

# The Cultural Perspective

## I. Explain Difference Between Physical and Cultural Geography.

- A. Physical = 1st part of course sets the stage.
- B. Cultural Geography = the play or manipulation of environment. All based upon cultural values of the group.

## II. Define Culture

- A. Learned behavior - you are not born with it.
- B. Culture has no written rules.
- C. Society is the rules established by the group based upon cultural values
- D. Laws are formal rules of a free society, based on cultural values.
- E. Culture is Relative - concepts of good and bad change from one culture to another that's why foreign aid fails. What is good for us may not be good for someone else. No absolute values for all people. Conformity within the group is necessary in most cultures.
- F. Culture is the key to understanding why people behave as they do. If you understand a culture, you can go a long way toward predicting a group's behavior. - Although not necessarily a single person's behavior. Russia has a strong fear of being surrounded and the problems associated with the arms race is a result.
- G. Cultural Landscape - the interaction between people and their environment.
- H. Cultural History - Cultural Landscape through time. esp. if different cultures are present at different times. i.e. Calif. example : Indians, Spanish, Mexican (mixture of indians and spanish), Americans.
- I. Cultural Ecology - Specific processes of man changing the environment for a special result - i.e. dams and reservoirs, or land tenure.
- J. Common Cultural Values -
  - 1. Consciousness of self and others.
  - 2. Recognition of similarities and differences between groups of people.
  - 3. Recognition of a Superior Being - God
  - 4. Rules for dealing with problems of life. - i.e. crisis, rites of passage, death, birth, puberty.
  - 5. Universal taboo - Incest
  - 6. Love (usually all three types: brotherly, sexual, family)
  - 7. Primitive sense of place - territoriality, physical direction and distance, location, curiosity of place (exploration)
  - 8. Identification of life and activity = property holding, job, place within the group.

## III. A State vs. A Nation

- A. Nation = a group of people having common cultural values.
- B. State = a political boundary which may contain more than one culture. i.e. Former Yugoslavia was made up of many; Croations, Serbians, etc.
- C. Many of the wars are fought over which culture will dominate a state. i.e. Lebanon (Christian vs. Moslems)
- D. A culture which recognizes no homeland = Gypsy Nation  
All other cultures (nations) can point to an area of the earth and say that that is where their nation's homeland is located.
  - 1. Many states contain more than one nation.
  - 2. Many nations have no state ( i.e. political boundaries )
- E. Difference between History and Geography - both take a comprehensive view of mankind and the earth, one stressing time bounds and the other place bounds.
- F. "Man apart from environment is an abstraction; in reality, no such thing could exist". - Dasmann

**END**

