

Cultural Tree

Zaretta Hammond created this metaphor for culture in her work as an educator. Read below and consider how this metaphor demonstrates how culture is living, and how we are connected to each other through our roots.

"Rather than use of the metaphor of an iceberg, I like to compare culture to a tree. A tree is a part of a bigger eco-system that shapes and impacts its growth and development. Shallow culture is represented in the trunk and branches of the tree while we can think of surface culture as the observable fruit that the tree bears. Surface and shallow culture are not static; they change and shift over time as social groups move around and ethnic groups inter-marry, resulting in a cultural mosaic just as the branches and fruit on a tree change in response to the seasons and its environment. Deep culture is like the root system of a tree. It is what grounds the individual and nourishes his mental health." P. 24

Tangible/ Observable Culture: Leaves of the tree

- Low emotional impact on trust
- Includes: clothing, food, games, music, dance, art, hair

Unspoken /Unseen Culture: Trunk of tree

- High emotional impact on trust
- Includes: concepts of time, personal space, managing emotions, eye contact

Deep Culture: Roots of the tree

- Collective unconscious
- Intense emotional impact on trust
- Includes: concepts of self and other, notions of fairness, decision making, worldviews