



anthropology

what does it mean to be human?

FOURTH EDITION

Robert H. Lavenda

St. Cloud State University

Emily A. Schultz

St. Cloud State University

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What is anthropology?

This chapter introduces the field of anthropology. We look at what anthropology is and explore its different subfields. We touch on anthropology's key concept—culture—as well as its key research method—fieldwork. We conclude with a discussion of the ways anthropological insights are relevant in everyday life.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

What Is Anthropology?

What Is the Concept of Culture?

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In early 1976, the authors of this book traveled to northern Cameroon, in western Africa, to study social relations in the town of Guider, where we rented a small house. In the first weeks we lived there, we enjoyed spending the warm evenings of the dry season reading and writing in the glow of the house's brightest electric fixture, which illuminated a large, unscreened veranda. After a short time, however, the rains began, and with them appeared swarms of winged termites. These slow-moving insects with fat, two-inch abdomens were attracted to the light on the veranda, and we soon found ourselves spending more time swatting at them than reading or writing. One evening, in a fit of desperation, we rolled up old copies of the international edition of *Newsweek* and began an all-out assault, determined to rid the veranda of every single termite.

The rent we paid for this house included the services of a night watchman. As we launched our attack on the termites, the night watchman suddenly appeared beside the veranda carrying an empty powdered milk tin. When he asked if he could have the insects we had been killing, we were a bit taken aback but warmly invited him to help himself. He moved onto the veranda, quickly collected the corpses of fallen insects, and then joined us in going after those termites that were still airborne. Although we became skilled at thwacking the insects with our rolled-up magazines, our skills paled beside those of the night watchman, who simply snatched the termites out of the air with his hand, squeezed them gently, and dropped them into his rapidly filling tin can. The three of us managed to clear the air of insects—and fill his tin—in about 10 minutes. The night watchman thanked us and returned to his post, and we returned to our books.

The following evening, soon after we took up our usual places on the veranda, the watchman appeared at the steps bearing a tray with two covered dishes. He explained that his wife had prepared the food for us in exchange for our help in collecting termites. We accepted the food and carefully lifted the lids. One dish contained *nyiri*, a stiff paste made of red sorghum, a staple of the local diet. The other dish contained another pasty substance with a speckled, salt-and-pepper appearance, which we realized was termite paste prepared from the insects we had all killed the previous night.

The night watchman waited at the foot of the veranda steps, an expectant smile on his face. Clearly, he did not intend to leave until we tasted the food his wife had prepared. We looked at each other. We had never eaten insects before or considered them edible in the North American, middle-class diet we were used to. To be sure, "delicacies" like chocolate-covered ants exist, but such items are considered by most North Americans to be food fit only for eccentrics. However, we understood the importance of not insulting the night watchman and his wife, who were being so generous to us. We knew that insects were a favored food in many human societies and that eating them brought no ill effects (Figure 1.1). So we reached into the dish of *nyiri*, pulling off a small amount. We then used the ball of *nyiri* to scoop up a small portion of termite paste, brought the mixture to our mouths, ate, chewed, and swallowed. The watchman beamed, bid us goodnight, and returned to his post. We looked at each other in wonder. The sorghum paste had a grainy tang that was rather pleasant. The termite paste tasted mild, like chicken, not unpleasant at all.

FIGURE 1.1 Many people around the world eat insects. Here, a restaurant worker in Bangkok, Thailand, prepares grubs for cooking.



Not long afterward, we received a package from our family in the United States that contained, among other treats, a bag of commercial chocolate chip cookie mix. The kitchen of the house we were renting had an oven; eager to enjoy this quintessential North American treat, we baked the cookies, and offered them to one of our field assistants. He politely tasted the cookies, but declined a second serving with the explanation that they were just too sweet for him.

What Is Anthropology?

This anecdote is not just about an encounter about our field assistant and us; it also illustrates some of the central elements of the anthropological experience. Anthropologists want to learn about as many different human ways of life as they can. The people they come to know are members of their own society or live on a different continent, in cities or in rural areas. Their ways of life may involve patterns of regular movement across international borders, or they may make permanent homes in the borderlands themselves. Archaeologists reconstruct ancient ways of life from traces left behind in the earth that are hundreds or thousands of years old; anthropologists who strive to reconstruct the origin of the human species itself make use of fossil remains that reach back millions of years into the past. Whatever the case may be, anthropologists are sometimes exposed to practices that startle them. However, as they take the risk of getting to know such ways of life better, they are often treated to the sweet discovery of familiarity. Still, the response of our field assistant to the chocolate chip cookies is a valuable reminder that encounters with the unfamiliar can also sometimes be “too sweet.” One of the strengths of anthropology comes precisely from unexpected insights that emerge from such encounters, when we and the people with whom we work discover that we can connect with one another in sometimes surprising ways, even though such connections may at times be awkward (Tsing 2005). In this book, we share aspects of the anthropological experience in the hope that you may come to find pleasure, insight, and self-recognition from an involvement with the unfamiliar.

Anthropology can be defined as the study of human nature, human society, and the human past (Greenwood and Stini 1977). It is a scholarly discipline that aims to describe in the broadest possible sense what it means to be human. Anthropologists are not alone in focusing their attention on human beings and their creations. Human biology, literature, art, history, linguistics, sociology, political science, economics—all these scholarly disciplines and many more—concentrate on one or another aspect of

human life. Anthropologists are convinced, however, that explanations of human activities will be superficial unless they acknowledge that human lives are always entangled in complex patterns of work and family, power and meaning.

What is distinctive about the way anthropologists study human life? As we shall see, anthropology is holistic, comparative, field based, and evolutionary. First, anthropology emphasizes that all aspects of human life intersect with one another in complex ways. They shape one another and become integrated with one another over time. Anthropology is thus the integrated, or *holistic*, study of human nature, human society, and the human past. This **holism** draws together anthropologists whose specializations might otherwise divide them. At the most inclusive level, we may thus think of anthropology as the integrated (or holistic) study of human nature, human society, and the human past. Holism has long been central to the anthropological perspective and remains the feature that draws together anthropologists whose specializations might otherwise divide them.

Second, in addition to being holistic, anthropology is a discipline interested in **comparison**. Generalizing about human nature, human society, and the human past requires evidence from the widest possible range of human societies. It is not enough, for example, to observe only our own social group, discover that we do not eat insects, and conclude that human beings as a species do not eat insects. When we compare human diets in different societies, we discover that insect eating is quite common and that our North American aversion to eating insects is nothing more than a dietary practice specific to our own society.

Third, anthropology is also a field-based discipline. That is, for almost all anthropologists, the actual practice of anthropology—its data collection—takes place away from the office and in direct contact with the people, the sites, or the animals that are of interest. Whether they are biological anthropologists studying chimpanzees in Tanzania, archaeologists excavating a site high in the Peruvian Andes, linguistic anthropologists learning an unwritten language in New Guinea, or cultural anthropologists studying ethnic identity in West Africa or small-town festivals in Minnesota, anthropologists are in direct

anthropology The study of human nature, human society, and the human past.

holism A characteristic of the anthropological perspective that describes, at the highest and most inclusive level, how anthropology tries to integrate all that is known about human beings and their activities.

comparison A characteristic of the anthropological perspective that requires anthropologists to consider similarities and differences in as wide a range of human societies as possible before generalizing about human nature, human society, or the human past.

contact with the sources of their data. For most anthropologists, the richness and complexity of this immersion in other patterns of life is one of our discipline's most distinctive features. Field research connects anthropologists directly with the lived experience of other people or other primates or to the material evidence of that experience that they have left behind. Academic anthropologists try to intersperse field research with the other tasks they perform as university professors. Other anthropologists—applied anthropologists—regularly spend most or all of their time carrying out field research. All anthropology begins with a specific group of people (or primates) and always comes back to them as well.

