Solutions for Experiencing Intercultural Communication 6th Edition by Martin

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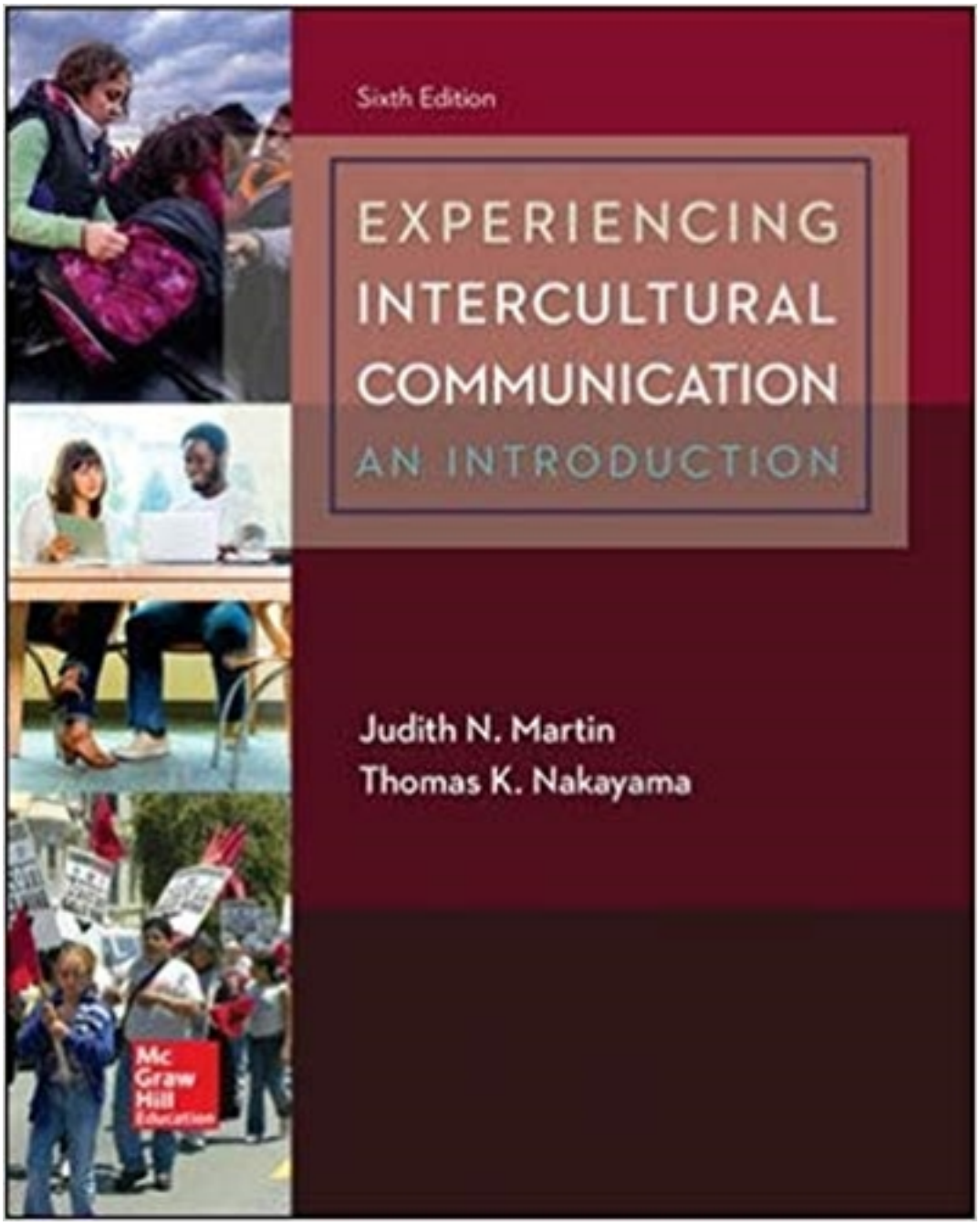

Solutions

Experiencing Intercultural Communication

An Introduction

6th edition

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Chapter 2

Intercultural Communication

Building Blocks and Barriers

Building Blocks

Building Block 1: Culture

Building Block 2: Communication

Building Block 3: Context

Building Block 4: Power

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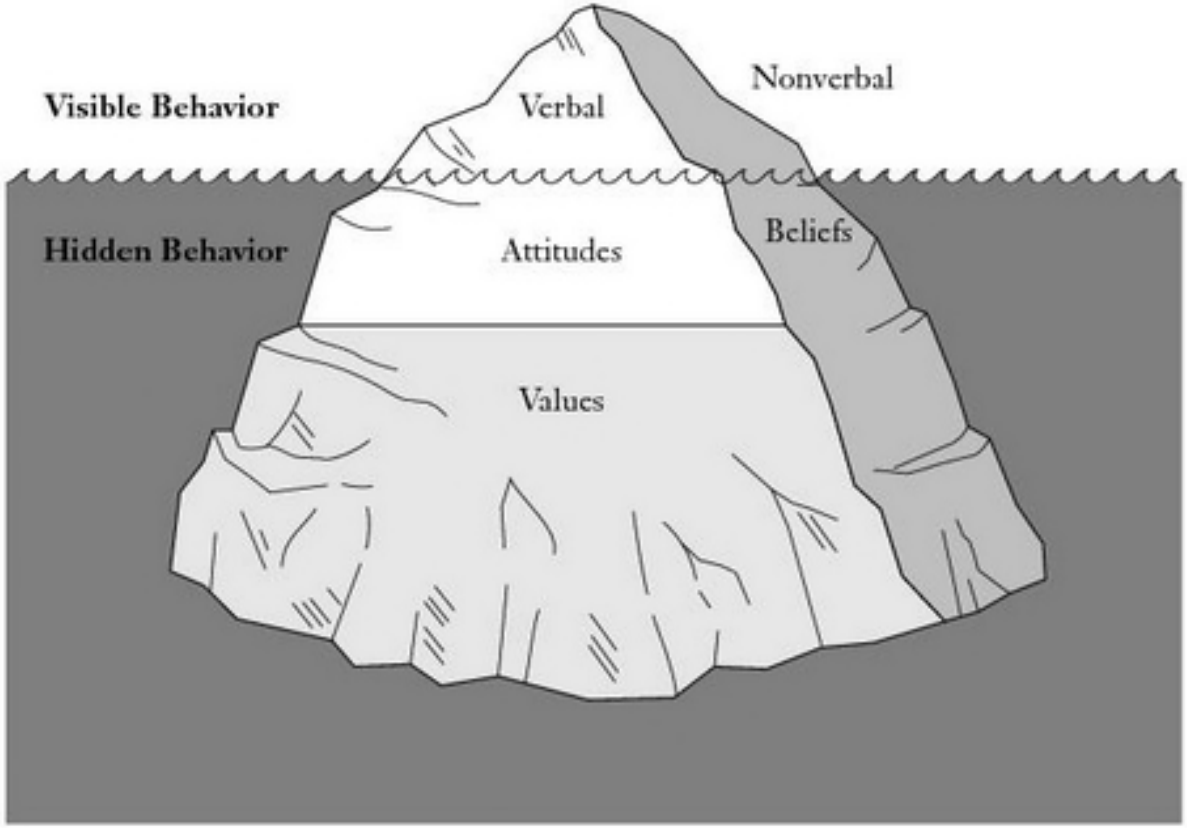
Culture

