



# HUMANITY

AN INTRODUCTION TO  
CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

James Peoples | Garrick Bailey

TENTH EDITION



Locations of peoples discussed in *Humanity*





1. SLOVENIA
2. CROATIA
3. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
4. ALBANIA
5. MACEDONIA

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AN INTRODUCTION TO  
CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

TENTH EDITION

**James Peoples**

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***Humanity: An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, Tenth Edition***

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# Preface

A textbook titled *Humanity* might seem presumptuous. The authors chose this title back in 1985, when we began working on the first edition. We thought *Humanity* captures the most distinctive feature of the discipline called anthropology: in the social sciences, anthropology alone studies all the world's peoples. Anthropologists are interested in all humans, including those who lived in the prehistoric past, the historic past, and the present day.

As a scholarly field of study, anthropology is very broad in its scope and interests. Several generations of anthropologists have discovered a vast amount of information about humanity. Paleoanthropologists are uncovering fossils and unwinding genetic relationships that are showing how and when the human species originated and evolved into modern *Homo sapiens*. Archaeologists are digging into information about how prehistoric peoples lived their lives.

Another subfield, cultural anthropology, is the main subject of this book. Research done by cultural anthropologists (fieldwork) often involves years of intensive study while living among some human community. Cultural anthropology describes and tries to explain or interpret the fascinating cultural variability of the world's diverse peoples. In this text, we try to convey to students the life-enriching as well as the educational value of discovering this variability. In the process, we hope students and other readers will experience a change in their attitudes about other cultures, about their own lives and nations, and about humanity in general.

We also hope the book leads readers to think about their own identities as individuals, as members of a particular society with its traditions and ways of thinking and acting, and as participants in an increasingly worldwide human community. To achieve this last goal, we discuss anthropological insights into some of the problems that affect the twenty-first century, such as ethnic conflicts, national and global inequalities, hunger, and the survival of indigenous cultures and languages. As we describe the diversity in various dimensions of human life, including relations with the natural world, marriage, gender, and religion, we suggest the

implications of such diversity for contemporary people and societies.

Finally, we want newcomers to anthropology to grasp the full significance of the oldest anthropological lesson of all: that their own values, beliefs, and behaviors are a product of their upbringing in a particular human group rather than universal among all peoples. If understood properly and applied seriously, this principle leads us to question unconscious assumptions and to view ourselves as well as other peoples from new perspectives.

As we write the tenth edition in 2012–2013, the United States and its allies remained involved in conflicts in Afghanistan. Iran is alleged to be developing nuclear weapons—or maybe not. In Syria, fighting between a popular movement (or is it?) and the ruling government has killed thousands. The possibility that chemical weapons are used by the Syrian government sharpens a common international dilemma: under what circumstances do humanitarian values outweigh narrow national interests (and budgets)? Such conflicts, perceived threats, and competitions lead some to believe that peoples of different nations, ethnicities, and religions can never live together in peace and security.

In another part of our planet, the People's Republic of China became the world's second-largest economy in August 2010. Offshoring of production to China decreases consumer prices for the people of Europe and North America—but also reduces high-wage factory jobs on those continents. China's factories, massive building projects, and motor vehicles pollute its own air and water. Emissions of greenhouse gases from nations that use fossil fuels in factory production add to the climate change that already has occurred because of fossil fuel-based development in Western nations. Economic competition between nations and international environmental problems lead to dilemmas that are truly global. Will there inevitably be global winners and losers? How should one nation handle environmental problems that are caused partly by other nations?

In the short term, wars and other forms of conflict and competitions separate antagonists from one another. Yet, overall, the world's regions now interact more frequently and intensively than ever before. Words like *multiculturalism* and *multinationalism* have become familiar to most people in the past couple of decades. Anthropology has much to say about these changes. Just as important, anthropology helps us become more aware of how our own lives are affected by such changes.

## New to the Tenth Edition

There are many reasons for the growing interdependence of peoples and nations: increased integration of the world's national economies, rises in international travel and migration, educational exchanges between countries and regions, wide availability of the Internet, worldwide spread of consumer culture, and access to international media. The general term for such changes is *globalization*, which has many dimensions: cultural, economic, political, artistic, linguistic, and religious, to name a few. As in the previous two editions, each chapter of *Humanity* includes a feature called Globalization Challenges and Opportunities in this edition, which focuses on the dimensions of globalization that relate to the chapter's subject. Features in various chapters deal with issues such as how globalization affects cultural diversity, language survival, inequality among nations, religious diversity in the United States, production and sale of art, and cultural and religious fundamentalism. Some discussions are mainly factually based, whereas others present anthropological insights into the process or the results of globalization.

Most chapters contain material that explicitly suggests the relevance of the subject for modern North America, such as climate change, exchange forms, and religious accommodation. We have chosen to delete the previous Closer Look boxes, but some of their information is integrated into the main text, such as language survival and same-sex marriage. In most chapters we have rewritten major sections to simplify the style and word use to make the material more engaging. Sections of several chapters have been retitled and reorganized to improve clarity and logical flow.

