1. Cultural Change

**Culture**

**Cultural Change:** A *change* in the whole, learned, and shared *behavioral system* of a group of people

*Any change*
- Cultural content
  - *Addition or deletion (extinction)*
  - Or a shift in *emphasis*
- In any *direction* - rich and poor
- To any *degree*
- At any *rate*

Cultures change *continuously*
- Change is the: **Rule**

**Culture is an?**
- **System**
  - Change involves a whole *system*
  - A change in one area is stimulated by changes in other areas
  - And a change in one area stimulates changes in other areas, etc.
  - ! The basic *process* of adaptation? *Reorganization of the system*
  - A dynamic cycle in the total *configuration* of culture
  - As one element is altered others are brought into *balance*
  - A continual process of *equilibrium*
  - ! It is a *system* that changes - not just traits

**Cultures are?**
- All cultures change over time and space
- Relative emphasis in *continuity and changes*
- Different balances as *starting point*

Cultural change is a *comprehensive* and *complex* phenomenon
- Calls for comprehensive understandings of complex *systems*
- Any theory has to explain all facets of a phenomenon
  - What changes and what does *not* change
  - *How* change works
  - ! It's not just traits that change, but?
2. Models of Change

Examine major ideas about social change
Help us understand change - be constructively involved in social changes
Help us spot and control misunderstandings about change

(1) CULTURAL EVOLUTION

_Cultural Evolution:_ Societies progress through stages of cultural development

Mid-1800s, early anthropologists (Morgan, Tyler)

_Context of ideas?_

- Ideas about biological evolution (not Darwin _per se_)
- Colonialism
  - Western societies dominant over other societies around the world with different cultures
  - Exploitation of colonies for own development
- Industrialization
  - Technology, fueled by colonial resources, rapid changes

_Stages:_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civilized</th>
<th>Savage</th>
<th>Primitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Various schemes</td>
<td>Descriptive list of traits for each stage</td>
<td>Unilinear &quot;progress&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Contributions to understanding change?_

- Very little
- Cultures _do_ change

_Limitations?_

- Unilinear
  - Adaptation is a dynamic and _complex_ process, not linear

_Ethnocentric_

- Main criteria?
  - Technology
  - Assumption about linear time
  - Justification for colonialism

- No explanation of _how_ and _why_ changes occur

_Popular concept today_

- A carryover of 150 years, very out of date
- Words can’t use in class?

_Similar ideas around:_

- _Modernization_, _industrializing_ nations, _underdeveloped_ countries, _Third World_, etc.
- Same basic limitations as linear cultural evolution
- Our ways are the standard

_BE WARY_

- These perceptions do _not_ lead to grounded understandings, and are essentially _ethnocentric_
(2) SOCIAL CONFLICT

Social Conflict: Changes resulting from a dialectic process of conflict and reorganization

Mid-1800s, main figures?

Every society has internal inconsistencies
There is never a perfect homeostasis
Imbalance stimulates reactive changes to restore equilibrium
A particular trait stimulates a reaction (thesis → antithesis)
Two forces produce a new merged trait (synthesis)
The direction of change is towards the reactive pole
"The squeaky wheel gets the grease" perspective

Marx focussed on class and material property/production/technology
Narrow perspective of where changes occur
Not borne out by history
But has been predictive in terms of the sources that initiate change
Internal imbalance in the system
And the process of change: reorganization of the system
Opposition produces a shift in the balance of a society

Contributions to understanding change?
● Sources of change
  Internal imbalances
● Process of change
  Reorganization of the system (synthesis)

Limitations?
● Focus only on economics and class
(3) ACCULTURATION

Acculturation: Changes that occur when two cultures are in contact

A dominant concept in contemporary times
   Anthropology and other disciplines (medicine, etc.)
   Development programs

Impacts of donor/dominant group on the culture of recipient group:
   Replacement
   Compartmentalization
   Incorporation
   Syncretism/synthesis/reorganization

Actual misusage emphasizes the stimulus of Western technology
  ● One-way changes: Dominant Western traits passed to subordinate group
  Contributions of non-Western cultures not usually considered
  Little analysis of external stimuli from dominant Western cultures
  ● Trait-replacement: A single Western trait replaced "traditional" trait
  All impacts of trait not normally considered

Look carefully at usage

Contributions to understanding change?
  ● Sources of change
    Introduction of external stimuli
  ● Process of change
    Reorganization of the system (syncretism)

Limitations?
  ● Common misperception of one-way transfer of traits
  ● Common misperception of trait-replacement
SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social Movements: A purposeful mass effort by a group to change its culture to a more satisfactory form

Dramatic examples of change
Anthropology has mostly examined as religious movements
Sociology, political science, and social psychology have also studied social and political changes

Types of social movements:
- **Reform**: Achieve the benefits of the larger society for a particular group
- **Revolutionary**: Replace the existing social order with another one
  Most revolutionary movements arise from frustrated reform movements

Stages:
- Cultural homeostasis
- Distortions
  Internal disruptions and/or external pressures
- Innovation
  Charismatic leader
  Conception of "problem"
  Vision of "solution"
- Expansion
  Spread and mass acceptance of new vision
- Reformation
- Cultural reorganization
- Cultural adaptation
  Adjustments to achieve internal and external balances
- New homeostasis

Key Concepts:
- **Sources**
  - Relative deprivation: A rapid increase in the gap between the ideal and the real
  - Cultural distortion from internal and/or external pressures
- **Ideology** (frame alignment)
  What explains the problem also defines the solution
- **Leadership**
  - Charismatic mass appeal
  - Power status
- **Organization**
  - Translate ideals into action, coordinate mass efforts
  - Movement organizations, internal constituency
- **Resource mobilization**
  - External supporters/allies

Ideas about social movements are useful in understanding cultural change in general

Contributions to understanding change?
- **Sources** of change
  - Internal distortions (relative deprivation)
  - External pressures
- **Process** of change
  - Reorganization of the system (syncretism)

Limitations?
(5) CULTURAL ADAPTATION

Adaptation?

