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Chapter 2 Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. _____ is the anthropological theory of culture that argues that cultures evolve from simple to complex by harnessing nature's energy through technology and the influence of particular culture-specific processes.
    a. Structural-functionalism
    b. Neo-evolutionism*
    c. Cognitive anthropology
    d. Social evolutionism

2. _____ was responsible for the theory of functionalism.
    a. Franz Boas
    b. E. B. Tylor
    c. Bronislaw Malinowski*
    d. Alfred Kroeber

3. The theory of culture that proposes that cultural practices, beliefs, and institutions fulfill the psychological and physical needs of society is called
    a. historical particularism.
    b. social evolution.
    c. functionalism.*
    d. cultural materialism.

4. Two aspects of E.B. Tylor's definition of culture have been especially influential to modern anthropologists. The first is that culture is acquired. What is the second?
    a. Culture is always changing.
    b. Culture can be discovered through quantitative analysis.
    c. Culture is inherently linked to climate.
    d. Culture is a complex whole.*

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5. Culture is
    a. learned and shared.*
    b. a product of biology.
    c. a product of individual psychology.
    d. something you get when you go to the opera.

6. Ethnocentrism
    a. is part of being a good anthropologist.
    b. means you think your culture is superior to others.*
    c. is a rare feature of culture.
    d. is the idea that all human actions are the products of culture.

7. _____ was responsible for the theory of social evolutionism.
    a. Marvin Harris
    b. Franz Boas
    c. E. B. Tylor*
    d. Bronislaw Malinowski

8. The process of learning culture from a very young age is called
    a. enculturation.*
    b. ethnocentrism.
    c. symbolism.
    d. acculturation.

9. Which of the following is not an example of enculturation?
    a. Learning to chew with your mouth closed
    b. Learning to wait your turn when checking out at a store
    c. Learning to recognize the sound of a fire alarm in case of emergency
    d. Learning to do a back handspring to show off to a group of friends*

10. The most enduring and ritualized aspects of culture are referred to as

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a. values.
b. norms.
c. traditions.*
d. symbols.

11. Which is not true of the textbook authors' definition of culture?
    a. Culture is dynamic.
    b. Culture is integrated with daily experience.
    c. Culture is shared.
    d. Culture is obvious.*

12. Why are values considered to be conservative?
    a. They conserve prevailing ideas about social relations and morality.*
    b. They remain stable even as other cultural forces change.
    c. They only represent a small portion of a society or community.
    d. They are only defined by conservative members of society.

13. A symbol
    a. has no basis of influencing human behavior.
    b. is something that conventionally stands for something else.*
    c. has a very limited period of cultural salience.
    d. is the idea that people collectively build meanings through collective negotiation.

14. The perspective that aims to identify and understand cultures in their entirety is called
    a. holism.*
    b. structural.
    c. symbolic.
    d. ethnocentrism.

15. Examples of social institutions are

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a. kinship, marriage, and farming.*
b. numbers and the alphabet.
c. texts, books, and archival materials.
d. material artifacts.

16. The defining feature of historical particularism is
    a. all societies pass through stages from primitive to complex.
    b. individual societies develop particular cultural traits and undergo a unique process of change.*
    c. cultural differences are the result of different evolutionary stages.
    d. the material world shapes people's customs and beliefs.

17. The main idea behind the holistic perspective is to study culture
    a. by its individual parts.
    b. through systematic connections of different parts.
    c. as integrated and balanced.*
    d. via symbols alone.

18. The structuralist approach to culture theorizes
    a. people make sense of the world through binary oppositions (i.e., raw/cooked).*
    b. cultures evolve over time.
    c. culture is systematic, operating in a balanced fashion to keep society functioning smoothly.
    d. individual societies develop individual traits.

19. The idea that embraces dynamic cultural processes and the idea that the observer of cultural processes can never see culture completely objectively represents
    a. interpretive anthropology.
    b. neo-evolutionism.
    c. poststructuralism.*
    d. historical particularism.