To those instructors who are previous users of *Humanity*, the following chapter-by-chapter summary highlights the major changes in this edition.

Chapter 1 again introduces the subdisciplines and discusses the importance of anthropological perspectives, methods, and factual knowledge of cultural diversity. We no longer include applied anthropology as

a fifth subfield, but the text emphasizes its importance in the field as a whole and for career opportunities for undergraduates. We eliminated the detailed discussion of human biological evolution but do describe the most essential facts and dates. We highlight the change in cultural anthropological field research away from what some call *tribes* toward what some call *modern societies*, including both “mainstream” and immigrant communities. The discussion of relativism retains the distinction between methodological and moral relativism, using female genital mutilation to illustrate the complexity of the relativism issue.

The topical structure and themes of Chapter 2 (culture) are intact. We continue to integrate terms like *cultural identity*, *subcultures*, *roles*, and *social learning* into an extended discussion of the concept of culture, with the goal of demonstrating that the concept of culture is more complicated than most people realize. New research findings about toolmaking methods from South Africa are described in the subsection “Origins of Culture,” which also covers archaeological and physical evidence for the use of symbols and language. Coverage of the cultural construction of race is moved to a major section of the chapter.

Chapter 3 (language) further condenses the sections on structural linguistics. There is explicit discussion of the use of language to acquire and enhance power, using new examples of political speech. In the section on language and culture, we cover how linguistic words and concepts might affect views of social reality, illustrated by terms like *family*, *human rights*, and *democracy*. This chapter continues to emphasize relationships among culture, language, thought, and behavior over the technical aspects of linguistics. Information on Native American words that have been incorporated into English now has its own major section.

Chapter 4 (cultural diversity and globalization) is a new chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a context for the chapters that follow, not just the ones concerned with cultural diversity, theories, and methods. After a brief discussion of why and how culture changes, we discuss the broad patterns of culture change that have occurred over the past 150,000 years or so of human history. We end the chapter with a discussion of the global economy.

The focus of Chapter 5 (theory) remains twofold: (1) main historical patterns and early ideas about cultures that gave rise to anthropology today and (2) distinctions between contemporary approaches, which we categorize (broadly) as scientific and humanistic. We try to represent both sides fairly and objectively. Where appropriate, we integrate this distinction into

later empirical chapters by stating the interpretations or explanations each broad approach would offer. Relationships between early theorists and modern themes and divisions are explicitly covered, by showing how new ideas were shaped by earlier ones.

In Chapter 6 (methods) we continue to emphasize that anthropological research has two primary objectives: to describe and explain cultural diversity. Cultural research can also focus on the culture of a people at a particular point, or in the changes in their culture over time. The new Global Challenges and Opportunities box addresses the changing relationship between anthropological researchers and peoples being studied. Increasingly these peoples are concerned with the protection of their intellectual properties rights and privacy; thus changing their relationship to the researcher.

In Chapter 7 (environment) we expanded the section on industrialized societies, which includes a new subsection describing how fossil fuels dramatically increased productivity and the social and cultural implications of this increase. Basic facts about the places and dates of domestication are provided in a separate section. The chapter covers how the cultures of industrial societies differ from those of preindustrial times, environmental impacts (especially climate change and pollution), and the globalization of production and resource harvesting. Major themes include the contributions made by China and other emerging economies to climate change, difficulties of the international system in solving the “public bad” problem, how smaller nations (e.g., island countries) are likely to be most affected, and which nations should pay to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (given the globalization of production). New numerical data are added to several topics. Like Chapter 2, this chapter provides information referred to extensively in later chapters.

Chapter 8 (exchange) is extensively revised. We hope the introductory vignette creates student interest in the general topic. Sections on reciprocity, redistribution, and market forms are largely unchanged except for one new example. More than previous editions, we focus on the distinction between market exchanges—which are ancient and culturally widespread—and market economies—which developed since the Industrial Revolution. Thanks to the comments of reviewers, we give explicit attention to capitalism and socialism as ways to organize industrial and postindustrial economies, including the advantages and weaknesses of each. Neoliberalism and social welfare capitalism are covered. We deconstruct the concept of *productivity*, using

Karen Ho’s research on Wall Street investment bankers as the primary example. There is a new discussion of the complexities of estimating the costs and benefits of the globalization of factory production, including the wider implications of the collapse of a building containing clothing factories in Bangladesh in April 2013.

In Chapter 9 (marriage and family), we streamlined many discussions while retaining the standard textbook structure from previous editions: ideas about incest taboos, problems of defining marriage, marriage forms and their implications, marital transactions, postmarital residence patterns, and household forms. Along the way, we cover fictive kin, matrifocal families, three unusual cases, and descriptions of Old Testament references to levirate, bridewealth, and brideservice to increase student interest. A new section discusses gay marriage and “culture wars” in the United States (including recent events such as the June 2013 Supreme Court decision). We expanded coverage of the relevance of anthropological studies on marriage and family to twenty-first-century issues.