Finally, anthropologists try to come up with generalizations about what it means to be human that are valid across space and over time. Because anthropologists are interested in documenting and explaining change over time in the human past, **evolution** is at the core of the anthropological perspective. Anthropologists examine the *biological evolution* of the human species, which documents change over time in the physical features and life processes of human beings and their ancestors. Topics of interest include both human origins and genetic variation and inheritance in living human populations. If evolution is understood broadly as change over time, then human societies and cultures may also be understood to have evolved from prehistoric times to the present.

Anthropologists have long been interested in *cultural evolution*, which concerns change over time in beliefs, behaviors, and material objects that shape human development and social life. Early discussions of cultural evolution in anthropology emphasized a series of universal stages. However, this approach has been rejected by contemporary anthropologists who talk about cultural evolution, like William Durham (1991) and Robert Boyd (e.g., Richerson and Boyd 2006). Theoretical debates about culture change and about whether it ought to be called “cultural evolution” are very lively right now, not only in anthropology but also in related fields like evolutionary biology and developmental psychology. In the midst of this debate, one of anthropology's most important contributions to the study of human evolution remains the demonstration that biological evolution is not the same thing as cultural evolution. Distinction between the two remains important as

a way of demonstrating the fallacies and incoherence of arguments claiming that everything people do or think can be explained biologically, for example, in terms of “genes” or “race” or “sex.”

What Is the Concept of Culture?

A consequence of human evolution that had the most profound impact on human nature and human society was the emergence of **culture**, which can be defined as sets of learned behavior and ideas that human beings acquire as members of society together with the material artifacts and structures that human beings create and use. Our cultural heritage allows humans to adapt to and transform the world around us through our interactions with material structures and objects in the communities where we live, through the connections we form with other people and other living organisms, through the actions and skills of our individual bodies, and through the ideas and values of our minds. The cultural heritage of the human species is both meaningful and material, and it makes us unique among living creatures.

Human beings are more dependent than any other species on learning for survival because we have no instincts that automatically protect us and help us find food and shelter. Instead, we have come to use our large and complex brains to learn from other members of society what we need to know to survive. Learning is a primary focus of childhood, which is longer for humans than for any other species.

From the anthropological perspective, the concept of *culture* is central to explanations of why human beings are what they are and why they do what they do. Anthropologists are frequently able to show that members of a particular social group behave in a particular way *not* because the behavior was programmed by their genes, but because they observed other people and copied what they did. For example, North Americans typically do not eat insects, but this behavior is not the result of genetic programming. Rather, North Americans have been told as children that eating insects is disgusting, have never seen any of their friends or family eat insects, and do not eat insects themselves. As we discovered personally, however, insects can be eaten by North Americans with no ill effects. This difference in dietary behavior can be explained in terms of culture rather than biology.

However, to understand the power of culture, anthropologists must also know about human biology. Anthropologists in North America traditionally have been trained in both areas so that they can understand how

evolution A characteristic of the anthropological perspective that requires anthropologists to place their observations about human nature, human society, or the human past in a temporal framework that takes into consideration change over time.

culture Sets of learned behavior and ideas that human beings acquire as members of society together with the material artifacts and structures that human beings create and use. Human beings use culture to adapt to and transform the world in which they live.

living organisms work and become acquainted with comparative information about a wide range of human societies. As a result, they can better evaluate how biology and culture contribute to different forms of human behavior. Indeed, most anthropologists reject explanations of human behavior that force them to choose either biology or culture as the unique cause. Instead, they emphasize that human beings are **biocultural organisms**. Our biological makeup—our brain, nervous system, and anatomy—is the outcome of developmental processes to which our genes and cellular chemistry contribute in fundamental ways. It also makes us organisms capable of creating and using culture. Without these biological endowments, human culture as we know it would not exist. At the same time, our survival as biological organisms depends on learned ways of thinking and acting that help us find food, shelter, and mates and that teach us how to rear our children. Our biological endowment, rich as it is, does not provide us with instincts that would automatically take care of these survival needs. Human biology makes culture possible; human culture makes human biological survival possible.

To understand the power of culture, anthropologists are also paying increasing attention to **material culture** in the lives of biocultural human organisms. Many cultural anthropologists, including ourselves, have traditionally emphasized the way people's dealings with artifacts are shaped by the cultural meanings they attach to those artifacts. This emphasis has seemed particularly necessary in the face of the widespread assumptions in our own North American society that material objects have obvious functional meanings that are the same for everyone, everywhere. But cultural anthropologists have found repeatedly that the same object can mean different things to different people. Just consider the varied meanings attached to assault weapons or the "morning after pill" in the recent history of the United States.

All the same, innovative theories of materiality developed in fields called cyborg anthropology and science studies have provided cultural anthropologists with new ways of conceptualizing relations between persons and things, enabling new connections between work in cultural anthropology and archaeology, a field with long experience in dealing with, and thinking about, material culture (see Chapters 6 and 7). Other examples illustrating these new approaches will be found throughout this book. Many examples center on human experiences with new kinds of things—computers, cell phones, the Internet—that are increasingly central to the lives of people all over the world. For instance, persons who play online video games seem to join with the technology and the other players to form a seamless hybrid entity; or the technology that links us to friends on Facebook disappears from our awareness. This is a phenomenon that

anthropologist Daniel Miller calls *the humility of things*: "objects are important, not because they are evident and physically constrain or enable, but quite the opposite. It is often precisely because we do not see them" (2010, 50). The merging of persons and things is sometimes a source of pleasure, as when we do our holiday shopping on the Internet; but it can also be troubling when we realize that our web-surfing activities are being tracked by commercial web-bots or by government entities like the National Security Agency. For these and other reasons, we agree with Daniel Miller that "the best way to understand, convey, and appreciate our humanity is through attention to our fundamental materiality" (2010, 4). And this means taking material culture seriously.

What Makes Anthropology a Cross-Disciplinary Discipline?

Because of its diversity, anthropology does not easily fit into any of the standard academic classifications. The discipline is usually listed as a social science, but it spans the natural sciences and the humanities as well. What it is *not*, as we will see, is the study of the "exotic," the "primitive," or the "savage," terms that anthropologists reject. Figure 1.2 brings some order to the variety of interests found under the anthropological umbrella.

Traditionally, North American anthropology has been divided into four subfields: *biological anthropology*, *cultural anthropology*, *linguistic anthropology*, and *archaeology*. Because of their commitment to holism, many anthropology departments try to represent most or all of the subfields in their academic programs. However, universities in other parts of the world, such as Europe, usually do not bring all these specialties together. Many North American anthropologists, however, associate holistic four-field North American anthropology with the successful repudiation of nineteenth-century scientific racism by Franz Boas and other early twentieth-century anthropologists. They also value four-field anthropology as a protected "trading zone" within which anthropologists are encouraged to bring together fresh concepts and knowledge from a variety of research traditions. North American anthropologist Rena Lederman (2005), for example, has stressed that four-field anthropology does not insist on a single way of bringing the subfields together.

biocultural organisms Organisms (in this case, human beings) whose defining features are codetermined by biological and cultural factors.

material culture Objects created or shaped by human beings and given meaning by cultural practices.