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20. If an anthropologist analyzes a society's use of religious practices as a way to keep societies together the anthropologist would be using which theoretical approach?
    a. Structuralism
    b. Functionalism*
    c. Historical particularism
    d. Social evolution

21. When anthropologists analyze the subordination of women in society as a result of thinking that men are "good" and women are "bad," they are using which approach?
    a. Functionalism
    b. Structuralism*
    c. Interpretivist
    d. Historical particularism

22. A reaction or measure to intended to enforce norms and punish their violation is a
    a. value judgement.
    b. interpretive response.
    c. social sanction.
    d. function of stratification.

23. Social institutions are
    a. the most enduring and ritualized aspects of culture.
    b. organized sets of social relationships that link individuals to each other in structured ways.*
    c. typical patterns of behavior viewed as rules of how things should be done.
    d. symbolic expressions of intrinsically desirable principles of qualities.

24. Interpretive anthropology argues that culture
    a. is a shared system of meaning and people make sense of their worlds through the use of symbols and symbolic activities like myth and ritual.*

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b. is unknowable and invisible. The role of anthropology is to tell people's stories to give reason to a chaotic world.
c. operates though mental models and logical systems.
d. can only be understood through language and interpretation.

25. According to Clifford Geertz's famous example of culture as a symbolic system, a _____ is a cultural symbol.
a. wink*
b. twitch
c. blink
d. shake

26. Because our values and beliefs include many elements of life such as clothes, food, and language means that culture is
a. static.
b. integrated.*
c. a system.
d. symbolic.

27. Anthropologists overcome ethnocentrism by
a. developing theories to explain human action.
b. studying a culture’s customs.
c. defending whatever another culture does.
d. seeing matters from the point of view of another culture.*

28. Cultural determinism is unproductive for cultural analysis because it
a. denies the influence of factors like physical environment and biology on humans.*
b. denies the history of social atrocities.
c. explains that human action is the product of biology alone.

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d. Is commonly used as a guiding framework by contemporary cultural anthropologists.

29. Norms are stable because
    a. culture doesn't change.
    b. people learn them when they are older.
    c. people learn them when they are young.*
    d. they are the same in every culture.

30. When anthropologists talk about cultural constructions, they are referring to the
    a. process of meaning building though common experience and negotiation.*
    b. random associations attached to certain physical objects.
    c. central role of architecture in community building.
    d. demolition of important historical markers to make way for popular entertainment and cultural centers.

31. The controversy between Native Americans and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) schools using mascots illustrates
    a. the scientific method.
    b. historical particularism.
    c. the power of tradition.*
    d. cultural determinism.

32. "Owning" culture
    a. means controlling symbols that give meaning.*
    b. happens inevitably over time.
    c. makes it better.
    d. is a naturally occurring process as a result of globalization.

33. When Kay Warren presented her anthropological research, a group of Maya intellectuals, activists, and political leaders

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a. were there cheering her on.
b. challenged her right to study the Maya culture as a foreign anthropologist.*
c. collaborated with Warren.
d. co-published the paper.

34. Which of the following is *not* a social consequence of introducing coffee into the highlands of Papua New Guinea?
    a. Young men gained social status.
    b. The spread of coffee plantations halted.
    c. People had less access to commodities.
    d. Starbucks cafes sprung up across the highlands.*

35. The application of a holistic perspective to understand changes in everyday practices, such as eating breakfast cereals, reveals the
    a. interconnections between different domains of a society.*
    b. processes of cultural appropriation.
    c. relativity of culture.
    d. creation of cultural constructions.

36. The idea that Ongee ancestors make tidal waves and earthquakes would be understood by an interpretive anthropologist as a(n)
    a. reflection of underlying binary structures of thought.
    b. adaptive response to nature's dynamics.
    c. psychological disturbance.
    d. way of explaining how the world works.*

37. If you wanted to understand the norms of a society, you would be *most* likely to focus on
    a. ceremonialized aspects of a society.
    b. everyday interactions.*
    c. the symbolic use of the body.