Coverage in Chapter 10 (kinship, descent, and terminology) also remains pretty standard: forms of descent and kinship, influences on these forms, and a minimized description of kinship terminologies to illustrate the cultural construction of kinship. The concluding section of this chapter suggests implications of diversity in marriage, family, and kinship forms for modern life and the future.

In Chapter 11 (gender), we have completed eliminated some old terminologies, using “Two Spirit” rather than “berdache,” and “gendered” rather than “sexual” division of labor. Except for streamlining and rewriting several paragraphs, this chapter is much the same as in the ninth edition, which added two new ethnographic cases: the hijra for multiple gender identities and the Vanatinai as a possible example of gender equality. We added more suggestions for the relevance of anthropological findings and ideas to modern understandings.

The basic structure of Chapter 12 (political life) has remained unchanged. However, the box entitled “Murder Among the Cheyenne” has been dropped with much of the discussion integrated into the main text. Although the Global Challenges and Opportunities box retains the old title “Multinational Corporations and the Nation-State,” the emphasis is now on the global economy and the resultant growing economic power of these corporations and how they are increasingly challenging the authority of national governments.



Chapter 13 (inequality and stratification) continues to contrast egalitarian, ranked, and stratified societies, incorporating many examples. It also discusses the concept of *ideology* (both religious and secular) and the complexities of evaluating it. As in earlier editions, we updated numerical data on the distribution of income and wealth in the United States, including numbers that bring home the extent to which economic inequalities have increased in the last thirty years. In discussing the functionalist and conflict theories of stratification, we used examples (e.g., CEO-to-worker income ratios) to illustrate some ideas.

In Chapter 14 (religion), we rewrote in places to clarify some points. There is a new discussion of the problems of classifications used by anthropologists to compare religions. The subsection on communal religious organizations is expanded to include rites of passage for both genders and seasonal rituals as well as ancestral rituals and totemism. New brief ethnographic examples are the eastern Pueblo, Gebusi of New Guinea, and Hawaiian *mana*. In the globalization feature on religious pluralism, we added new material on European countries.

Chapter 15 (art) is basically the same with the exception of the Global Challenges box. This new box addresses the question of how increased integration into the global economy and less expensive machine-made goods are changing the artistic visual traditions associated with handmade items.

Chapter 16 (ethnicity) has modifications in the defining and describing the attributes of ethnic groups. The discussions of types of ethnic groups have been changed. The discussion of civilizations has been expanded, while transnational groups have been dropped from the list of types of ethnic groups and are now discussed in greater detail in the Global Challenges box. The data on conflicts have been updated and changed.

Chapter 17 (world problems and the practice of anthropology), though modified, still discusses anthropological insights in the issues of health and health care, population growth, and world hunger. The last part on anthropologists as advocates has been modified, expanded, and updated.

## Special Features

The boxed features called A Closer Look are eliminated in this edition, in the interest of space and continuity. Each chapter still contains a feature on globalization, titled **Global Challenges and Opportunities**, a label

that reflects the focus of most of their content. A photo accompanies each insert.

Several pedagogical aids are intended to help students understand and retain the material they have just read. Each chapter begins with a set of five to eight **Learning Objectives** that focus on the key concepts, ideas, and themes of the chapter. The learning objectives are tied to the end-of-chapter **Summary**. We hope this helps students come away with a solid understanding of the main points of each chapter.

We continue to include at least one **Concept Review** in every chapter to condense ideas and make sharp distinctions in just a few words. A **Glossary** again is included at the end of the book. **Key Terms** in bold are defined immediately at the bottom of the page when students first encounter them in the chapter.

Anthropology is a highly visual discipline, and *Humanity* holds to the highest standards in providing photographs, figures, and maps to illustrate the text. Maps on the inside front cover show the location of peoples and cultures mentioned in the book.

There are two **indexes**, one a traditional subject index and the other a list of peoples and cultures mentioned in the book.

## Resources

### Student Resources

**CourseMate.** The CourseMate for Peoples and Bailey's *Humanity*, tenth edition, brings course concepts to life with interactive learning, study, and exam preparation tools that support the printed textbook. Access an integrated MindTap e-book, glossary, quizzes, videos, and more in the CourseMate for *Humanity*, tenth edition. Go to CengageBrain.com to register or purchase access.

### Instructor Resources

**Online Instructor's Manual with Test Bank.** This online supplement offers learning objectives, chapter outlines and summaries, key terms, suggested supplementary lectures, discussion questions, and more. The instructor's manual also includes updated references to relevant news articles, films, and videos for each chapter. The test bank provides approximately 40 multiple-choice, 15 true/false, and 5 essay questions per chapter.

**Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero.** A flexible, online system, Cognero allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions. Cognero also offers you

the ability to create multiple tests in an instant and deliver them from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want!