Building Block 1

I. Culture is learned
II. Culture involves perception and values
III. Culture involves feelings
IV. Culture is shared
V. Culture is expressed as behavior
VI. Culture is dynamic and heterogeneous

Culture is learned patterns of perception, values, and behaviors, shared by a group of people, that are dynamic and heterogeneous

Visible and Hidden Layers of Culture



The visible and hidden layers of culture.

Communication

Building Block 2

I. Communication is symbolic
II. Communication is a process involving several components
    a. People who are communicating
    b. A message that is being communicated (verbal or nonverbal)
    c. A channel through which communication takes place
    d. Context
III. Communication involves sharing and negotiating meaning
IV. Communication is dynamic
V. Communication does not have to be intentional
VI. Communication is receiver-oriented

Communication is a symbolic process whereby meaning is shared and negotiated

Culture and Communication

Culture influences communication

Worldview: A particular way of looking at the world

- Values of a cultural group represent a worldview

Values: What is judged to be good or bad, or right or wrong

Hofstede's Value Dimensions

Power distance: Concerns the extent to which people accept an unequal distribution of power

Masculinity/femininity: Degree to which gender-specific roles are valued and the degree to which a cultural group values masculine or feminine values

Uncertainty avoidance: Degree to which people feel threatened by ambiguous situations and try to ensure certainty by establishing more structure

Hofstede's Value Dimensions

(continued)

Long-term versus short-term orientation to life: Concerns a society's search for virtue versus truth

- Societies that are concerned with virtue (long-term orientation)
  - China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Brazil, and India
- Societies that are concerned with truth (short-term orientation)
  - United States, Canada, Great Britain, the Philippines, and Nigeria

Context

Building Block 3

I. Physical, social, or virtual situation that influences communication

II. Context may consist of the following structures in which communication occurs:

a. Physical

b. Social

c. Political

d. Historical

Power

Building Block 4

I. Power is always present when we communicate with each other although it is not always evident or obvious

II. In every society, a social hierarchy exists that gives some groups more power and privilege than others

   a. Groups with the most power determine, to a great extent, the communication system of the entire society

III. Power is complex

IV. One cannot really understand intercultural communication without considering the power dynamics in the interaction

Barriers

Barrier 1: Ethnocentrism

Barrier 2: Stereotyping

Barrier 3: Prejudice

Barrier 4: Discrimination

Ethnocentrism

Barrier 1

I. Ethnocentrism can be extreme, almost to the point that one cannot believe that another culture's values are equally good or worthy

II. Ethnocentrism may become a barrier when it prevents people from even trying to see another's point of view, through another's "prescription lens"

III. It can be difficult to see our own ethnocentrism

IV. Learning to see our own ethnocentrism may help us be more receptive to learning about other cultures and about other people's ways of living and experiencing the world

Ethnocentrism is the belief that one's own cultural group—usually equated with nationality—is superior to all other cultural groups

Stereotyping

Barrier 2

I. Stereotypes develop as part of our everyday thought processes

II. To make sense out of the overwhelming amount of information we receive every day, we categorize and generalize from this information

III. Why do we hold stereotypes?

   a. Stereotypes help us know what to expect from and how to react to others

   b. Stereotypes can develop out of negative experiences

IV. People tend to remember information that supports a stereotype and to not retain information that contradicts the stereotype

V. Stereotypes often operate at an unconscious level and are so persistent that people have to work consciously at rejecting them

Stereotypes are widely held beliefs about a group of people and are a form of generalization—a way of categorizing and processing information we receive about others in our daily life

Prejudice

Barrier 3

I. Stereotypes tell us what a group is like, whereas prejudice tells us how we are likely to feel about that group

II. Tokenism is a kind of prejudice shown by people who do not want to admit they are prejudiced

III. A **color-blind approach** to intercultural relations may have taught us to not notice color

   a. Counterproductive to the improvement of race relations

   b. Not possible to do

   c. Discourages meaningful conversations about race relations

   d. Allows people to ignore, deny, disregard, and support the status quo (existence of racial inequalities)

Prejudice is a negative attitude toward a cultural group based on little or no experience

Discrimination

Barrier 4

I. Discrimination may be based on racism or other “isms” (sexism, ageism, and elitism)

II. May range from very subtle nonverbal (lack of eye contact or exclusion of someone from a conversation), to verbal insults and exclusion from job or other economic opportunities, to physical violence and systemic elimination of the group or genocide

III. **Hate speech**: Intended to degrade, intimidate, or incite violence or prejudicial action against a person or group of people based on their group membership

IV. Discrimination may be interpersonal, collective, and/or institutional

The behavior that results from stereotyping or prejudice—overt actions to exclude, avoid, or distance oneself from other groups—is called discrimination

Building Intercultural Skills

Chapter 2 - Building Blocks and Barriers

1. Become more conscious of the identity groups you belong to, both voluntary and involuntary
2. Become more aware of your own communication in intercultural encounters
3. Notice how diverse your friends are
4. Become more knowledgeable about different cultures by reading local ethnic newspapers and watching foreign films
5. Notice how different cultural groups are portrayed in the media
6. When speaking about other groups, try to use tentative words that don’t reflect generalizations
7. Practice speaking up when someone tells a joke that is hurtful toward another group

Chapter 2
Intercultural Communication

Study Objectives

After studying the material in this chapter, students should be able to accomplish the following objectives.