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d. the principles and values people hold dear.

38. When one social group makes a unilateral decision to take control over the symbols, practices, and or objects of another, they are engaging in what phenomenon?
    a. cultural relativism
    b. inventing tradition
    c. holism
    d. cultural appropriation

39. How would a critical relativist explain Native American criticisms of cultural appropriation?
    a. They are baseless complaints; cultural appropriation is as old as humanity itself.
    b. Cultural appropriation is a positive process of change for any society.
    c. It is important to understand Native American claims from their point of view.*
    d. It is in their culture to criticize dominant settler society.

40. What policy shaped museums' handling of sacred indigenous artifacts and displaying objects without the permission of tribal leaders?
    a. The Structuralism Act
    b. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act*
    c. Symbolic Values Act
    d. Cultural Appropriation Law

True/False

1. Culture is uniquely human.
    a. True*
    b. False

2. The American anthropologist responsible for the concept of historical particularism is named Franz Boas.

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a. True*
b. False

3. Anthropologists generally believe in one unified theory of culture.
    a. True
    b. False*

4. All humans are born with some culture.
    a. True
    b. False*

5. Activities that are biologically based, such as eating and sleeping, are universally practiced in the same way for all humans.
    a. True
    b. False*

6. Culture cannot be transmitted implicitly.
    a. True
    b. False*

7. Cultural relativism is important because it helps anthropologists understand and defend all the things that people in other cultures do.
    a. True
    b. False*

8. Culture consists of the collective processes that make the artificial seem natural.
    a. True*
    b. False

9. People rarely hold conflicting values.
    a. True

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b. False*

10. Cultural appropriation involves relationships of power.
    a. True*
    b. False

11. Collective definitions of proper and improper behavior “built” meanings through common experiences, and negotiations are cultural constructions.
    a. True*
    b. False

12. The experience of feeling that the way your culture does things is the right way and any different way of doing things is wrong is called cultural relativism.
    a. True
    b. False*

13. The idea that cultures pass through stages from primitive to complex is known as social evolution.
    a. True*
    b. False

14. Anthropologists believe that a comparative approach, analyzing human societies’ phenomena by comparing the phenomena with different societies, is necessary to appreciate how artificial our beliefs and actions are.
    a. True*
    b. False

15. The theory that posits that cultural practices and beliefs serve purposes for society is called natural selection.
    a. True

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b. False*

Short Answer

1. Describe the controversy regarding intercollegiate sports mascot names and American Indian groups. How does this impact your view of mascots and culture?
2. Describe three elements of culture and how they interact to provide a snapshot of humanity.
3. What does it mean to say that "culture is learned?" Provide three examples of your culture that you recall learning, and the context around these moments.
4. Describe what is meant when the authors say that cultures are dynamic and always adapting and changing. Provide three examples from contemporary culture to illustrate this element of culture.
5. Explain how a focus on values can help us understand why people around the world love their countries.
6. What is a cultural construction? Share three cultural constructions from your culture and the process by which they illustrate the concept.
7. Explain how culture is defined in this book and the meaning conveyed in this definition.
8. What is the role of symbols in our everyday lives? Give an example of an important symbol, and discuss how and why it creates meaning.
9. How might a critical relativist study a political protest?
10. Thinking holistically, what would you study if you wanted to understand the introduction of the cell phone into a community?

Short Answer Key

1. Describe the controversy regarding intercollegiate sports mascot names and American Indian groups. How does this impact your view of mascots and culture?
    a. Culture: Giving Meaning to Human Lives
    b. "In 2005, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the body that governs intercollegiate sports in the United States, banned teams with -American

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Indian names and mascots from competing in its postseason tournaments. Clarifying the ruling, an official stated, "Colleges and universities may adopt any mascot that they wish. . . . But as a national association, we believe that mascots, nicknames, or images deemed hostile or abusive in terms of race, ethnicity or national origin should not be visible at the championship events that we control" (NCAA 2005). The ruling affected a number of schools with competitive sports programs, including Florida State ("Seminoles"), University of North Dakota ("Fighting Sioux"), and University of Illinois ("Fighting Illini").