**Online PowerPoint Slides.** These vibrant, Microsoft® PowerPoint® lecture slides for each chapter will assist you with your lecture by providing concept coverage using images, figures, and tables directly from the textbook.

**CourseReader: Anthropology.** *CourseReader Anthropology* is a fully customizable online reader that provides access to hundreds of readings and audio and video selections from multiple disciplines. This easy-to-use solution allows you to select exactly the content you need for your courses and is loaded with convenient pedagogical features like highlighting, printing, note taking, and audio downloads. You have the freedom to assign individualized content at an affordable price. The *CourseReader: Anthropology* is the perfect complement to any class.

**The Wadsworth Anthropology Video Library Volumes I–IV.** Enhance your lectures with new video clips from the BBC® Motion Gallery and CBS® News. Addressing topics from the four fields, these videos are divided into short segments, perfect for introducing key concepts with footage sourced from some of the most remarkable collections in the world.

**AIDS in Africa DVD.** Expand your students' global perspective of HIV/AIDS with this award-winning documentary series focused on controlling HIV/AIDS in southern Africa. Films focus on caregivers in the faith community; how young people share messages of hope through song and dance; the relationship of HIV/AIDS to gender, poverty, stigma, education, and justice; and the story of two HIV-positive women helping others.

**Classic Readings in Cultural Anthropology, Third Edition.** Practical and insightful, *Classic Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, third edition, is a concise and accessible reader that presents a core selection of historical and contemporary works that have been instrumental in shaping anthropological thought and research over the past decades. Carefully edited by Dr. Gary Ferraro, the third edition includes five new classic readings from the disciplines of cultural anthropology and linguistics. Readings are organized around eight topics that closely mirror most introductory textbooks and are selected from scholarly works on the basis of their enduring themes and contributions to the discipline. These selections allow students to further explore anthropological perspectives on such key topics as culture, language and communication, ecology and economics, marriage and family, gender, politics and social control, supernatural beliefs, and

issues of culture change. The new edition also addresses pressing topics such as globalization, ethnic violence, environmental issues, and more. *Classic Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, third edition, delivers an excellent introduction to the field of anthropology and the contributions it makes to understanding the world around us.

**Human–Environment Interactions: New Directions in Human Ecology.** This module by Kathy Galvin begins with a brief discussion of the history and core concepts of the field of human ecology and the study of how humans interact with the natural environment. It then looks in-depth at how the environment influences cultural practices (environmental determinism), as well as how aspects of culture, in turn, affect the environment. Human behavioral ecology is presented within the context of natural selection and how ecological factors influence the development of cultural and behavioral traits, and how people subsist in different environments. The module concludes with a discussion of resilience and global change as a result of human–environment interactions. This module, in chapter-like print format, can be packaged for free with the text.

**Medical Anthropology in Applied Perspective Module.** This free-standing module is actually a complete text chapter, featuring the same quality of pedagogy and written content in Cengage's cultural anthropology texts. See your sales representative for information on bundling the module with this text.

## Acknowledgments

Since the first edition was published in 1988, *Humanity* (the book, not the species) has benefited enormously from reviewers. Some reviewers are long-term users of the text, whereas others have never adopted it for their classes. Of course, we have never been able to incorporate all their suggestions for improvement, or the book would be twice as long as it is. But, over the last 25 years, we have added, subtracted, updated, rethought, and reorganized most of the book based on reviewers' comments. We thank all of them.

For the 10th edition, both authors thank the reviewers listed here (their identities were unknown to us until publication):

Lara Braff, San Diego State University  
Maureen Sperrazza, Western Connecticut State University  
Francine Melia, University of Nevada–Reno  
Jeffrey Ratcliffe, Penn State Abington  
Micah Soltz, Columbus State Community College

Although we were unable to make all the changes these scholars suggested, many of their comments are incorporated into the text. Their comments that the book needs to be more *explicit* about the relevance of anthropology in today's world were especially influential.

Both authors have benefited from the suggestions of colleagues and friends. Jim is grateful to Thomas Love

