

Multicultural Alliance: Defining “multiculturalism”

Keep your language. Love its sounds, its modulation, its rhythm. But try to march together with men of different languages, remote from your own, who wish like you for a more just and human world.

— Helder Camara, *Spiral Of Violence*

Multiculturalism (noun)

1. the state or condition of being multicultural.
2. the preservation of different cultures or cultural identities within a society, as a state or nation.
3. the presence of, or support for the presence of, several distinct cultural or ethnic groups.
4. the view that the various cultures in a society merit equal respect and scholarly interest. It became a significant force in American society in the 1970s and 1980s as African-Americans, Latinos, and other ethnic groups explored their own history.

Culture (noun)

1. (verb) to subject to culture; cultivate.
2. the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action
3. The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. Culture is learned and shared within social groups and is transmitted by nongenetic means.
4. the total range of activities and ideas of a group of people with shared traditions, which are transmitted and reinforced by members of the group (example: *the Mayan culture*)
5. a particular form or stage of civilization at a particular period
6. the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group (example: *youth culture*)
7. *Anthropology*. the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another.
8. the attitudes, feelings, values, and behavior that characterize and inform society as a whole or any social group within it
9. the quality in a person or society that arises from a concern for what is regarded as excellent in arts, letters, manners, scholarly pursuits, etc.
10. that which is excellent in the arts, manners, etc.
11. the artistic and social pursuits, expression, and tastes valued by a society or class, as in the arts, manners, dress, etc
12. the enlightenment or refinement resulting from social pursuits
13. development or improvement of the mind by education or training.
14. the cultivation of plants, especially by scientific methods designed to improve stock or to produce new ones
15. the act or practice of tilling or cultivating the soil
16. *Biology*. the experimental growth of microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi, in a nutrient substance (culture medium), usually under controlled conditions