c. The ruling concluded decades of pressure from American Indians, students, and others who have argued that these mascots stereotype and denigrate Indian traditions. As one Oneida woman expressed, "We experience it as no less than a mockery of our cultures. We see objects sacred to us—such as the drum, eagle feathers, face painting, and traditional dress—being used, not in sacred ceremony, or in any cultural setting, but in another culture's game" (Munson 1999:14). To Indians, the mascots seem to be just another attack on Indian cultures by non-Indians—attacks they have endured for several centuries."

2. Describe three elements of culture and how they interact to provide a snapshot of humanity.
    a. What Is Culture?
    b. "Since Tylor's time, anthropologists have developed many theories of culture, the most prominent of which are summarized in Table 2.1. We discuss many of these theories in later chapters, exploring in more detail how they have changed over time. One of the most important changes in cultural theory is that early anthropologists tended to see cultures in societies with simple technologies as more fixed and stable than anyone does today. Nevertheless, across all these theories, there are seven basic elements that anthropologists agree are critical to any theory of culture."
        i. Culture is learned
        ii. Culture uses symbols

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iii. Cultures Are Dynamic, Always Adapting and Changing
iv. Culture Is Integrated with Daily Experience
v. Culture Shapes Everybody's Life
vi. Culture Is Shared
vii. Cultural Understanding Involves Overcoming Ethnocentrism

3. What does it mean to say that "culture is learned?" Provide three examples of your culture that you recall learning, and the context around these moments.
    a. What Is Culture?
    b. "Enculturation happens both explicitly and implicitly. Your student experience illustrates how both processes have shaped you. Throughout your schooling, your teachers have explicitly taught you many things you need to know to be a productive member of society: to write, to analyze a text, to do mathematics, and so on (Figure 2.1). But you have also learned many other things that are more implicit, or not clearly expressed. These lessons include obedience to authority and respect for social hierarchy, learned for example from sitting in class facing forward in rows so the teacher can control your attention and movement. Bells and announcements over the loudspeakers also regulate your activities and the flow of your day. By the time you reach college, these patterns are so ingrained that you know more or less exactly what to do when you walk into the classroom without thinking about it. Enculturation hasn't stopped, though: it continues throughout your life. You might notice that you are also involved in enculturation, explicit and implicit, as a student at your college, as you learn its specific traditions and develop loyalty to certain mascots and other school symbols."

4. Describe what is meant when the authors say that cultures are dynamic and always adapting and changing. Provide three examples from contemporary culture to illustrate this element of culture.
    a. What Is Culture?

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b. “In a globalized world with high levels of migration across cultural borders, communication flowing in all directions, and social and ethnic mixing, it is often impossible to say with any certainty where one culture or social group ends and another begins. As a result, many anthropologists today talk less about culture as a totally coherent and static system of meaning and more about the processes through which social meanings are constructed and shared.
c. Culture is a dynamic process. It is adaptive, helping people adjust to the changing worlds in which they live. At the same time, social groups are not uniform or homogeneous, because not everybody interprets the events of everyday life in the same way, nor do they blindly act out scripts already laid out for them to perform. So cultural processes are emergent, fluid, and marked by creativity, uncertainty, differing individual meaning, and social conflict. Relations of power and inequality routinely permeate these cultural processes.”

5. Explain how a focus on values can help us understand why people around the world love their countries.
    a. If Culture Is Always Changing, Why Does It Feel So Stable?
    b. “Studying values also helps us to understand how change and stability are so closely related. Values are symbolic expressions of intrinsically desirable principles or qualities. They refer to that which is moral and true for a particular group of people. For example, “Mom and apple pie” symbolize American core values (values that express the most basic qualities central to a culture), such as patriotism or loyalty to country. In the United States, “Mom” expresses the purity of selfless sacrifice for the greater good. “Apple pie,” a common food since colonial times, expresses Americans’ shared heritage. Of course, not everybody eats apple pie and not every mother is loyal to her family, much less sacrifices herself for the greater good. The point is not that these ideals reflect what actually happens in the real world. Rather, they orient thinking about one’s obligations as a citizen, like putting aside differences with other -Americans and being willing to sacrifice oneself for love of family and country.”