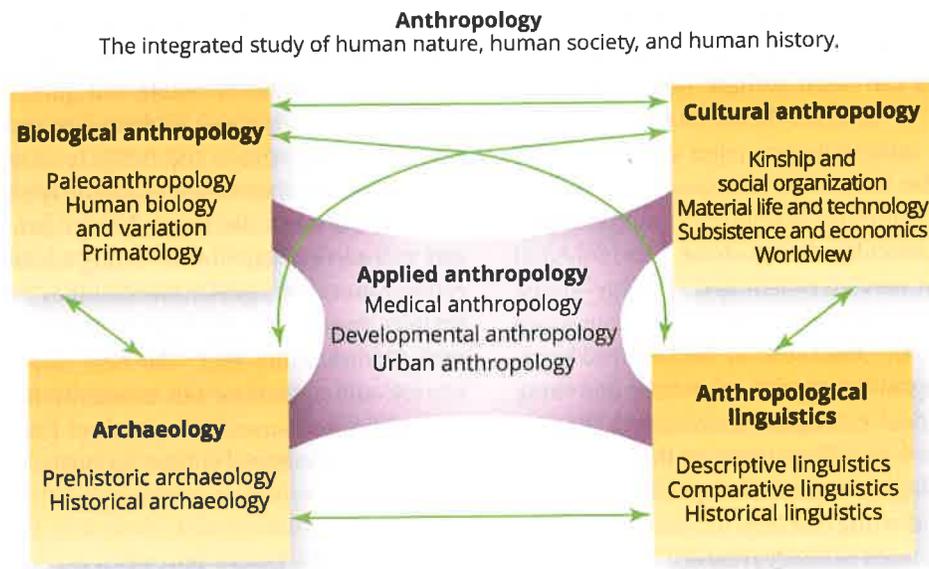


FIGURE 1.2 In the United States, anthropology is traditionally divided into four specialties: biological anthropology, cultural anthropology, anthropological linguistics, and archaeology. Applied anthropology draws on information provided by the other four specialties.

Anthropological holism is attractive even to those who were not trained in North America. British anthropologist Tim Ingold (1994), for example, argues, "The best anthropological writing is distinguished by its receptiveness to ideas springing from work in subjects far beyond its conventional boundaries, and by its ability to connect these ideas in ways that would not have occurred to their originators, who may be more enclosed in their particular disciplinary frameworks" (xvii). We share the views of Lederman and Ingold: trained in holistic, four-field anthropology, we continue to value the unique perspective it brings to the study of human nature, human society, and the human past. Indeed, as the organizers of a recent anthropological conference observed, "Even those who were the least persuaded that the traditional four-field organization of American anthropology was still viable (if it ever was) came away with a strong sense that the subfields had a great deal to say to one another and indeed needed one another" (McKinnon and Silverman 2005, viii).

Biological Anthropology

Since the nineteenth century, when anthropology was developing as an academic field, anthropologists have studied human beings as living organisms to discover

what makes us different from or similar to other animals. Early interest in these matters was a by-product of centuries of exploration. Western Europeans had found tremendous variation in the physical appearance of peoples around the world and had long tried to make sense of these differences. Some researchers developed a series of elaborate techniques to measure different observable features of human populations, including skin color, hair type, body type, and so forth, hoping to find scientific evidence that would allow them to classify all the peoples of the world into a set of unambiguous categories based on distinct sets of biological attributes. Such categories were called *rac*es, and many scientists were convinced that clear-cut criteria for racial classification would be discovered if careful measurements were made on enough people from a range of different populations.

European scientists first applied racial categories to the peoples of Europe itself, but their classifications soon included non-European peoples, who were coming under increasing political and economic domination by expanding European and European American capitalist societies. These peoples differed from "white" Europeans not only because of their darker skin color but also because of their unfamiliar languages and customs. In most cases, their technologies were also no match for the might of the West. In the early eighteenth century, the European biologist Carolus Linnaeus (Carl von Linné, 1707–1778) classified known human populations into four races (American, European, Asian, and Negro) based on skin color (reddish,

races Social groupings that allegedly reflect biological differences.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Anthropology as a Vocation

Listening to Voices

James W. Fernandez (Ph.D., Northwestern University) is a professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago. He has worked among the Fang of Gabon and among cattle keepers and miners of Asturias, Spain. This is an excerpt from an essay about the anthropological vocation.

For me, the anthropological calling has fundamentally to do with the inclination to hear voices. An important part of our vocation is "listening to voices," and our methods are the procedures that best enable us to hear voices, to represent voices, to translate voices.

By listening carefully to others' voices and by trying to give voice to these voices, we act to widen the horizons of human conviviality. If we had not achieved some fellow feeling by being there, by listening carefully and by negotiating in good faith, it would be the more difficult to give voice in a way that would widen the horizons of human conviviality. Be that as it may, the calling to

widen horizons and increase human conviviality seems a worthy calling—full of a very human optimism and good sense. Who would resist the proposition that more fellow feeling in the world is better than less, and that to extend the interlocutive in the world is better than to diminish it?

At the same time, there is a paradox here, one that demands of us a sense of proportion. Although the anthropologist is called to bring diverse people into intercommunication, he or she is also called to resist the homogenization that lies in mass communication. We are called by our very experience to celebrate the great variety of voices in the human chorus. The paradox is that we at once work to amplify the scale of intercommunication—and in effect contribute to homogenization—while at the same time we work to insist on the great variety of voices in communication. We must maintain here too a sense of proportion. We must recognize the point at which wider and wider cultural intercommunication can lead to dominant voices hidden in the homogenizing process. Human intercommunication has its uses and abuses.

Source: Fernandez 1990, 14–15.

white, yellow, and black, respectively). Linnaeus also connected racial membership with the mental and moral attributes of group members. Thus, he wrote, Europeans were "fickle, sanguine, blue-eyed, gentle, and governed by laws," whereas Negroes were "choleric, obstinate, contented, and regulated by custom" and Asians were "grave, avaricious, dignified, and ruled by opinion" (Molnar 2001, 5–6).

In the nineteenth century, influential natural scientists such as Louis Agassiz, Samuel George Morton, Francis Galton, and Paul Broca assumed that biological races were real and that they could be ranked in a hierarchy. They then embarked on a program of scientific research (sometimes called *scientific racism*) that sought material evidence that would define racial boundaries and explain why the racial hierarchy existed. For instance, they ranked different populations of the world in terms of brain size; they found the brains of "white" Europeans and North Americans to be larger and saw the other races as representing varying grades of inferiority, with Africans ranked at the bottom (Gould 1996). These findings were used to justify the familiar social practices we now call **racism**: the systematic oppression of members of one or

more socially defined "races" by another socially defined "race" that is justified in terms of the supposed inherent biological superiority of the rulers and the supposed inherent biological inferiority of those they rule.

Biological or physical anthropology as a separate discipline had its origins in the work of scholars like these, whose training was in some other discipline, often medicine. Johann Blumenbach (1752–1840), for example, whom some have called the "father of physical anthropology," was trained as a physician. Blumenbach identified five different races (Caucasoid, Mongoloid, American, Ethiopian, and Malayan), and his classification was influential in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Molnar 2001, 6). He and his contemporaries assumed that the races of "mankind" (as they would have said) were fixed and unchanging subdivisions of humanity.

racism The systematic oppression of one or more socially defined "races" by another socially defined "race" that is justified in terms of the supposed inherent biological superiority of the rulers and the supposed inherent biological inferiority of those they rule.

