

Why are certain activities taboo?



THEODOTUS. "Caesar: you are a stranger here, and not conversant with our laws. The king and queen of Egypt may not marry except with their own royal blood. Ptolemy and Cleopatra are born king and consort just as they are born brother and sister."

BRITANNUS (shocked). Caesar: this is not proper.

THEODOTUS (outraged). How!

CAESAR (recovering his self-possession). "Pardon him, Theodotus: he is a barbarian, and thinks that the customs of his tribe and island are the laws of nature."

- George Bernard Shaw, Caesar and Cleopatra

Ruth Benedict (Digger Indian Creation story) "God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from this cup they drank their life...They all dipped in the water, but their cups were different."

Anthropology- The study of human society and culture, generally, but not exclusively, traditional or pre-modern societies and cultures.

Culture- The customs, beliefs and practices of people that define their societies. All learned behaviors.

What would you include in a list of things that make up a culture?

Are all cultures worthy of respect? The Declaration of Independence says that "All men are created equal", not all cultures. What do you think?