1. Define culture.
2. Define communication.
3. Discuss the relationship between culture and communication.
4. Describe the role that context and power play in intercultural interactions.
5. Identify and define ethnocentrism.
6. Identify and describe stereotyping.
7. Identify and describe prejudice.
8. Identify and describe discrimination.
9. Explain the ways in which ethnocentrism, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination act as barriers to effective intercultural communication.

Key Terms

- Color-blind approach
- Communication
- Context
- Culture
- Discrimination
- Embodied ethnocentrism
- Ethnocentrism
- Hate speech
- Individualism
- Indulgence versus restraint
- Intercultural communication
- Long-term versus short-term orientation
- Masculinity/femininity
- Perceptions
- Power
- Power distance

- Prejudice
- Stereotypes
- Uncertainty avoidance
- Values
- Worldview

Detailed Chapter Outline

Introduction

- **Intercultural communication** occurs when people of different cultural backgrounds interact, but this definition seems simplistic and redundant. To properly define intercultural communication, it's necessary to understand the two root words—*culture* and *communication*—that represent the first two building blocks.
- In addition, communication always happens in a particular situation or context, the third building block. The fourth building block concerns the element of **power**, something that is part of every intercultural interaction.

I. Building Block 1: Culture

- Culture is often considered the core concept in intercultural communication. Often, people cannot identify their own cultural backgrounds and assumptions until they encounter people from other cultures, which gives them a frame of reference.
- **Culture** is defined as learned patterns of perception, values, and behaviors, shared by a group of people, that are dynamic and heterogeneous.

A. Culture Is Learned

- First, culture is learned. While all human beings share some universal habits and tendencies—people eat, sleep, seek shelter, and share some motivations to be loved and to protect themselves—these are not aspects of culture. Rather, culture is the unique way people have learned to eat, sleep, and seek shelter because they are American or Japanese, male or female, and so on.
- People have to learn how to eat, walk, talk, and love like other members of their cultural groups—and they usually do so slowly and subconsciously, through a process of socialization.

B. Culture Involves Perception and Values

- Members of cultural groups share **perceptions**, or a way of looking at the world.
- The process of perception is composed of three phases: selection, organization, and interpretation.
    - During the *selection* process, people are only able to give attention to a small fraction of all the information available to their senses. In the *organization* phase people categorize the information into recognizable groups. Last in the perception process is *interpretation*, the ways in which people assign meaning to the information they have organized.
- The perception process is laden with opportunities for people to compare themselves and their culture to others.

C. Culture Involves Feelings

- Culture is experienced not only as perceptions and values but also as feelings. When people are in their own cultural surroundings they *feel* a sense of familiarity and a certain level of comfort in the space, behavior, and actions of others. They might characterize this feeling as a kind of **embodied ethnocentrism**, which is normal.

D. Culture Is Shared

- The idea of a culture implies a group of people. These cultural patterns of perceptions and beliefs are developed through interactions with different groups of individuals—at home, in the neighborhood, at school, in youth groups, at college, and so on.
- Culture becomes a group experience because it is shared with people who live in and experience the same social environments.
- People's membership in cultural groups ranges from involuntary to voluntary. Many of the cultural groups people belong to—specifically, those based on age, race, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, and family membership—are involuntary associations over which they have little choice.
- People belong to other cultural groups—those based on professions, political associations, and hobbies—that are voluntary associations. And some groups may be involuntary at the beginning of people's lives (those based on religion, nationality, or socioeconomic status) but become voluntary associations later on.

E. Culture Is Expressed as Behavior

- People's cultural lens or computer program influences not only their perceptions and beliefs but also their behaviors.
- It is important to understand that people belong to many different cultural groups and

that these groups collectively help determine their perceptions, beliefs, and behavior. These patterns endure over time and are passed on from person to person.

F. Culture Is Dynamic and Heterogeneous

- A crucial feature of culture is that it is dynamic, or changing, and can often be a source of conflict among different groups. It is important to recognize that cultural patterns are not rigid and homogeneous but are dynamic and heterogeneous.
- Viewing culture as dynamic is particularly important for understanding the struggles of various groups—Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, African Americans, Latinos/as, women, gays and lesbians, working-class people, and so on—as they try to negotiate their relationships and ensure their well-being within U.S. society.
- Seeing culture as dynamic and heterogeneous opens up new ways of thinking about intercultural communication. After all, the people from a particular culture are not identical, and any culture has many intercultural struggles.
- Cultures are not heterogeneous in the same way everywhere. How sexuality, race, gender, and class function in other cultures is not necessarily the same as or even similar to how they do in the United States.
    - For example, there are poor people in most nations. The poor in the United States are often viewed with disdain, as people to be avoided; in many European countries, by contrast, the poor are seen as a part of society, to be helped by government programs.

II. Building Block 2: Communication

- **Communication** is defined as a symbolic process whereby meaning is shared and negotiated. In other words, communication occurs whenever someone attributes meaning to another's words or actions. In addition, communication is dynamic, may be unintentional, and is receiver-oriented.
    - First, communication is symbolic. That is, the words people speak and the gestures they make have no meaning in themselves; rather, they achieve significance only because people agree, at least to some extent, on their meaning.
    - Second, communication is a process involving several components: people who are communicating, a message that is being communicated (verbal or nonverbal), a channel through which the communication takes place, and a context. People communicating can be thought of as senders and receivers—they are sending and receiving messages.
    - Third, communication involves sharing and negotiating meaning. People have to agree on the meaning of a particular message, but to make things more complicated, each message often has more than one meaning.

- Fourth, communication is dynamic. This means that communication is not a single event but is ongoing, so that communicators are at once both senders and receivers.
- Fifth, communication does not have to be intentional. Some of the most important (and sometimes disastrous) communication occurs without the sender knowing a particular message has been sent.
- Finally, communication is receiver-oriented. Ultimately, it is the person who assigns meaning who determines the outcome of the communication situation.