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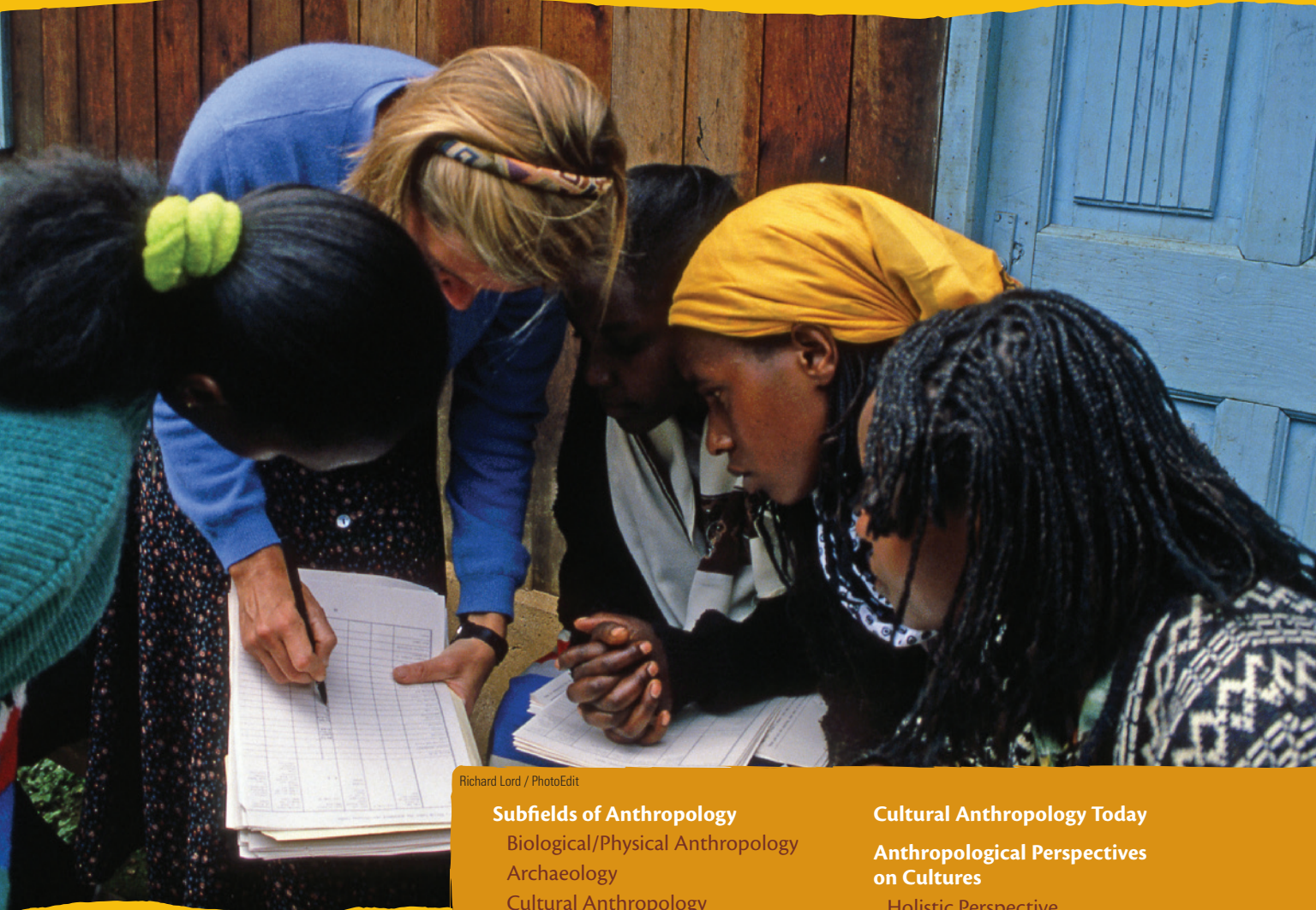
## About the Authors

**James (Jim) Peoples** is currently Professor and Chairperson of Sociology/Anthropology and Director of East Asian Studies at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio. Peoples has taught at the University of California at Davis and the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma, among other colleges and universities. He received a B.A. from the University of California–Santa Cruz and a PhD from the University of California–Davis. His main research interests are human ecology, cultures of the Pacific Islands, and cultures of East Asia. His first book, *Island in Trust* (1985), describes his fieldwork on the island of Kosrae in the Federated States of Micronesia. His latest project is a coauthored book describing the prehistory, history, and contemporary culture of Kosrae island in Micronesia, to which he most recently returned in July and August 2013. Since joining the faculty of Ohio Wesleyan University in 1988, he has taught courses on East Asia, the Pacific, human ecology, cultural anthropology, the anthropology of religion, world hunger, the prehistory of North America, and Native Americans of the southwestern United States. Since 2010, Peoples has been Secretary of the Japan Studies Association. When not teaching, writing, or attending meetings, he enjoys fly-fishing, traveling, and gardening.

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# 1 The Study of Humanity



Richard Lord / PhotoEdit

Cultural anthropology is the discipline that studies human cultural diversity, usually by visiting people where they live and interacting with them first-hand. This anthropologist is training Kenyan women to help with her field investigation.

## Subfields of Anthropology

- Biological/Physical Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Cultural Anthropology
- Anthropological Linguistics

## Applications of Anthropology

- Applied Anthropology
- Careers in Anthropology

## Cultural Anthropology Today

### Anthropological Perspectives on Cultures

- Holistic Perspective
- Comparative Perspective
- Relativistic Perspective

## Some Lessons of Anthropology

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1 LIST** the four major subfields of anthropology and describe their primary subject matters.
- 2 DISCUSS** how anthropology differs from other disciplines that also study humans.
- 3 EXPLAIN** some of the practical uses of anthropology in solving human problems.
- 4 DISCUSS** how cultural anthropology has changed in the last several decades.
- 5 UNDERSTAND** the meaning and importance of the holistic, comparative, and relativistic perspectives.
- 6 DESCRIBE** the wider lessons one can learn from studying anthropology.