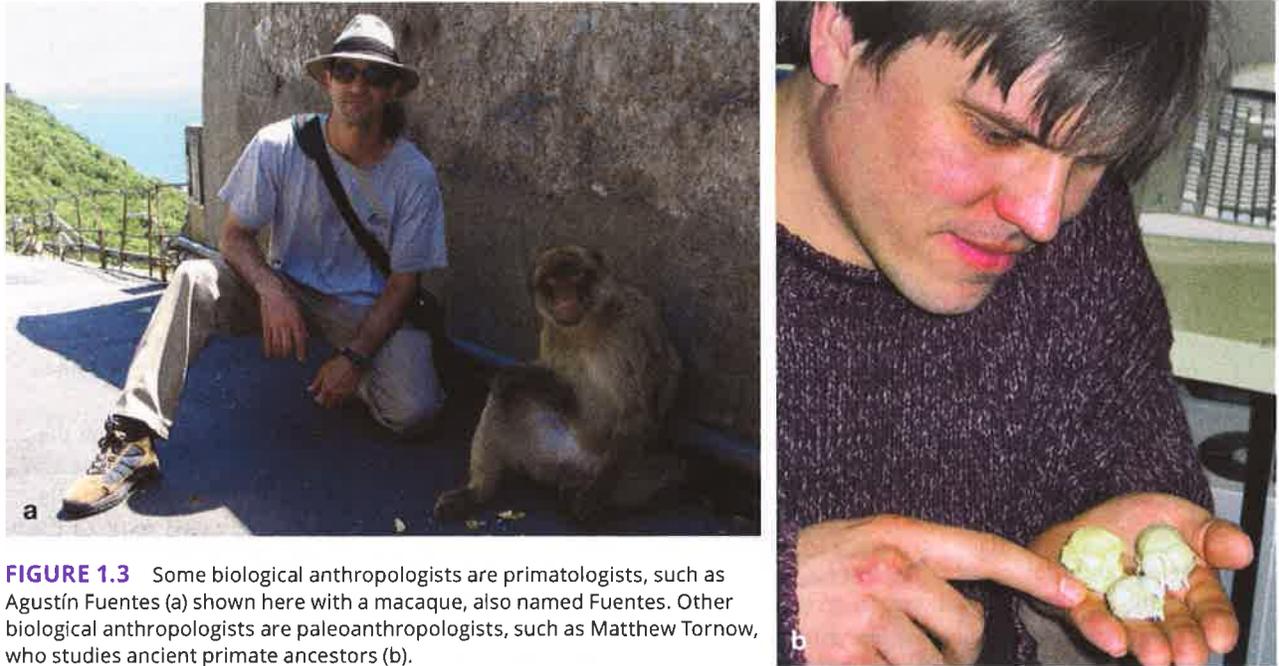


FIGURE 1.3 Some biological anthropologists are primatologists, such as Agustín Fuentes (a) shown here with a macaque, also named Fuentes. Other biological anthropologists are paleoanthropologists, such as Matthew Tarnow, who studies ancient primate ancestors (b).

However, as scientists learned more about biological variation in human populations, some of them came to realize that traits traditionally used to identify races, such as skin color, did not correlate well with other physical and biological traits, let alone mental and moral traits. Indeed, scientists could not even agree about how many human races there were or where the boundaries between them should be drawn.

By the early twentieth century, some anthropologists and biologists were arguing that “race” was a cultural label invented by human beings to sort people into groups and that races with distinct and unique sets of biological attributes simply did not exist. Anthropologists like Franz Boas, for example, who in the early 1900s founded the first department of anthropology in the United States, at Columbia University, had long been uncomfortable with racial classifications in anthropology. Boas and his students devoted much energy to debunking racist stereotypes, using both their knowledge of biology and their understanding of culture. As the discipline of anthropology developed in the United States, students were trained in both human biology

and human culture to provide them with the tools to fight racial stereotyping. After World War II, this position gained increasing strength in North American anthropology, under the forceful leadership of anthropologist Sherwood Washburn. The “new” physical anthropology Washburn developed at the University of California, Berkeley, repudiated racial classification and shifted attention to patterns of variation and adaptation within the human species as a whole. This shift in emphasis led many of Washburn’s followers to define their specialty as **biological anthropology**, a move that highlighted their differences with the older “physical anthropology” devoted to racial classification.

Some biological anthropologists work in the fields of **primatology** (the study of the closest living relatives of human beings, the nonhuman primates), **paleoanthropology** (the study of fossilized bones and teeth of our earliest ancestors), and human skeletal biology (measuring and comparing the shapes and sizes—or morphology—of bones and teeth using skeletal remains from different human populations) (Figure 1.3). Newer specialties focus on human adaptability in different ecological settings, on human growth and development, or on the connections between a population’s evolutionary history and its susceptibility to disease. Forensic anthropologists use their knowledge of human skeletal anatomy to aid law enforcement and human rights investigators. Molecular anthropologists trace chemical similarities and differences in the immune system, an interest that has led to active research on the virus that causes HIV/AIDS. Moreover, new analytic techniques,

biological anthropology (or physical anthropology) The specialty of anthropology that looks at human beings as biological organisms and tries to discover what characteristics make them different from other organisms and what characteristics they share.

primatology The study of nonhuman primates, the closest living relatives of human beings.

paleoanthropology The search for fossilized remains of humanity’s earliest ancestors.

such as biostatistics, three-dimensional imaging, and electronic communication and publishing, have transformed the field (Boaz and Wolfe 1995; Weinker 1995). Even more revolutionary has been the recent development of techniques for extracting ancient biomolecules from fossils. *Ancient DNA (aDNA)* extracted from fossil bones can reveal a range of information about the individual from whom it came, such as the individual's sex and its relationships to other populations in the past and present. Entire genomes of fossilized individuals, such as Neanderthals, have been reconstructed, providing dazzling new windows on migrations and contacts among ancient populations, as well as their connections to living populations (see Chapter 5). Ancient molecules can also be recovered, not only from fossilized bones, but also from ancient artifacts. For example, casein, a protein found in milk, leaves residues in the containers people used to store milk products such as cheese, which provides information about ancient dietary practices. This kind of information is of interest both to paleoanthropologists and to archaeologists, creating new opportunities for them to collaborate in reconstructing the human past (Brown and Brown 2013). In all these ways, biological anthropologists can illuminate what makes human beings similar to and different from one another, other primates, and other forms of life.

Whether they study human biology, primates, or the fossils of our ancestors, biological anthropologists clearly share many methods and theories used in the natural sciences—primarily biology, ecology, chemistry, and geology. What tends to set biological anthropologists apart from their nonanthropological colleagues is the holistic, comparative, and evolutionary perspective that has been part of their anthropological training. That perspective reminds them always to consider their work as only part of the overall study of human nature, human society, and the human past.