III. Culture and Communication

A. Communication, Cultural Worldviews, and Values

- All cultural groups influence the ways in which their members experience and perceive the world. Members of a culture create a worldview, which, in turn, influences communication.
- **Values**, have to do with what is judged to be good or bad, or right or wrong. They are deeply felt beliefs that are shared by a cultural group and that reflect a perception of what ought to be, not what is. Collectively, the values of a cultural group represent a **worldview**, a particular way of looking at the world.
- To more fully explain the concept of values, two anthropologists, Fred Strodtbeck and Florence Kluckhohn, studied how the cultural values of Hispanics, Native Americans, and European Americans differ. They suggested that members of all cultural groups must answer these important questions:
  - What is human nature?
  - What is the relationship between humans and nature?
  - What is the relationship between humans?
  - What is the preferred personality?
  - What is the orientation toward time?
- *The Nature of Human Nature:* The solution to the issue of human nature is related to dominant religious and legal practices. One solution is a belief in the basic goodness of human nature. A second solution involves a combination of goodness and evil in human nature. According to a third solution, humans are essentially evil. Societies holding to this orientation would more likely punish criminals than rehabilitate them.
- *The Relationship between Humans and Nature:* In most of U.S. society, humans seem to dominate nature. For example, clouds are seeded in an attempt to bring rain. Rivers are rerouted and dammed to make way for human settlement, to form lakes for recreation, and to provide power. Of course, not everyone in the United States agrees that humans should dominate nature. Many Native American groups, and also the Japanese, believe in the value of humans living in harmony with nature, rather than one dominating the other.

- *The Relationship between Humans:* **Individualism**, a key European American (and Canadian and Australian) value, places importance on the individual rather than the family or work team or other group. By contrast, people from more collectivist societies—such as those of Central and South America, many Arab groups, and the Amish and some Chicano and Native American communities in the United States—place a great deal of importance on extended families. Values may also be related to economic class or rural/urban distinctions. In the United States, for example, working-class people may be more collectively oriented than members of the middle or upper classes, given that working-class people reportedly give a higher percentage of their time and money to helping others.
- *The Preferred Personality:* The most common form of activity in the United States seems to involve a "doing" orientation. Thus, being productive and keeping busy are highly valued in many contexts—for example, in the workplace, most employees have to document what they "do". The highest status is usually given to those who "do" rather than those who mostly "think". By contrast, a "growing" orientation places importance on the spiritual aspects of life. This orientation seems to be less common than the other two; the main practitioners are Zen Buddhists. A final orientation revolves around "being." In this process of self-actualization, "peak experiences," in which the individual is fused with the experience, are most important. This orientation can be found in Central and South America, and in Greek and Spanish cultural groups.
- Most U.S. cultural communities—particularly European American and middle-class ones—seem to emphasize the future. This is evident in practices such as depositing money in retirement accounts that can be recovered only in the distant future and having appointment books that can reach several years into the future. Other societies (Spain, Greece, Mexico) seem to emphasize the importance of the present, recognizing the value of living in the here and now, and the potential of the current moment. Many European societies (France, Germany, Belgium) and Asian societies (Japan, Korea, Indonesia) place a relatively strong emphasis on the past, believing that history has something to contribute to an understanding of contemporary life.
- Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede and his associates have identified several additional cultural values that help people understand cultural differences: (1) power distance, (2) masculinity/femininity, (3) uncertainty avoidance, (4) **long-term versus short-term orientation** to life, and (5) indulgence/restraint orientation.
    - **Power distance** refers to the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.
        - Societies that value low power distance (Denmark, Israel, New Zealand) believe that less hierarchy is better and that power should be used only for legitimate purposes.

- **Masculinity/femininity** dimension refers to both the degree to which gender-specific roles are valued and the degree to which a cultural group values "masculine" (achievement, ambition, acquisition of material goods) or "feminine" (quality of life, service to others, nurturance) values.
  - People in Japan, Austria, and Mexico seem to prefer a masculine orientation, expressing a general preference for gender-specific roles. People in northern Europe (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands) seem to prefer a feminine orientation, reflecting more gender equality and a stronger belief in the importance of quality of life for all.
- **Uncertainty avoidance** describes the degree to which people feel threatened by ambiguous situations and try to ensure certainty by establishing more structure. Relatively weak uncertainty-avoidance societies (Great Britain, Sweden, Ireland, Hong Kong, the United States) share a preference for a reduction of rules and an acceptance of dissent, as well as an increased willingness to take risks. By contrast, strong uncertainty-avoidance societies (Greece, Portugal, Japan) usually prefer more extensive rules and regulations in organizational settings and more consensus concerning goals.
- Hofstede acknowledged and adopted the **long-term** (Confucian) **versus short-term orientation** to life, which originally was identified by a group of Asian researchers. This value has to do with a society's search for virtue versus truth. Societies with a short-term orientation (the United States, Canada, Great Britain, the Philippines, Nigeria) are concerned with "possessing" the truth (reflected in Western religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). Societies with a long-term orientation (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Brazil, and India) are more concerned with virtue (reflected in Eastern religions like Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Shintoism).

- Based on recent research by Michael Minkov, one of Hofstede's associates, there is now an additional value dimension, **indulgence versus restraint**. This dimension is related to the *subjective* feelings of happiness. That is, people may not actually *be* happy or healthy but they report that they *feel* happier and healthier.
- Intercultural conflicts often result from differences in value orientations.
- While identifying cultural values helps people understand broad cultural differences, it is important to remember that not everyone in a given society holds the dominant value.
- One of the problems with cultural frameworks is that they tend to "essentialize" people. In other words, people tend to assume that a particular group characteristic is the essential characteristic of given group members at all times and in all contexts.
- Value heterogeneity may be particularly noticeable in a society that is undergoing rapid change.
- Although people may differ with respect to specific value orientations, they may hold other value orientations in common.

- There are no easy lists of behaviors that are key to “successful” intercultural interaction.
- Value orientations discussed in the chapter are general guidelines, not rigid rules.

B. Communication and Cultural Rituals and Rules

- Even as culture influences communication, communication influences and reinforces culture. This means that the way people communicate in cultural contexts often strengthens their sense of cultural identity.
- Many White middle-class (mostly women) participate in a communication ritual that is aimed at solving personal problems and affirming participants’ identities. The ultimate cultural purpose is that it dramatizes common cultural problems, provides a preferred social context for the venting of problems, and promotes a sense of community identity.
- Similarly, patterns of talk about drinking alcohol help shape and reinforce notions of masculinity and gender identity among U.S. college students.
- A recent study compared Korean and American online personal profiles and found that Koreans were less likely to reveal personal information and more likely to present themselves rather indirectly, through visual means (e.g., graphics) and links to their interests. Americans were more likely to present personal information about themselves, directly through personal stories. These differences show how each cultural group expressed and reinforced their cultural identity, the more individualistic, direct Americans, and the more collectivistic, indirect Koreans.