What makes humans different from other animals? What is human nature, or is there such a thing? How and why do the peoples of the world differ, both biologically and culturally? Have affluent people in industrialized, urbanized nations sacrificed something important in their quest for the good life? If so, what might we learn from “traditional” or “indigenous” people? What are the implications of living in a world whose diverse peoples have recently become connected by global corporations and international communications? These are some of the questions investigated by **anthropology**, the academic discipline that studies all of humanity.

Almost everything about humanity interests anthropologists. We want to know when, where, and how our species originated and why we evolved into what we are today. Anthropologists try to explain the many differences among the world’s cultures, such as why people in one culture believe they get sick because the souls of witches devour their livers, whereas people in another think that illness can result from tarantulas flinging tiny magical darts into their bodies. We want to know why most Argentinians and Australians like beef, which devout Hindus and Buddhists refuse to eat. We are curious about why some New Guinea peoples ritually engorge themselves with pork—the same animal flesh that some religions that began in the Middle East hold to be unclean and prohibited as food. In brief, anthropologists of one kind or another

are likely to investigate almost everything about human beings: our biological evolution, cuisines, values, art styles, behaviors, languages, religions, and so forth.

Anthropologists, then, study many different dimensions of humanity. Indeed, the broad scope of anthropology is perhaps the one feature that most distinguishes it from other fields that also study humans, such as psychology and history. Anthropologists are interested in *all* human beings, whether living or dead, Asian or African or European. No people are too isolated to escape the anthropologist’s notice. We also are interested in many different *aspects* of humans, including their genetic makeup, family lives, political systems, relations with nature, and emotional responses. No dimension of humankind, from skin color to dance traditions, falls outside the anthropologist’s interest.

## Subfields of Anthropology

Obviously, no single anthropologist can master all these subjects. Therefore, most modern anthropologists specialize in one of four principal subfields: biological (or physical) anthropology, archaeology, cultural anthropology, or anthropological linguistics. (The Concept Review summarizes the primary interests of each four subfields.) A fifth area, called applied anthropology, uses anthropological methods and insights to help solve real-world problems. Because cultural anthropology is the primary subject of this book, here we briefly summarize the other subfields and describe some of their major findings.

**anthropology** Academic discipline that studies humanity from a broad biological and cultural perspective.



<b>Physical/Biological</b>	Excavation of material remains in prehistoric sites to reconstruct early human ways of life; study of remains in historic sites to learn more about historic, literate peoples
<b>Archaeology</b>	Comparisons of human anatomy and behavior with other primate species; physical (genetic) variation among human populations; biological evolution of <i>Homo sapiens</i>
<b>Cultural</b>	Differences and similarities in contemporary and historically recent cultures; causes and consequences of sociocultural change; impacts of globalization and contacts on the world's peoples
<b>Anthropological Linguistics</b>	Relationships between language and culture; role of language and speaking in social life of various peoples; how language might shape perceptions and thoughts

## Biological/Physical Anthropology

**Biological** (also called **physical**) **anthropology** is closely related to the biological sciences in its goals and methods. It focuses on subjects such as the anatomy



Steve Bloom Images/Alamy

One of the most surprising discoveries about the great apes is that they commonly use and even make tools. These two Ugandan chimpanzees are inserting twigs inside termite mounds. When they withdraw the twig, they will eat the insects that have locked their jaws onto it.

and behavior of monkeys and apes, the physical (including genetic) variations between different human populations, and the biological evolution of the human species.

Within biological anthropology, researchers in **primatology** study the evolution, anatomy, adaptation, and social behavior of primates, the taxonomic order to which humans belong. Research on group-living monkeys and apes has added significantly to the scientific understanding of many aspects of human behavior, including tool use, sexuality, parenting, cooperation, male-female differences, and aggression. Field studies of African chimpanzees and gorillas, the two apes genetically most similar to humans, have been especially fruitful sources of hypotheses and knowledge.

In the 1960s, famous British primatologist Jane Goodall was the first to observe toolmaking among African chimpanzees. Chimps intentionally modified sticks to probe entry and exit holes in termite mounds. When termite soldiers attacked the intruding objects, the chimps withdrew the probes and licked off the tasty insects. Goodall observed adult chimps teaching their young how to probe for termites, showing that humanity's closest animal relatives have at least a semblance of cultural tradition. Some chimpanzee groups wave tree branches in aggressive displays against other groups and wad up leaves to use as sponges to soak

**biological (physical) anthropology** Major subfield of anthropology that studies the biological dimensions of humans and other primates.

