roles vary from culture to culture

EX: Roles of women in the US vs Phil

- ☞ Roles are often internalized

EX: the heiress, the revolutionary and back to being an heiress

### *High and low status roles*

- ☞ People with a high status RECEIVE TREATMENT paralleled with that position
- ☞ PERCEIVED as having TRAITS that usually correspond to people in that position
- ☞ DEMEANING roles undermine SELF-EFFICACY

### *Role Reversal*

- ☞ Taking on another person's role may help the other better understand

EX: Repeating arguments, statements, sentiments before continuing the conversation will increase mutual understanding

*\*\*\*Myers: the goal of social psychology is not to identify differences but to arrive at a universalistic psychology*

## GENDER SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

- ☞ Has stirred up most of the researches in the hope of understanding why such differences exist

*Gender* – the characteristics by which people define male and female

### **Independence versus Connectedness**

- ☞ Culture dictates how children play

EX: boys play outside of the house (habulan, etc...); girls play inside the house (bahay-bahayan, lutulutuan, etc...)

- ☞ Boys don't cry, girls have to be neat, etc...

### What are some of differences between males and females cited by Myers?

1. Women are interdependent, while men are independent when it comes to play

- (less aggressive)
2. Women are more empathic than men; they are able to sense how others feel better (*Feminine Perspective*)
  3. Women are more emotionally expressive (positive emotions)
  4. Women believe more that it is important to help others in need

There are no known societies wherein women are more dominant?!!! – Musou people in China.

### **Social Dominance**

1. Men and women differ in their conversational style  
*“People will accept a man’s strong, assertive leadership more readily than a woman’s pushy, aggressive leadership” ~ Myers*
  - ☞ Depends largely on the context of the conversation; strong, assertive conversational styles are simply characteristic of higher social statuses, which is DOMINATED by males

**Aggression** – physical or verbal behavior intended to hurt someone

- ☞ Men have a higher rate of being aggressive than women, but when provoked, they respond in roughly the same frequency

### **Sexuality**

- ☞ Men are generally the one’s to initiate sexual relations; they are more likely to be promiscuous, etc...

### **Evolutionary basis for this**

Males

- ☞ Need to spread genes (more sperm)
- ☞ Protect their family and establish dominance among the group (macho image enhanced aggression)
- ☞ Need to be strong, able to fight
- ☞ More concerned with the paternity of their offspring; jealous of physical/sexual infidelity
- ☞ Attracted to wide hips, large breasts (suggests fertility)

Females

- ☞ Need to find the best genes
- ☞ Care and nurture their offspring (empathic capability)

- ☞ Need to be able to bear and nurse offspring
- ☞ More concerned with emotional infidelity (provision of resources)

*Activity: Describe how your ideal partner would be to see whether traditional notions, about how we choose our mate would be applicable to this sample of individuals.*

### **Gender and Hormones**

*Testosterone* – heightened aggressiveness; higher levels for criminals; NFL players and fraternity members (*Estrogen*)

- ☞ Aggressiveness decreases as testosterone levels decrease during adulthood; men have been found to be more empathic and domineering as they grow old
- ☞ Masculinity-femininity trait measures suggest that we tend to be more androgynous as we get older

### **CULTURE AND GENDER**

- ☞ Culture determines how each gender should behave, the attitudes they assume, the traditions they follow

EX: almost all cultures: girls spend more time with household chores, boys with unsupervised play

*Gender Roles* – a set of behavior expectations (norms) for males and females

- ☞ Experiments suggest that both males and females adjust their self-presentation to a more traditional type in the face of a desirable opposite sex
- ☞ Culture constructs our gender roles

### **Gender Roles Vary with Culture**

- ☞ In some cultures, there are more female doctors or dentists, and others vice versa

### **Gender Roles Vary over Time**

- ☞ there has been an increase in women's participation in traditionally male tasks; attitudes change as well
- ☞ not so much the time, but the increasing AWARENESS and ACCEPTANCE of gender equality over the past few decades

### **Peer-transmitted Culture**

- ☞ Peers, immediate surrounding most greatly influences
- ☞ *“Children get their cues from slightly older children, who get their cues from older youth, who take theirs from young adults in the parents' generation”*

### **Biology and Culture**

☞ *“What our biological heritage initiates, culture may accentuate”*

*Coevolution*

**Great Lessons of Social Psychology**

1. social situations affect different people differently
2. people choose their situations
3. people create their situations