C. Communication and Resistance to the Dominant Culture

- Another way to look at culture and communication is to think about how people may use their own space to resist the dominant culture. Similarly, workers can find ways to resist the authority structure of management in many ways, some subtle (e.g., work slowdowns, posting negative information about their employer or organization on Facebook or YouTube) and some more obvious (e.g., whistle-blowing, boycotting).

IV. Building Block 3: Context

- **Context** refers to the physical, social, or virtual situation in which communication occurs. For example, communication may occur in a classroom, a bar, a church, or online and people communicate differently depending on the context.
- Context may consist of the physical, social, political, and historical structures in which the communication occurs. The political context in which communication occurs includes those forces that attempt to change or retain existing social structures and relations.

V. Building Block 4: Power

- **Power** is always present when people communicate with each other although it is not always evident or obvious. In every society, a social hierarchy exists that gives some groups more power and privilege than others. The groups with the most power determine, to a great extent, the communication system of the entire society. This is certainly true in intercultural communication.
- There are two types of group-related power. The first involves membership in involuntary groups based on age, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, race, and sexual orientation and is more permanent in nature. The second involves membership in more voluntary groups based on educational background, geographic location, marital status, and socioeconomic status and is more changeable. The key point is that the dominant communication systems ultimately impede others who do not have the same ways of communicating.
- Power also comes from social institutions and the roles people occupy in those institutions. Power is not a simple one-way proposition but is dynamic. Power should be thought of in broad terms. Dominant cultural groups attempt to perpetuate their positions of privilege in many ways. Groups can negotiate their various relations to culture through economic boycotts, strikes, and sit-ins.
- Power is complex, especially in relation to institutions or the social structure. Some inequities, such as those involving gender, class, or race, are more rigid than those resulting from temporary roles like student or teacher. One cannot really understand intercultural communication without considering the power dynamics in the interaction.

VI. Barriers to Intercultural Communication

A. Ethnocentrism

- **Ethnocentrism** is the belief that one's own cultural group—usually equated with nationality—is superior to all other cultural groups.
- It can be very difficult for people to see their own ethnocentrism. Often, people see it best when they spend extended time in another cultural group.

B. Stereotyping

- **Stereotypes** "are widely held beliefs about a group of people" and are a form of generalization—a way of categorizing and processing information people receive about others in their daily life.
- However, generalizations become potentially harmful stereotypes when they are held rigidly.

- Stereotypes also may be positive. For example, some people hold the stereotype that all attractive people are also smart and socially skilled. Even positive stereotypes can cause problems for those stereotyped.
    - Attractive individuals may feel excessive pressure to fit the stereotype that they are competent at something they're not, or they may be hired on the basis of their appearance and then find out they cannot do the job.
- Stereotypes can also develop out of negative experiences. If people have unpleasant contact with certain group of people, they may generalize that unpleasantness to include all members of that particular group, whatever group characteristic they focus on (race, gender, and sexual orientation).
- Because stereotypes often operate at an unconscious level and are so persistent, people have to work consciously at rejecting them. This process involves two steps: (1) recognizing the negative stereotypes, and (2) obtaining individual information that can counteract the stereotype.

C. Prejudice

- **Prejudice** is a negative attitude toward a cultural group based on little or no experience.
- Stereotypes tell people what a group is like, prejudice tells them how people are likely to feel about that group.
- People want to be accepted and liked by their cultural groups, and if they need to reject members of another group to do so, then prejudice serves a certain function.
- Another function is the ego-defensive function, whereby people may hold certain prejudices because they don't want to admit certain things about themselves.
- Finally, people hold some prejudices because they help reinforce certain beliefs or values—the value-expressive function.
- It is also helpful to think about in different kinds of prejudice. The most blatant prejudice is easy to see but is less common today. It is more difficult, however, to pinpoint less obvious forms of prejudice. For example, "tokenism" is a kind of prejudice shown by people who do not want to admit they are prejudiced. They go out of their way to engage in unimportant but positive intergroup behaviors.
- "Arms-length" prejudice is when people engage in friendly, positive behavior toward members of another group in public and semiformal situations (casual friendships at work, interactions in large social gatherings or at lectures) but avoid closer contact (dating, attending intimate social gatherings).
    - These subtle yet real forms of prejudice often go hand-in-hand with a **color-blind approach** to intercultural relations.

- Like stereotypes, prejudice, once established, is very difficult to undo. Because it operates at a subconscious level, there has to be a very explicit motivation to change people's ways of thinking.

D. Discrimination

- The behavior that results from stereotyping or prejudice—overt actions to exclude, avoid, or distance oneself from other groups—is called **discrimination**.
- Discrimination may be based on racism or any of the other "isms" related to belonging to a cultural group (sexism, ageism, elitism).
- Discrimination may range from very subtle nonverbal (lack of eye contact, exclusion of someone from a conversation), to verbal insults and exclusion from job or other economic opportunities, to physical violence.
- **Hate speech** is a particular form of verbal communication that can lead to (or reflect) prejudice and discrimination.
- Discrimination may be interpersonal, collective, and/or institutional.
- In recent years, interpersonal racism seems to be much more subtle and indirect but still persistent. Institutionalized or collective discrimination—whereby individuals are systematically denied equal participation or rights in informal and formal ways—also persists.

Discussion Questions

1. In your opinion, which of the building blocks of intercultural communication is/are the most important? Why?
2. Why is power considered one of the four building blocks of intercultural communication? What is the effect of power in intercultural communication?
3. What are some barriers to positive intercultural communication?
4. Can you think of similar communication rituals you and members of other cultures might participate in?
5. Why do we hold stereotypes? Are they inherently bad?
6. What social function(s) does prejudice against Muslims fulfill for those who hold that attitude?
7. What is the role of values in intercultural communication? Is it possible to reach agreement even when core values differ?
8. What do we mean by the statement, "Trying to understand one's own culture is like trying to explain to a fish that it lives in water"?
9. How is culture learned?
10. What cultural patterns do you share with the members of your cultural group?

11. Find four examples (past or present) for the dynamic (changing) nature of culture.
12. How can value frameworks "essentialize" people? What is the problem in doing so?
13. What is the difference between stereotypes and generalizations?
14. How do we learn the stereotypes of different groups?
15. Identify and explain interpersonal, collective, and/or institutional discrimination.