**primatology** Part of biological anthropology that studies primates, including monkeys and apes.



AP Photo/Bob Campbell/Turkana Basin Institute

**Paleoanthropology is the subfield that specializes in human evolution, using evidence from DNA and fossil discoveries. Here Richard Leakey discusses the evidence for human biological evolution by displaying hominin fossils discovered in the Turkana Basin in Kenya.**

up drinking water. Working in West Africa, other researchers have observed some chimp groups using heavy round stones as hammers to crack open hard-shelled nuts. The chimps select stones of the proper shape and weight, control the force of their blows so that the nut does not shatter, and often leave the tools under nut trees for future use.

Other apes also use tools. Using sticks, African gorillas in the wild gauge the depth of water and even lay down tree trunks to cross deep pools. Researchers have seen one young female gorilla use stones to smash open a palm nut to get at the oil inside.

These and other observations dramatically altered our understanding of human–animal differences: prior to such studies, making tools was widely considered to be one of the things humans could do that

other animals could not. Also, the ability to make tools reveals a certain amount of mental foresight: the apes must be able to see a natural object as a potential tool that can be used to get something or to solve some problem.

Biological anthropologists who study **human variation** investigate how and why human populations vary physically due to hereditary, genetic factors. All humanity belongs to a single species, which taxonomists call *Homo sapiens*. One of the most important findings of anthropology is that the physical/genetic similarities among the world's peoples far outweigh the differences. Nonetheless, peoples whose ancestral homelands lie in Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia, the Pacific islands, and the Americas were once more isolated than they are today. During this time, they evolved differences in overall body and facial form, height, skin color, blood chemistry, and other genetically determined features. Specialists in human variation measure and try to explain the differences and similarities among the world's peoples in these physical characteristics. (We return to “racial” variation in Chapter 2.)

Often, genetic differences are related to the environment in which a people or their ancestors lived. Consider skin color. When in sunlight, human skin manufactures vitamin D, a necessary nutrient. Melanin is the substance in human skin that produces the color our eyes perceive as dark. High levels of melanin protect skin against sun damage, so melanin usually is beneficial in tropical environments, where sunlight is most intense. However, as humans migrated into more temperate regions tens of thousands of years ago, too much melanin became harmful. In high latitudes, melanin reduces the penetration of sunlight in the skin, reducing its ability to make vitamin D. Thus, dark pigmentation is harmful in high latitudes like Europe and Siberia, and over many centuries skin grew lighter (“whiter”) in such regions.

Human populations who live in high altitudes also have evolved physiological adaptations. Andean peoples of South America have relatively large lungs and high levels of hemoglobin. The blood of Tibetans circulates more rapidly than most other people, allowing their muscles and organs to function more efficiently at elevations over 14,000 feet. Such populations evolved physiological adaptations to supply oxygen to their tissues.

Another aim of physical anthropology is understanding when and how the human species evolved from prehuman, apelike ancestors. **Paleoanthropology** investigates human biological evolution. Over decades of searching for fossils and carrying out meticulous

**human variation** Physical differences among human populations; an interest of physical anthropologists.

**paleoanthropology** Specialization within biological anthropology that investigates the biological evolution of the human species.





© Reuters/Corbis

**Forensic anthropologists work with governments and international organizations to identify human skeletal remains and to help determine the causes of death. These forensic specialists are examining remains in El Salvador.**

laboratory studies, paleoanthropologists have reconstructed the evolution of human anatomy: limbs, feet, hands, skull, and other physical features.

In the late 1970s, paleoanthropologists began to use new methods for investigating human evolution. Scientists in the field of molecular genetics can now sequence DNA—the genetic material by which hereditary traits are transmitted between generations. By comparing DNA sequences, geneticists can estimate how closely different species are related. Studies comparing the genetic sequences of African apes with humans show that humans share 97.7 percent of their DNA with gorillas and 98.7 percent with chimpanzees and bonobos. DNA from modern humans and DNA sampled from bones of the extinct human species *Neanderthal* are about 99.5 percent the same. Similarities in the DNA of two or more species are evidence that they share a common evolutionary ancestor. Also, the more similar the DNA between two or more species, the less time has elapsed since their divergence from a common ancestor. Thus, anthropologists study DNA sequences to estimate how long ago the species separated.

Through discovering and analyzing fossils, comparisons of DNA sequences, and other methods, the outlines of human evolution are becoming clear. Most scholars

agree that the evolutionary line leading to modern humans split from the lines leading to modern African apes (chimpanzees and gorillas) at least 6 million years ago.

Most biological anthropologists work in universities or museums as teachers, researchers, writers, and curators. But many also apply their knowledge of human anatomy to practical matters. For instance, specialists in **forensic anthropology** work for or consult with law enforcement agencies, where they help identify human skeletal remains. Among their contributions are determining the age, sex, height, and other physical characteristics of crime or accident victims. Forensic anthropologists gather evidence from bones about old injuries or diseases, which are then compared with medical histories to identify victims. Forensic anthropologists also excavate and analyze mass graves containing the remains of victims of assassination, hoping to identify them and determine the causes of their deaths.