Cultural Anthropology

The second specialty within anthropology is **cultural anthropology**, which is sometimes called *sociocultural anthropology*, *social anthropology*, or *ethnology*. By the early twentieth century, anthropologists realized that racial biology could not be used to explain why everyone in the world did not dress the same, speak the same language, pray to the same god, or eat insects for dinner. About the same time, anthropologists such as Margaret Mead were showing that the biology of sexual difference could not be used to predict how men and women might behave or what tasks they would perform in any given society. Anthropologists concluded

that something other than biology had to be responsible for these variations. They suggested that this “something else” was culture.

Many anthropologists did significant research throughout the twentieth century to separate human biological variation from human cultural practices, showing that these practices could not be reduced to “racial” difference. By the latter part of the twentieth century, anthropologists also regularly distinguished between the biological sex of an individual and the culturally shaped gender roles considered appropriate for each sex in a given society. As we shall see throughout the text, attention to gender has become an integral part of all anthropological work.

Because people everywhere use culture to adapt to and transform everything in the wider world in which they live, the field of cultural anthropology is vast. Cultural anthropologists tend to specialize in one or another domain of human cultural activity (Figure 1.4). Some study the ways particular groups of human beings organize themselves to carry out collective tasks, whether economic, political, or spiritual. This focus within cultural anthropology bears the closest resemblance to the discipline of sociology, and from it has come the identification of anthropology as one of the social sciences.

Sociology and anthropology developed during the same period and share similar interests in social organization. What differentiated anthropology from sociology was the anthropological interest in comparing different forms of human social life. In the racist framework of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century European and North American societies, some people viewed sociology as the study of “civilized” industrial societies and labeled anthropology as the study of all other societies, lumped together as “primitive.” Today, by contrast, anthropologists are concerned with studying *all* human societies, and they reject the labels *civilized* and *primitive* for the same reason they reject the notion of biological race. Contemporary anthropologists do research in urban and rural settings around the world and among members of all societies, including their own.

Anthropologists discovered that people in many non-Western societies do not organize bureaucracies or churches or schools, yet they still manage to carry out successfully the full range of human activity because they

cultural anthropology The specialty of anthropology that shows how variation in the beliefs and behaviors of members of different human groups is shaped by sets of learned behaviors and ideas that human beings acquire as members of society—that is, by culture.

sex Observable physical characteristics that distinguish two kinds of humans, females and males, needed for biological reproduction.

gender The cultural construction of beliefs and behaviors considered appropriate for each sex.



FIGURE 1.4 Cultural anthropologists talk to many people, observe their actions, and participate as fully as possible in a group's way of life. Here, Sri Lankan anthropologist Arjun Guneratne converses with some of his consultants in Nepal.

developed institutions of relatedness that enabled them to organize social groups through which they could live their lives. One form of relatedness, called *kinship*, links people to one another on the basis of birth, marriage, and nurturance. The study of kinship has become highly developed in anthropology and remains a focus of interest today. In addition, anthropologists have described a variety of forms of social groups organized according to different principles, such as secret societies, age sets, and numerous forms of complex political organization, including states. In recent years, cultural anthropologists have studied contemporary issues of gender and sexuality, transnational labor migration, urbanization, globalization, the post-Cold War resurgence of ethnicity and nationalism around the globe, and debates about human rights.

Cultural anthropologists have investigated the patterns of material life found in different human groups. Among the most striking are worldwide variations in clothing, housing, tools, and techniques for getting food and making material goods. Some anthropologists specialize in the study of technologies in different

societies or in the evolution of technology over time. Those interested in material life also describe the natural setting for which technologies have been developed and analyze the way technologies and environments shape each other. Others have investigated the way non-Western people have responded to the political and economic challenges of colonialism and the capitalist industrial technology that accompanied it.

Cultural anthropologists, no matter what their area of specialization, ordinarily collect their data during an extended period of close involvement with the people in whose language or way of life they are interested.

This period of research, called **fieldwork**, has as its central feature the anthropologists' involvement in the everyday routine of those among whom they live. People who share information about their culture and language with anthropologists have traditionally been called **informants**; however, anthropologists use this term less today, and some prefer to describe these individuals as *respondents*, *collaborators*, *teachers*, or simply "*the people I work with*" because these terms emphasize a relationship of equality and reciprocity. Fieldworkers gain insight into another culture by participating with members in social activities and by observing those activities as outsiders. This research method, known as *participant observation*, is central to cultural anthropology.

Cultural anthropologists write about what they have learned in scholarly articles or books and sometimes document the lives of the people they work with on film or video. An **ethnography** is a description of "the customary social behaviors of an identifiable group of people" (Wolcott 1999, 252–253); **ethnology** is the comparative study of two or more such groups. Thus, cultural anthropologists who write ethnographies are sometimes called *ethnographers*, and anthropologists who compare ethnographic information on many different cultural practices are sometimes called *ethnologists*. But not all anthropological writing is ethnographic. Some anthropologists specialize in reconstructing the history of our discipline, tracing, for example, how anthropologists' fieldwork practices have changed over time and how these changes may be related to wider political, economic, and social changes within the societies from which they came and within which they did their research.

People everywhere are increasingly making use of material goods and technologies produced outside their own societies. Anthropologists have been able to show that, contrary to many expectations, non-Western people

fieldwork An extended period of close involvement with the people in whose language or way of life anthropologists are interested, during which anthropologists ordinarily collect most of their data.

informants People in a particular culture who work with anthropologists and provide them with insights about their way of life. Also called respondents, teachers, or friends.

ethnography An anthropologist's written or filmed description of a particular culture.

ethnology The comparative study of two or more cultures.

do not slavishly imitate Western ways. Instead, they make use of Western technologies in ways that are creative and often unanticipated but that make sense in their own local cultural context. These forms of cultural exchange were powerfully accelerated after the end of the Cold War in 1989, when advances in the technologies of communication, manufacturing, and transportation seemed to dissolve, or at least seriously reduce, previous barriers of space and time. All parts of the world were drawn into these processes of **globalization**: the reshaping of local conditions by powerful global forces on an ever-intensifying scale. Globalization suggests a world full of movement and mixture, contacts and linkages, and persistent cultural interaction and exchange (Inda and Rosaldo 2002, 2). Some people have clearly benefitted from globalization, whereas others have suffered, and people everywhere struggle to respond to effects of globalization that seem impossible to manage. In a globalized world, it is no longer possible to presume that peoples and cultures are firmly attached to specific geographical locations. As a result, many cultural anthropologists now pay increasing attention to the migrations undertaken by peoples all over the globe and have often focused on regions like the borderland between northern Mexico and the United States, where struggles with contradictory social practices and ambiguous identities have long been the rule, not the exception.

It would be difficult to find any research projects by contemporary cultural anthropologists that do not in some way acknowledge the ways in which global processes affect the local communities where they work. Indeed, global flows of technologies and commodities have pushed ethnographers to expand their ethnographic focus to topics and settings that are unprecedented from the perspective of research undertaken during most of the twentieth century. Especially striking has been the move of cultural anthropologists into fields like computer engineering or into ethnographic settings like scientific laboratories or the Internet. As we noted earlier, this interest has also stimulated new approaches to material culture, especially the ways human beings and their computerized devices connect with each other.