Classroom Exercises and Chapter Activities

1. Defining Communication Exercise: Divide students into groups of four to six, and ask them to come up with the best definition for "communication." Suggest that, as part of this discussion, they create a list of the different characteristics of communication. After 10 minutes, have students share their lists and their definitions of communication. This could be followed by a discussion of the characteristics of communication and the reasons for the many different definitions of communication. At the conclusion of the discussion, you might ask, "How would you define intercultural communication?" and lead a discussion about how the definition might be modified to apply to communication. You may also want to discuss how the characteristics of communication they have listed would influence the process of intercultural communication.

2. Building Communication Models Exercise: At the beginning of this exercise, explain to the students that sometimes when we talk about processes, we use models to illustrate the process. Show students a communication model. Basic communication, public speaking, and interpersonal communication textbooks are all good sources for such models. Discuss the model with the class. Identify the characteristics of communication shown in the model, and have students suggest aspects of communication they feel are missing from the model. Then divide the class into small groups, and challenge them to create an original model that they feel adequately illustrates the communication process. Give them about 15 minutes to complete their models. One or two students from each group should be designated by the group to draw the model on the board and explain the rationale behind its design.

3. Cultural Artifacts Exercise: To encourage students to become more aware of their own cultural backgrounds and to emphasize the "hidden" nature of culture, ask them to bring to class an article or object from home that they believe exemplifies their cultural background and its values. During class, the students can "show and tell" their object or article and explain how it is representative of their culture's values and beliefs (if a large class, have them do this in small groups).

4. DIE Perception Exercise: This exercise will help students become familiar with *description, interpretation,* and *evaluation* (DIE) as an important tool for "sense-making" when confronted with people, behaviors, and events that are unknown. Also, DIE acts as a

tool in helping people become aware of how they make value judgments. It can become a wonderful tool for guiding future class discussions. You will need one or two ambiguous objects. Select unfamiliar objects for this demonstration. Objects taken from unusual hobbies (lobster bait bags, pitons for mountain climbing, etc.), objects from other cultures (Japanese sword-cleaning tools, flower-arranging equipment, etc.), or unusual hardware or kitchen utensils may be good choices.

Select one of the ambiguous objects. Ask the large group to tell you something they know about the object. The phrasing of this question is very important; otherwise, it skews the answers. You should say, “Tell me something about this.” (Don’t ask them what they “see” or to describe it.) Let them touch the object, but keep it moving very quickly. (“What else can you say?”) Spend two to three minutes on this. You (or a student assistant) can write down the statements the best fit the following categories in three different columns: description, interpretation, and evaluation. Do not write these terms on the board yet; simply divide the responses into these three categories. Explain the terms “description,” “interpretation,” and “evaluation.” Illustrate that what they said about the object can be divided into three columns. It can be found that it is most common for them to give mostly *interpretations* because when faced with an object or event that is unknown to us, we tend to make sense of it by putting it in a category we already know.

Repeat the process with the second object, and ask students to explain only what they see. Chart this statement in the “description” column. Correct them if they make any interpretations or evaluations. Next, have them interpret (attempt to identify what it might be) charting their responses again on the board. Finally, ask them to evaluate it according to the interpretations, both a positive and a negative evaluation for each interpretation.

Finally, have them decide what the object actually is by looking at all of the information they have generated. It is possible for students to come up with countries (or at least regions) and identify an object they had no way of identifying at the start. This step is important because it validates both the process and their ability to make sense of things when they slow down and pay attention instead of going with programmed responses. (A more complex version of this exercise is available at www.intercultural.org.

5. Values Identification Exercise: Use the following “worksheet” to assist students in identifying their own values and making the link between what they value and the value frameworks discussed in the chapter.

   Listed below are “traditional American values,” in other words, goals and attitudes that are socially approved in the American culture. Read through the list, and check the ones that you consider important in your life.

____ Honesty	____ Well-liked by Others	___ Know the Right People
____ Trust	____ Honor One's Parents	___ Live in the Right Places
____ Cleanliness	____ Live Life to the Fullest	___ Have a Close-Knit Family
____ Pursue Happiness	____ Explore New Horizons	___ Help Your Fellow Woman/Man
____ Be Productive	____ Play to Win	___ Influence Other Countries to Become Democratic
____ Marriage	____ Obey the Law	___ Know your Heritage/Culture
____ Get Ahead	____ Identify with a Cause	___ Physical and Emotional Health
____ Work Hard	____ Find a Better Way	___ Take Pride in Your Community
____ Become Educated	____ Loyalty to Your Country	___ Stand Up for What is Right
____ Spiritual Growth	____ Participate in Government	___ Recreation, Leisure
____ Friendship	____ Accrue Goods and Wealth	
____ Tolerance	____ Save Time	
____ Independence	____ Build Things	

Now, choose five of the items listed above that are the most important to you, and rank them from one to five. For each of these top five values, explain why you rated them highly.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Questions to ponder:

- Who or what has influenced me in developing my value system?
- How can I use this course to further clarify my awareness of both my own and others' value orientations?
- Which of the categories in the Kluckholn, Hofstede, and Hall value models interface with your five top values.

6. Values Exercise II: The goal of this powerful exercise is to enable students to experience first-hand how deeply we hold certain values. Be aware that this may be upsetting for some students, particularly immigrants who may have lost something they value. Allow students to opt out of the process at any time if they find the exercise too disturbing. The exercise will probably work better with a class that is willing to be self-reflective. First, give students 5 to 10 pieces of paper (determine the number by class size and time constraints). Then take the following steps:
   - Ask the students to write different values on each piece of paper.

- Instruct them to organize the pieces of paper according to how important each value is to them, with the most important value at the top and the least important at the bottom.
- Invite students to throw away (literally into the middle of the room) the paper with the value they think is the least important.
- Discuss how it felt to throw away that value, even considering that it was their least important one.
- Instruct them to throw away their most important value.
- Discuss how it felt to even figuratively throw away their most significant value.
- (Optional) Ask students to take one of the values from the person on their left and throw it away.
- Discuss how this felt.

After the exercise, use the following questions to debrief the exercise.

- How do you feel about the values you have in front of you?
- How did it feel to lose values or to keep values?
- What does this say about the power and the meaning our values have for us?
- Did you feel differently when another person threw away one of your values than when you did it yourself?
- Are there examples of situations in which people have taken other people's values away from them? How did they react? How might you react in a similar situation? What impact did the situations have on these people?

Invite students to retrieve "tossed" values at the conclusion of this exercise.