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6. What is a cultural construction? Share three cultural constructions from your culture and the process by which they illustrate the concept.
    a. What Is Culture?
    b. “An individual’s comprehension of anything is always based on what his or her group deems collectively as proper and improper. Anthropologists commonly refer to such definitions as cultural constructions, which refers to the fact that people collectively “build” meanings through common experience and negotiation. In the debate over college mascots, for example, both sides collectively “constructed” the significance of these images and symbols for both Indians and colleges through their debates, protests, and discussions. A “construction” derives from past collective experiences in a community, as well as people talking about, thinking about, and acting in response to a common set of goals and problems.”

7. Explain how culture is defined in this book and the meaning conveyed in this definition.
    a. What Is Culture?
    b. “Although all anthropologists agree that these seven elements of culture are critical to any definition, in their research different anthropologists emphasize or interpret these elements differently, which contributes to the diversity of culture theories expressed in Table 2.1. So while we, too, accept the importance of these key elements to any definition, we do approach culture throughout this book in a particular way. Building on the more general definition provided in Chapter 1, we define culture as those collective processes through which people in social groups construct and naturalize certain meanings and actions as normal and even necessary. In whatever manner any group of people does something, their way seems like the only sensible and obvious way to people in that community—it seems natural, obvious, and appropriate—even though other people might only scratch their heads, perplexed. No matter how much our culture changes during our lifetimes, our reactions to the people and things around us always seem normal or natural.”

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8. What is the role of symbols in our everyday lives? Give an example of an important symbol, and discuss how and why it creates meaning.
    a. If Culture Is Always Changing, Why Does It Feel So Stable?
    b. “One way of approaching the issue of cultural stability and change is by examining symbols (Sahlins 1999). A symbol, as we have already noted, is something that conventionally stands for something else. The relationship between the symbol and what it refers to is arbitrary, based on no particular rhyme or reason (Figure 2.4). Symbols can be more than just images or concepts, however; people also use their bodies as symbols. In Japan, for example, bowing is a form of greeting, but depending on how low one bows, it may also symbolize respect, apology, gratitude, sincerity, remorse, superiority, or humility.”

9. How might a critical relativist study a political protest?
    a. What Is Culture?
    b. “A number of anthropologists, in fact, advocate critical relativism, or taking a stance on a practice or belief only after trying to understand it in its cultural and historical context. Critical relativism also holds that no group of people is homogeneous, so it is impossible to judge an entire culture based on the actions or beliefs of a few (Merry 2003). For example, many North Americans practice male circumcision, which other societies consider abhorrent, including people in the German city of Cologne, who banned circumcision in 2012 as a human rights abuse. There is even a small but growing social movement in the United States that condemns the practice along similar lines. But to criticize this practice is not to condemn the entire culture.”

10. Thinking holistically, what would you study if you wanted to understand the introduction of the cell phone into a community?
    a. How Do Social Institutions Express Culture?
    b. “In spite of its shortcomings, functionalism has left us an important legacy: the -holistic perspective, a perspective that aims to identify and understand the

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whole—that is, the systematic connections between individual cultural beliefs, practices, and social institutions—rather than the individual parts. This does not mean that contemporary anthropologists still see a society as wholly integrated and balanced. Rather, the holistic perspective is a methodological tool that helps show the interrelationships among different domains of a society—domains that include environmental context, history, social and political organization, economics, values, and spiritual life. Thus, the life of a community becomes expressed through the social relationships among its members, organized as they are through their social institutions. To understand how changes in cultural values can lead to changes in social institutions, consider the relationship between diet, industrialization, and sexual deviance in America."

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