Cybernetics was an early name given to those technologies that connected people and machines in this intimate way, and it influenced the thinking of Donna Haraway, a biologist and radical feminist, who published "A Cyborg Manifesto" in 1980. The image of the cyborg—an organism-machine hybrid—was popularized in science fiction, but Haraway pointed out that, for good or for ill, such hybrids were all around us, from cybernetically advanced weapons systems to laboratory rats with implanted cyber-control devices. Although

many people are troubled by the notion of organism-machine hybrids, Haraway urged her readers to embrace the image of the cyborg as a new model for challenging rigid social, political, and economic boundaries that have been used to separate people by gender, sexuality, class, and race, boundaries proclaimed by their defenders to be "natural." Haraway's work attracted the attention of a wide range of scholars in many disciplines, including anthropology. **Cyborg anthropology** refers to ethnographic research that focuses on human-machine hybrids that blur boundaries between nature and culture, the living and the nonliving. Haraway's cyborg insights also contributed to the development of the interdisciplinary field of **science studies**, which explores the interconnections among sociocultural, political, economic, and historic conditions and practices that make scientific research both possible and successful. Cyborg thinking reinforced work by scholars like Bruno Latour, who undertook ethnographic fieldwork in scientific laboratories, following practicing scientists engaging in skillful work with different kinds of material apparatus, and later following them outside laboratories as they sought various kinds of support for their work (e.g., Latour and Woolgar 1986) (see Module I). But cyborg thinking has also been taken up successfully by anthropologists who explore the many other ways that material culture and nonhuman organisms are deeply entangled with human cultural meanings, beliefs, and values, and practices. Models from science studies and cyborg anthropology allow for fresh understandings of human beings as biocultural hybrids, enmeshed with living and nonliving features of their material worlds, including artifacts of their own manufacture. These theoretical orientations also intersect productively with work on processes of cultural reorganization and hybridization produced by globalization.

As cultural anthropologists have become increasingly aware of the sociocultural influences that stretch across space to affect local communities, they have also become sensitive to those that stretch over time. As a result, many contemporary cultural anthropologists

globalization The reshaping of local conditions by powerful global forces on an ever-intensifying scale.

cyborg anthropology A form of anthropological analysis based on the notion of animal-machine hybrids, or cyborgs, that offers a new model for challenging rigid social, political, or economic boundaries that have been used to separate people by gender, sexuality, class, and race, boundaries proclaimed by their defenders as "natural."

science studies Research that explores the interconnections among sociocultural, political, economic, and historic conditions and practices that make scientific research both possible and successful.



FIGURE 1.5 Professor of Anthropology and Linguistics H. Samy Alim (second from left) leads a graduate seminar at Stanford University.

make serious efforts to place their cultural analyses in detailed historical context. Cultural anthropologists who do comparative studies of language, music, dance, art, poetry, philosophy, religion, or ritual often share many of the interests of specialists in the disciplines of fine arts and humanities.

Linguistic Anthropology

Perhaps the most striking cultural feature of our species is **language**, which we can provisionally define as the system of arbitrary symbols humans use to talk about all areas of our lives, from material to spiritual, and to encode our experience of the world and of one another. **Linguistic anthropology** therefore studies language, not only as a form of symbolic communication, but also as a major carrier of important cultural information. Indeed, linguistic anthropologists understand language broadly, insisting that words and sentences cannot be understood apart from the social and cultural contexts in which they are uttered; and, conversely, that the study of language in its contexts of use is a particularly useful way to investigate social and cultural aspects of human society. Many early anthropologists were the first people to transcribe non-Western languages and

to produce grammars and dictionaries of those languages (Figure 1.5). Contemporary linguistic anthropologists and their counterparts in sociology (called *sociolinguists*) study the way language differences correlate with differences in gender, race, class, or ethnic identity. Some have specialized in studying what happens when speakers are fluent in more than one language and must choose which language to use under what circumstances. Others have written about what happens when speakers of unrelated languages are forced to communicate with one another, producing languages called *pidgins*. Some linguistic anthropologists study sign languages. Others look at the ways children learn language or the styles and strategies followed by fluent speakers engaged in conversation. More recently, linguistic anthropologists have paid attention to the way political ideas in a society contribute to people's ideas of what may or may not be said and the strategies speakers devise to escape these forms of censorship. Some take part in policy discussions about literacy and language standardization and address the challenges faced by speakers of languages that are being displaced by international languages of commerce and technology such as English.

In all these cases, linguistic anthropologists try to understand language in relation to the broader cultural, historical, or biological contexts that make it possible. Because highly specialized training in linguistics as well as anthropology is required for people who practice it, linguistic anthropology has long been recognized as a separate subfield of anthropology. Contemporary linguistic anthropologists continue to be trained in this way, and many cultural anthropologists also receive linguistics training as part of their professional preparation.

Archaeology

Archaeology, another major specialty within anthropology, is a cultural anthropology of the human past involving the analysis of material remains. Through archaeology, anthropologists discover much about human history, particularly *prehistory*, the long stretch of time before the development of writing. Archaeologists look for evidence of past human cultural activity, such as postholes, garbage heaps, and settlement patterns. Depending on the locations and ages of sites they are digging, archaeologists may also have to be experts on stone-tool manufacture, metallurgy, or ancient pottery. Because archaeological excavations frequently

language The system of arbitrary symbols used to encode one's experience of the world and of others.

linguistic anthropology The specialty of anthropology concerned with the study of human languages.

archaeology A cultural anthropology of the human past involving the analysis of material remains left behind by earlier societies.

uncover remains such as bones or plant pollen, archaeologists often work in teams with other scientists who specialize in the analysis of these remains.

Archaeologists' findings complement those of paleoanthropologists. For example, archaeological information about successive stone-tool traditions in a particular region may correlate with fossil evidence of prehistoric occupation of that region by ancient human populations. Archaeologists can use dating techniques to establish ages of *artifacts*, portable objects modified by human beings. They can create distribution maps of cultural artifacts that allow them to make hypotheses about the ages, territorial ranges, and patterns of sociocultural change in ancient societies. Tracing the spread of cultural inventions over time from one site to another allows them to hypothesize about the nature and degree of social contact between different peoples in the past. The human past that they investigate may be quite recent: Some contemporary archaeologists dig through layers of garbage deposited by human beings within the last two or three decades, often uncovering surprising information about contemporary consumption patterns.

Applied Anthropology

Applied anthropology is the subfield of anthropology in which anthropologists use information gathered from the other anthropological specialties to propose solutions to practical problems (Figure 1.6). Some may use a particular group of people's ideas about illness and health to introduce new public health practices in a way that makes sense to and will be accepted by members of the group. Other applied anthropologists may use knowledge of traditional social organization to ease the problems of refugees trying to settle in a new land. Still others may use their knowledge of traditional and Western methods of cultivation to help farmers increase their crop yields. Given the growing concern throughout the world with the effects of different technologies on the environment, this kind of applied anthropology holds promise as a way of bringing together Western knowledge and non-Western knowledge to create sustainable technologies that minimize pollution and environmental degradation. Some applied anthropologists have become management consultants or carry out market research, and their findings may contribute to the design of new products.

In recent years, some anthropologists have become involved in policy issues, participating actively in social



FIGURE 1.6 Members of the Argentine Forensic Anthropologists Team work on the biggest dictatorship-era mass grave to date, where around 100 suspected victims of the 1976–1983 military junta were buried in a local cemetery in Córdoba, 800 km (500 miles) northwest of Buenos Aires.

processes that attempt to shape the future of those among whom they work (Moore 2005, 3), and this has involved a change in their understanding of what applied anthropology is. Les W. Field (2004), for example, has addressed the history of applied anthropology on Native American reservations—"Indian Country"—in the United States. He observes that by the end of the twentieth century, a major transformation had occurred, "from applied anthropology in Indian Country to applications of anthropological tools in Indian country to accomplish tribal goals" (472). This often draws anthropologists into work in the legal arena, as when, for example, they have lent their expertise to arguments in favor of legislation mandating the repatriation of culturally significant artifacts and tribal lands in North America or to efforts by tribal groups to reclaim

applied anthropology Subfield of anthropology in which anthropologists use information gathered from the other anthropological specialties to solve practical cross-cultural problems.

official government-recognized status (Field 2004) or to defending indigenous land rights in Latin America (Stocks 2005).