7. Power and Privilege Exercise—"Stand Up": This exercise allows students to identify themselves as belonging to a particular group or groups by standing up when a particular statement pertains to them. It is designed to bring into awareness the types of privilege we all have, depending on the context. Read each statement to the class, and allow time for students to "stand up" in response to the statement (students need to stand up only if they are comfortable doing so, and all the students should remain silent). You can create statements to fit a particular topic or context: the list that follows merely contains suggestions. You may want to begin with statements that are not very personal and move gradually to those that require more intimate self-disclosure. This list of statements is designed to highlight class issues.

   Stand up if the following statements are true:

   - You were born in the United States.
   - You are an only child.

- You moved more than two times while growing up.
- You were raised in the country or a rural setting.
- You grew up in an apartment.
- Your family had few resources (students determine what "few" means).
- Your family had more than enough resources.
- Your parents are divorced.
- You have more resources than your parents.
- You are working your way through school.

After the exercise, examine each of the statements with the class, and ask students how being a part of the group identified in the statement would affect their ability to communicate with people from other groups. Which groups would be the most comfortable communicating with them? Which groups would be the least comfortable communicating with them?

8. Simulation Exercise: One of the most effective ways to help students identify with the challenges faced by immigrants is to involve them in a simulation in which they must interact without knowing the proper rules for communicating and accomplishing tasks. There are a number of well-known simulations. The one you choose can depend on the number of students, resources, and the amount of time you have. The following are the different simulations listed based on the levels of complexity and threat.
   - "Barnga," Created by Sivasailam Thiagarajan. Distributed by Intercultural Press. P.O. Box 700, Yarmouth, ME 04096; (BOO) 370-2665; fax (207) 846-5181
     This is easy and requires only packs of ordinary playing cards. Students confront frustration at "not knowing the rules of the game" as they change from group to group.
   - "The Albatross"
     This is a simulation that has been used since the 1970s. It is easily adaptable, requires 30 to 45 minutes including the debrief, and requires minimal supplies. It is a good introduction to the power of culture to program our perceptions and can be very effectively debriefed with the DIE Process.
   - "BaFa BaFa: A Cross Culture Simulation," Created by R. Garry Shirts; distributed by Simulation Training Systems, P.O. Box 910, Del Mar, CA 92014; (800) 942-2900; fax (619) 792-9743
     This is a complex simulation that requires two facilitators, cultural artifacts supplied in the game, and learning a simple language. The cultural exchanges really bring home feelings of culture shock and the power of cultural values.
   - "Ecotonos: A Unique Simulation for Working across the Cultural Divide" Diane Hofner Saphiere and Nipporica Associates. Distributed by Intercultural Press. P.O.

Box 700, Yarmouth, ME 04096; (BOO) 370-2665; fax (207) 846-5181.
This simulation is the most complex, and it highlights how cultural values and communication behaviors, as well as issues of power, can complicate intercultural interactions. It requires participants to come together in small groups and come to consensus about an important decision.

The Albatross: Tips for the Facilitators

The Albatross simulation provides an opportunity for participants to experience the process of observing another culture and learning how we often (mistakenly) judge the behavior of others based on our own assumptions about the world. During the simulation, participants observe certain ritualistic behaviors by the members of the Albatross culture. Participants are then asked to make interpretations and conclusions about the culture. After the facilitators explain the culture, it becomes clear that the underlying cultural assumptions are entirely different than the interpretations first made by the observers. The exercise can then be utilized as a common experience for all participants to discuss how we should describe and react to cultural differences without being judgmental.

The minimum number of participants should be 8, and the maximum number can be 40. Participants should be a mixture of males and females. The minimum number of facilitators should be two (one male, one female). It is recommended that you use one person as the main facilitator until you become comfortable leading discussions together.

Materials Needed

- One table and two chairs
- Two bowls, two cups, and a bottle or flask
- Peanuts in the shell and M&M’s

Other things you may want to add to the activity are listed below.

- You can bring anything to add to the atmosphere: tablecloth, costumes for facilitators, candles, incense, plants, music, etc. Be creative!
- Once you understand the basic assumptions of Albatrossian culture, you are free to be creative and add elements and participants to the simulation in any way that suits your needs.

Time Needed

The tie required to this activity can be a minimum of 30 minutes. The simulation of the Albatross culture can be done in as little as 15 minutes. The discussion (often referred to as

debriefing) can take anywhere from 15 to 45 minutes.

Albatross Culture

Albatross is a culture in which the earth is most highly revered. As a result, women—who are most like the Mother Earth—are highly revered. It is only women who are allowed to touch the earth (they wear no shoes while men must wear shoes) and only women who are allowed to work with the goods of the earth (food). Men must wait to be brought food by the women.

The culture places great importance on greetings and making visitors feel welcome and part of the culture. Women greet each other by touching one another's feet or lower legs to demonstrate their connections to the earth. Men shake one another's hands by holding the other's hand with both of their own hands as a welcoming and gentle gesture. They also treat guests in their culture in a reserved but gentle and caring way. If visitors are not treated well, then it is a sign of great rudeness.

Albatrossians of either gender do not speak during the rituals. They place great importance on calm and peacefulness, taking time to meditate on the meaning of the movements and gestures. However, they do have three communication strategies that are allowed. To indicate disapproval, Albatrossians will make a sustained hissing sound. Alternately, approval of an action will spur an almost spiritual humming sound. Lastly, a quiet clicking of the tongue will be used to get another person's attention.

Because women and men have different status, women will greet men by kneeling next to him and bowing to the earth in order to allow him to use her as a vehicle to touch the "mother" by placing his hand on the back of her head.

Process

The simulation begins with a man and woman entering the room. At the front of the room, there are two chairs facing the audience and a serving table/altar behind it. She is barefoot, and he is wearing shoes. They walk into the audience—the man greets the other men by humming and shaking their hands, and the woman greets the other women by kneeling and touching their feet or calves. When this is done, the woman motions the man to sit in the chair, and then she sits on the floor, and the two quietly meditate for a moment. The woman clicks quietly, the man places his hand on her head, and she bows all the way to the ground. She then gets up and walks slowly toward the table. She begins to serve him a ritual meal, first placing a cloth on his lap and then bringing him food (peanuts, M&Ms), and drink. Each time she brings something, she kneels and faces the audience with the item

in her hand. He places his hand on her head, and she bows all the way to the ground. The woman waits on her knees until he is finished eating or drinking. Before she leaves, he touches her head, and she bows to the ground again. The man hums in approval each time he is served. The woman moves away while the man eats. When the man is done, the woman moves closer to him. The man touches her head, and she bows to the floor once again.

