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As an increasing number of field studies of chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) have achieved long-term status across Africa, differences in the behavioural repertoires described have become apparent that suggest there is significant cultural variation. Here we present a systematic synthesis of this information from the seven most long-term studies, which together have accumulated 151 years

of chimpanzee observation. This comprehensive analysis reveals patterns of variation far more extensive than have previously been documented for any animal species except humans. We find that 39 different behaviour patterns, including tool usage, grooming and courtship behaviours, are customary or habitual amongst some communities, yet are absent in others where ecological explanations have been discounted. Amongst mammalian and avian species, cultural variation has previously been identified only for single behaviour patterns, such as the local dialects of song-birds. The extensive, multiple variations now documented for chimpanzees are thus without parallel. Moreover, the combined repertoire of these behaviour patterns in each chimpanzee community is itself highly distinctive, a phenomenon characteristic of human cultures but previously unrecognised amongst non-human species.

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