Although many anthropologists believe that applied work can be done within any of the traditional four fields of anthropology, increasing numbers in recent years have come to view applied anthropology as a separate field of professional specialization (see Figure 1.2). More and more universities in the United States have begun to develop courses and programs in a variety of forms of applied anthropology. Anthropologists who work for government agencies or nonprofit organizations or in other nonuniversity settings often describe what they do as the *anthropology of practice*. In the twenty-first century, it has been predicted that more than half of all new Ph.D.s in anthropology will become practicing anthropologists rather than take up positions as faculty in university departments of anthropology.

Medical Anthropology

Medical anthropology is one of the most rapidly growing branches of anthropology. Beginning half a century ago as a form of applied anthropology, it has developed into an important anthropological specialty that has offered new ways to link biological and cultural anthropology. Medical anthropology concerns itself with human health—the factors that contribute to disease or illness and the ways that human populations deal with disease or illness (Baer et al. 2003, 3). Medical anthropologists may consider the physiological variables that are involved with human health and disease, the environmental features that affect human well-being, and the way the human body adapts to various environments. Contemporary medical anthropologists engage in work that directly addresses the anthropological proposition that human beings must be understood as biocultural organisms (Figure 1.7).

Particularly significant has been the development of *critical medical anthropology*, which links questions of human health and illness in local settings to social, economic, and political processes operating on a national or global scale. Indeed, critical medical anthropologists have been among the most vocal in pointing out how

various forms of suffering and disease cannot be explained only by the presence of microbes in a diseased body, but may depend on—or be made worse by—the presence of social inequality and a lack of access to health care. According to anthropologist Merrill Singer (1998), critical medical anthropology “is committed to the ‘making social’ and the ‘making political’ of health and medicine” (195). Thus, critical medical anthropologists pay attention to the way social divisions based on class, “race,” gender, and ethnicity can block access to medical attention or make people more vulnerable to disease and suffering. They draw attention to the way traditional Western biomedicine “encourages people to fight disease rather than to make the changes necessary to prevent it,” for example, by linking low birth weight in newborn babies to poor nutrition, but failing to note that poor nutrition “may be a major health factor among impoverished social classes and oppressed ethnic groups in developed countries despite an abundance of food in society generally” (Singer 1998, 106, 109).

One of the most important insights of critical medical anthropologists has been to point out that “various practices that bioculturalist anthropologists have traditionally called ‘adaptations’ might better be analyzed as social adjustments to the consequences of oppressive sociopolitical relationships” (Singer 1998, 115). Gavin Smith and R. Brooke Thomas, for example, draw attention to situations where “social relations compromise people’s options” for attaining biological well-being and cultural satisfaction but where people do not passively accept this situation and choose instead to “try to escape or change these relations”; Smith and Thomas (1998) call these practices “adaptations of resistance” (466). Chapter 16 is devoted to a survey of ethnographic research and case studies in medical anthropology.

Medical anthropologists draw attention to the difficulties that follow when Western understandings of health and illness, rooted in the science of biology, are assumed to be universally applicable, no matter what the context. In recent years, their views have been strengthened by the development of a broad-ranging, multidisciplinary body of work called science studies. As we noted earlier, in our discussion of cyborg anthropology, science studies research explores the interconnections among sociocultural, political, economic, and historic conditions that make scientific research both possible and successful. By the turn of the twenty-first century, research in science studies was well established not only in Europe and the United States but also in Asia (Fischer 2016).

medical anthropology The specialty of anthropology that concerns itself with human health—the factors that contribute to disease or illness and the ways that human populations deal with disease or illness.

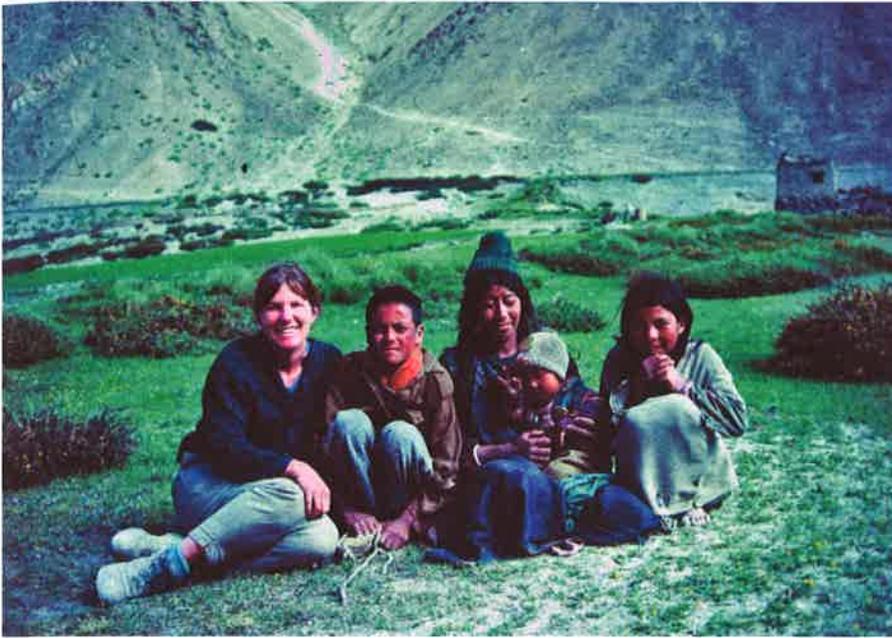


FIGURE 1.7 Medical anthropologist Andrea Wiley is shown here in a high-altitude setting in the Himalayas of Ladakh (India), where she studied maternal and child health.

Science studies is therefore a field in which many kinds of cyborg anthropology and medical anthropology fit very well. Science studies has become increasingly influential in all subfields of anthropology, suggesting innovative ways of bringing various subfields of anthropology into closer collaboration. Examples of these kinds of collaboration will appear in a number of chapters throughout this book.

The Uses of Anthropology

Why take a course in anthropology? An immediate answer might be that human fossils or broken bits of ancient pots or the customs of faraway peoples inspire a fascination that is its own reward. But the experience of being dazzled by seemingly exotic places and peoples carries with it a risk. As you become increasingly aware of the range of anthropological data, including the many options that exist for living a satisfying human life, you may find yourself wondering about the life you are living. Contact with the unfamiliar can be liberating, but it can also be threatening if it undermines your confidence in the absolute truth and universal rightness of your previous understanding of the way the world works.

The contemporary world is increasingly interconnected. As people from different cultural backgrounds

come into contact with one another, learning to cope with cultural differences becomes crucial. Anthropologists experience both the rewards and the risks of getting to know how other people live, and their work has helped to dispel many harmful stereotypes that sometimes make cross-cultural contact dangerous or impossible. Studying anthropology may help prepare you for some of the shocks you will encounter in dealing with people who look different from you, speak a different language, or do not agree that the world works exactly the way you think it does.