The woman then goes into the audience, searching for the woman with the largest feet. She motions for her to take off her shoes and then brings her beside the man's chair and motions for her to kneel. She then returns to the audience and brings a man from the audience to sit in the second chair. She motions for the male guest to place his hand on a female guest's head and has her bow to the floor. With hisses for correction and humming for praise, the woman instructs the guests to reenact the ritual. She then gives the woman guest the bowl of peanuts (M&Ms) to serve to the men in the audience. The Albatross woman takes the bowl of peanuts in the shell and serves the women in the audience by placing them on the floor beside their feet. She then motions the woman guest to return to sit beside the man's chair and serves her peanuts, takes some for herself, and motions for all of the women to eat the peanuts they have.

When this is done, she motions the guests to return to the audience, and she and the man rise and depart.

For all options, there is absolutely no talking throughout the simulation. All directions are given with humming, clicking, and hissing as signals.

Possible Discussion Questions

The debriefing follows a pattern of Description, Evaluation, and Interpretation.

i. Begin by asking for descriptions: "What did you see?" (D)
ii. Then, ask participants to talk about their feelings: "How did you feel about what you saw?" Make sure that you also ask any members who participated in serving or eating food this question. (E)
iii. Ask the participants to describe the people from the Albatross culture: "What are they like?" (E/I)
iv. Ask if there are any other possible explanations for what went on in the simulation.
v. Tell the participants about the Albatross culture.
vi. Ask the participants what they think about the Albatross culture now.
vii. Discuss how cultural and perceptual perceptions affect how we perceive, interpret, and evaluate what we see and how we react to cultures, people, and events that are different from our own.

viii. Discuss how it feels to adapt one's behavior in uncomfortable situations. The phrase "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" is easily said, but often not so easily done. What do you do if you understand or properly interpret what is going on but still don't like it?
ix. As a continuation of the previous question, discuss how our perception of self/identity is tied to our behavior.
x. Ask participants to think about ways in which what they learned can be adapted to learning about and interacting successfully with culturally different people.

An easy way to demonstrate the frustration involved in intercultural communication is to ask for two student volunteers from class. One student will be your collaborator. Outside the class, explain to the student chosen that in the exercise, they are from a culture with only two rules: 1) they can understand English, but they can only say yes or no, and 2) they must be asked the same way twice in order to comply with any request. Back in the classroom, set two chairs back to back, and explain to the second student that his/her job is to convince the first student (from the other culture) to take a can of soda from a paper bag and drink it. Encourage them to do it in steps. The rest of the class will watch and offer suggestions. If the second student gets frustrated, allow another student to take his/her place. The rules are rarely discovered in the 10- to 15-minute time period, although some participants may talk louder and some will feel frustrated, which is part of intercultural communication. Debrief by explaining the rules and asking students how they felt in this situation. Ask them to draw the parallels to true intercultural communication.

Suggested Videos

1. *Still Killing Us Softly: Advertising's Image of Women* (Produced by Jean Kilbourne; distributed by Cambridge Documentary Films, Cambridge, MA, 1987, 32 minutes)
   In this video, the director, Margaret Lazarus, describes the portrayal of women in advertising and the way this portrayal influences women, men, and children. It also suggests ways that the depiction of women in advertising alters the images men and women form of themselves.

2. *Black View of Discrimination* (Produced by the Educational Film Center for NYT Educational Media; distributed by Filmic Archives, New York, 1995, 17 minutes)
   This film has four modules that deal with Black Americans' outlook of racial discrimination.

3. *A Class Divided (*Length: 60 Minutes)
   Filmed 15 years after *Eye of The Storm*, this series analyses children's understanding after Jane Elliott's daring classroom experiment. The children learned about discrimination and

its affects that exist still today. In the video Ms. Elliott meets with some of her former students to evaluate the experiment in prejudice and its impact on their lives. The film shows the effect of discrimination and its impact years later. The video increases viewers' sensitivity and compassion to the problems of racism and prejudice.

4. *Skin Deep: College Students Confront Racism* (Distributed by Iris Films, Ho-Ho-Kus, NI, 1995, 60 minutes)
   This film by Francis Reid documents the thoughts and feelings of several college students spending a weekend retreat together. It talks about the issues of cultural difference, prejudice, and racism as seen through the eyes of this very diverse group.

5. *True Colors* (Produced by MTI/Film and Video, North Brook, IL, 1991, 19 minutes)
   This film questions our accomplishments in the fight for equality since the 1960s by testing various levels of prejudice.

6. *Overcoming Prejudice* (Distributed by Insight Media, New York, 1996, 59 minutes)
   This documentary explores the origins of prejudice. It discusses how prejudice can be learned at home, can be a result of fear or ignorance, or can be a reaction to mistreatment. People after successfully overcoming their own prejudices share their experiences and offer suggestions for finding common ground.

7. *How Beliefs and Values Define a Culture* (Distributed by Insight Media, New York, 1997, 24 minutes)
   This video considers how the arts, history, religion, and other elements shape cultural beliefs and values. It considers cross-cultural interactions and explores how technology is changing cultures.

8. *The Color of Fear* (Distributed by Stir Fry Productions, 1222 Preservation Parkway, Oakland, California, 1994, 90 minutes)
   This is a powerful video that reveals the pain and anguish that racism has caused in the lives of North American men of Asian, European, Latino, and African descent. An emotional and insightful portrayal is developed out of their disputes and struggles to understand and trust each other, the type of dialogue most of us fear but hope will happen at some point in our lifetime.

9. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkugbqkE4Bw (What is Power Distance)

10. https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msid=201645180959880549419.0004c9a894dfb66defab9&msa=0&ie=UTF8&t=m&source=embed&ll=32.10119,42.1875&spn=57.886601,105.46875&z=3

11. http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/49444272/ns/world_news/

12. http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/video/chinese-language-classroom-17486168?tab=9482930&section=16871352&playlist=1363340

13. http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/pakistani-girl-malala-yousafzai-shot-head-taliban-security-17488024?tab=9482931&section=1206828

14. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrxXsA_0224&feature=related

15. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ijSwfODaHg&feature=related

16. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCBaM0bzoPg(culture shock)

17. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1hqHo6lyUU&feature=related (Japanese weight)

18. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cy9-buzHL4k (reverse culture shock)