(Boasian) Cultural relativism = a position insisting that since cultures are diverse and unique and embody different conceptions of the desirable, they can only be understood and evaluated in terms of their own standards and values.

Cultural relativism (as a research tool) = the idea that one must suspend judgment of other people’s practices in order to understand them in their own cultural terms.

**Walter Goldschmidt’s formula** for viewing cultural practices “objectively” is based on gauging how well a given culture satisfies the physical and psychological needs of those whose behaviors it guides.

**Indicators include rates of**:

Malnutrition/Disease

Poverty/Wealth disparity

Violence

Crime

Suicide

Emotional Disorders

Sense of despair/Anomie

Environmental degradation