Anthropology involves learning about the kinds of living organisms we human beings are, the various ways we live our lives, and how we make sense of our experiences. Studying anthropology can equip you to deal with people with different cultural backgrounds in a less threatened, more tolerant manner. You may never be called on to eat termite paste. Still, you may one day encounter a situation in which none of the old rules seem to apply. As you struggle to make sense of what is happening, what you learned in anthropology class may help you relax and dare to try something totally new to you. If you do so, perhaps you too will discover the rewards of an encounter with the unfamiliar that is at the same time unaccountably familiar. We hope you will savor the experience.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

What Can You Learn from an Anthropology Major?

The Career Development Center at SUNY Plattsburgh developed a document that highlights what students typically learn from a major in anthropology.

1. Social agility In an unfamiliar social or career-related setting, you learn to quickly size up the rules of the game. You can become accepted more quickly than you could without this anthropological skill.
2. Observation You must often learn about a culture from within it, so you learn how to interview and observe as a participant.
3. Analysis and planning You learn how to find patterns in the behavior of a cultural group. This awareness of patterns allows you to generalize about the group's behavior and predict what they might do in a given situation.
4. Social sensitivity Although other people's ways of doing things may be different from your own, you learn the importance of events and conditions that have contributed to this difference. You also recognize that other cultures view your ways as strange. You learn the value of behaving toward others with appropriate preparation, care, and understanding.
5. Accuracy in interpreting behavior You become familiar with the range of behavior in different cultures. You learn how to look at cultural causes of behavior before assigning causes yourself.
6. Ability to appropriately challenge conclusions You learn that analyses of human behavior are open to challenge. You learn how to use new knowledge to test past conclusions.
7. Insightful interpretation of information You learn how to use data collected by others, reorganizing or interpreting the data to reach original conclusions.
8. Simplification of information Because anthropology is conducted among publics as well as about them, you learn how to simplify technical information for communication to non-technical people.
9. Contextualization Although attention to details is a trait of anthropology, you learn that any given detail might not be as important as its context and can even be misleading when the context is ignored.
10. Problem solving Because you often function within a cultural group or act on culturally sensitive issues, you learn to approach problems with care. Before acting, you identify the problem, set your goals, decide on the actions you will take, and calculate possible effects on other people.
11. Persuasive writing Anthropologists strive to represent the behavior of one group to another group and continually need to engage in interpretation. You learn the value of bringing someone else to share—or at least understand—your view through written argument.
12. Assumption of a social perspective You learn how to perceive the acts of individuals and local groups as both shaping and being shaped by larger sociocultural systems. The perception enables you to “act locally and think globally.”

Chapter Summary

1. Anthropology aims to describe in the broadest sense what it means to be human. The anthropological perspective is holistic, comparative, and evolutionary and has relied on the concept of culture to explain the diversity of human ways of life. Human beings depend on cultural learning for successful biological survival and reproduction, which is why anthropologists consider human beings biocultural organisms. Anthropology is also a field-based discipline. In the United States today, anthropology is considered to have five major subfields: biological anthropology, archaeology, cultural anthropology, linguistic anthropology, and applied anthropology.
2. Biological anthropology began as an attempt to classify all the world's populations into different races. By the early twentieth century, however, most anthropologists had rejected racial classifications as scientifically unjustifiable and objected to the ways in which racial classifications were used to justify the social practice of racism. Contemporary anthropologists who are interested in human biology include biological anthropologists, primatologists, and paleoanthropologists.
3. Cultural anthropologists study cultural diversity in all living human societies, including their own. Linguistic anthropologists approach cultural diversity by relating varied forms of language to their cultural contexts. Both gather information through fieldwork, by participating with their informants in social activities, and by observing those activities as outsiders. Today, some of them carry out research in fields like computer engineering or in ethnographic settings such as scientific laboratories or the Internet. They publish accounts of their research in ethnographies. Archaeology is a cultural anthropology of the human past, with interests ranging from the earliest stone tools to twenty-first-century garbage dumps. Applied anthropologists use information from the other anthropological specialties to solve practical cross-cultural problems. Medical anthropology overlaps biological anthropology, cultural anthropology, and applied anthropology and concerns itself with human health and illness, suffering, and well-being.
4. In contemporary anthropology, the multidisciplinary field of science studies has influenced work in all subfields of anthropology, particularly in fields like medical anthropology and cyborg anthropology. By offering fresh ways of rethinking the connections between nature and culture, people and artifacts, and people and other living species, science studies continues to suggest innovative ways of bringing various subfields of anthropology into closer collaboration.

For Review

1. What is anthropology, as defined in the text?
2. What are the four distinctive approaches anthropologists take to the study of human life?
3. How do anthropologists define culture?
4. What makes anthropology a cross-disciplinary discipline?
5. Describe the main subfields of modern anthropology.
6. What are some of the main topics of interest in biological anthropology?
7. What are some of the main topics of interest in cultural anthropology?
8. Summarize the difference between ethnography and ethnology.
9. What do linguistic anthropologists try to learn about human languages?
10. What are some of the things archaeologists study?
11. How is applied anthropology connected to the other branches of anthropology?
12. What is critical medical anthropology?

Key Terms

anthropology 5	cultural anthropology 11	gender 11	medical anthropology 16
applied anthropology 15	culture 6	globalization 13	paleoanthropology 10
archaeology 14	cyborg anthropology 13	holism 5	primatology 10
biocultural organisms 7	ethnography 12	informants 12	races 8
biological anthropology (or physical anthropology) 10	ethnology 12	language 14	racism 9
comparison 5	evolution 6	linguistic anthropology 14	science studies 13
	fieldwork 12	material culture 7	sex 11

Suggested Readings

- Ashmore, Wendy, and Robert J. Sharer. 2013. *Discovering our past: A brief introduction to archaeology*, 6th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill. An engaging introduction to the techniques, assumptions, interests, and findings of modern archaeology.
- Besteman, Catherine, and Hugh Gusterson (eds.). 2005. *Why America's top pundits are wrong: Anthropologists talk back*. Berkeley: University of California Press. According to the editors, "pundits" are media personalities—conservative and liberal—who lack authoritative knowledge on important issues but whose confident, authoritative, and entertaining pronouncements attract large audiences, especially when they defend simplified views of issues that reinforce rather than challenge popular prejudices. Twelve anthropologists offer critical assessments of the writings of pundits Samuel Huntington, Robert Kaplan, Thomas Friedman, and Dinesh D'Sousa and also explore questionable popular accounts of the origins of racial inequality and sexual violence.
- Feder, Kenneth L. 2014. *Frauds, myths and mysteries: Science and pseudoscience in archaeology*, 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill. An entertaining and informative exploration of fascinating frauds and genuine archaeological mysteries that also explains the scientific method.
- Kidder, Tracy. 2004. *Mountains beyond mountains: The quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a man who would cure the world*. New York: Random House. Kidder follows Dr. Farmer, an anthropologist and physician, relating his efforts to enlist powerful funders, the World Health Organization, and ordinary people in neglected communities in a quest to bring the best modern medicine to those who need it most.
- Relethford, John. 2013. *The human species: An introduction to biological anthropology*, 9th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill. An excellent, clear introduction to biological anthropology.
- Strang, Veronica. 2009. *What anthropologists do*. Oxford: Berg. Written for students, this book provides illustrations of many ways anthropology is being used in everyday life.