Cultural Adaptation: The systems process in how a group’s behavioral potentials interacts with its environmental challenges which enhances its survival and continuation.

A perspective of culture as an evolutionary and dynamic system
Culture?
   Systems change: the reorganization of components of a social system
Related to cultural ecology models
   But emphasis is on change rather than maintenance of homeostasis

Unit of analysis: The group level
At the individual level, we will use the term “adjustment” (similar process)

Model of Cultural Adaptation:
Forces in Cultural Adaptation
   ● Behavioral Potentials
      Needs and resources
      Innate/fixed to developed/plastic
      Criteria for innate/developed?
      Repertoire of behavioral alternatives
      Diversity is?
      Internal coherence
   ● Environmental Challenges
      Constraints and opportunities
      Selection among behavioral alternatives

Process of Cultural Adaptation?
Interactive forces that direct changes
The system is shaped
   Selection of most effective traits from among potentials
   Best fit with environmental challenges
   Nature and nurture
Reorganization of the system
A new pattern that provides the optimal balance of interaction between internal and external forces
Measure of Adaptation?
Ultimate: Survival and continuation of the group as social unit
Intermediate measures also used
  Optimal functioning of the group which contributes to continuation

Goal of changes?
Better adaptation
Optimal population-environment equilibrium
Not a specific trait or direction

Time
Designation of time frames is important
Adaptation can reverse/alter over different time frames as potentials and challenges change

Summary Principles of Cultural Adaptation
• Internal forces?
• External forces?
• Process?
• Measure?
• Time frame?

Change itself is neither positive or negative
What is important is the context of change
  The balance between challenges and resources
What is adaptive for the continuation of the group?
  Sometimes not changing a trait can be adaptive
  Congruence of traditions with new challenges
3. Applied Change

a. Applied Change

*Applied Change:* Purposeful and organized efforts to alter a society's structure and behavior (culture)

b. Models of Applied Change

NOTE: Terms and specific models vary widely

(1) POLICY SCIENCE

*Policy Science:* The study of decision processes and implementation, and contribution of expert knowledge to this process

“Standard” type of academic applied involvement

Roles:
- Policy research
- Program evaluation
- Consultation
- Expert witness

Academic basis
Expert knowledge based on research

Policy is basically a *political* process (not scholarship)
Most policies based on vested interests and extreme cases

(2) SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Socioeconomic Development:* The planning and implementation of programs to improve economic and social conditions of a group

Roles:
- Administration of grants, specialty services, etc.
- Advising and consulting in planning and implementation
- Direct agent of change
(3) COMMUNITY ACTION

*Community Action:* The participation in the achievement of the community group’s own goals

Roles: Supporter/facilitator of the community’s goals
(as long as ethically agree with the change goals/means)
- Action research
  Planning/evaluation data for specific action
- Advocacy
  Pleading the case of a community "client" group
- Resource mobilization
  To support goals of a community group
Can be yourself

Principle of **self-determination**

There are many variations and overlaps in most applied projects
c. **Ethics in Applied Change**

Those who try to make change happen have an *ethical* responsibility.

Changes will impact upon people’s lives.

- **Professional Standards**
  Concepts, methods, and skills
  Understand the process of change

- **Recognize and control for ethnocentrism**
  How are we a part of imposing outside values on them?
  Review standards of **human rights**
  Principle of *self-determination*

- **Assessment of goals and methods**
  We must ethically agree with the change goals and methods
  Whose interests are being served?
  Who benefits?
  Who bears the costs (economic/social)?

- **Assess possible impacts**
  Assess the whole system
  Meanings?
  **Functions**?
  How will the community be affected?
  Who benefits?
  Who bears the costs (economic/social)?
  What are the adaptive outcomes?

- **Accountability**
  Who will be responsible for the outcomes?
  Positive or negative?
  To whom are we RESPONSIBLE?
  Select carefully who we work with
  Ideals? (what want to achieve)
  Effective? (proven abilities)
6. Principles of Sociocultural Change

- Change is the **Rule**
  Culture is a holistic, integrated, and *dynamic* system
  Should be expected - not something to be avoided
  Should not be surprised that unforeseen/unwanted changes

- It is not just traits that change, but the **system**
  Changes in one part of a system affect other parts of the system directly or indirectly
  Changes occur in the *configuration* of a cultural system
    - The *interaction* between a culture and its environment

- The **sources** of change include:
  - *Internal inconsistencies* within the system
  - New *external challenges*

- The **forces** that influence the *direction*, *rate*, and *degree* of change are:
  - A group's internal *potentials* that are brought to a change setting
    - Diversity is adaptive
  - The group's environmental *challenges*

- The basic **process** of change is: **Reorganization of the system**

- The primary **goal** of change should always be: **Better adaptation**
  Not a particular trait/direction
SUMMARY of Social Organization

Cultural change
Models of change:
  Cultural Evolution (and Modernization/Developed/etc.)
  Social Conflict
  Acculturation
  Social Movements
  Cultural Adaptation
Applied change
  Models
  Principles in applied change
  Ethics in applied change
Principles of change
  Rule
  Systems change
  Process
  Measure