**forensic anthropology** Specialization within physical anthropology that analyzes and identifies human remains.



© Robert Bremner/Photo Edit

Prehistoric archaeologists investigate the remote past by the careful excavation of material remains.

## Archaeology

**Archaeology** investigates the human past through excavating and analyzing material remains. Modern archaeology is divided into two major kinds of studies: prehistoric and historic.

**Prehistoric archaeology** is the study of prehistoric peoples—that is, those who had no writing to keep records of their activities, customs, and beliefs. Much information about the lives of prehistoric peoples can be recovered from the tools, pottery, ornaments, bones, plant pollen, charcoal, and other materials they left behind, in or on the ground. Through careful excavation and laboratory analysis of such remains, prehistoric archaeologists reconstruct the way people lived in ancient times and trace how human cultures have changed over many centuries and millennia. Contrary to impressions given by many television documentaries and popular films,

the main goal of excavating archaeological sites is not to recover valuable treasures and other artifacts, but to understand how people lived long ago. Modern archaeologists seek to reconstruct as fully as possible how prehistoric peoples made their tools, lived in their environments, organized their societies, and practiced their religions.

Over decades of meticulous field excavations and laboratory work, archaeologists have learned that agriculture first developed around 10,000 years ago, when some peoples of the Middle East began planting wheat and barley. For the first time, humans transformed certain edible wild plants into *crops*. A few thousand years later, peoples of China, Southeast Asia, and West Africa also domesticated plants like rice and millet. On the other side of the world, in what we now call the Americas, ancient peoples of southern Mexico, western South America, and the Amazon basin domesticated different plants like corn, squash, beans, tomatoes, potatoes, and manioc. Surprisingly, present evidence shows that these six regions where agriculture developed were independent—meaning that the people of one region domesticated plants on their own, rather than learning the idea of agriculture from other peoples. Similarly, civilization (living in cities) developed in several different regions independently, beginning about 5,000 years ago (see Chapter 6).

**archaeology** Investigation of past cultures through the excavation of material remains.

**prehistoric archaeology** Field that uses excavations and analysis of material remains to investigate cultures that existed before the development of writing.



To investigate the past of societies in which at least some people could read and write, historians analyze written materials such as diaries, letters, land records, newspapers, and tax collection documents. The growing field of **historic archaeology** supplements historical documents by excavating houses, stores, plantations, factories, and other structures and remains. Historic archaeologists seek to uncover information lacking in old documents about how people lived at a particular time and place.

In early May, 2013, the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, CNN, and other media reported a startling find by historic archaeologists. In 1607, 104 settlers from England arrived in Jamestown, Virginia, to establish a settlement and make profit for the private company that financed the colony. Only one-third were alive after 9 months in the New World, despite trade with the local Native Americans, the Powhatan. More colonists arrived in the next couple of years. However, in the winter of 1609, the Anglo Jamestown settlers were starving. A drought the previous year had led to low agricultural yields, the fleet of nine ships from England that was supposed to supply the colony had been lost in a hurricane, and relationships with the Powhatan had turned hostile. A letter written in 1625 by the leader of the colony refers to the settlers digging up human corpses to consume their flesh during the Starving Time.

Archaeological excavations in the summer of 2012 led by William Kelso found hard evidence that cannibalism in fact had occurred at Jamestown. The archaeological team unearthed the remains of a girl about 14 years old. After her death, someone had struck the back of the girl's head, and another blow to her left temple split her skull, apparently to remove the brain. Other cuts on the face bones showed that facial tissues had been removed. Douglas Owsley, a well-known forensic anthropologist who studied the skull and the evidence of blows, believes the girl was likely a child of an English gentleman, because analysis of her bones showed a diet high in protein. Excavations in and around Jamestown will continue.

Today, many archaeologists work not in universities but in museums, public agencies, and for-profit corporations. Museums offer jobs as curators and researchers. State highway departments employ archaeologists to conduct surveys of proposed new routes in order to locate and excavate archaeological sites that will be destroyed. The U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service hire archaeologists to find sites on public lands to help make decisions about the preservation of cultural materials. Those who work in *cultural resource management* (CRM) locate sites of prehistoric and historic

significance, evaluate their importance, and make recommendations about total or partial preservation.

Since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, private corporations and government agencies that construct factories, apartments, parking lots, shopping malls, and other structures must file a report how the construction will affect historical remains and which steps will be taken to preserve them. Because of this law, the business of *contract archaeology* has boomed in the United States. Contract archaeology companies bid competitively for the privilege of locating, excavating, and reporting on sites affected or destroyed by construction. Hundreds of contract archaeology companies exist, providing jobs for thousands of archaeologists and students.

In 2012, while building a courthouse in Fredericksburg, Virginia, construction workers came across an underground wall. The city government called in contract archaeologist Taft Kiser to lead a team to investigate the wall before the new construction destroyed it. In their hurried excavation (such work used to be called “salvage archaeology”), the team found that the wall was part of an old cellar. The original cellar was from the Civil War period and contained remains of an 1862 battle. The cellar appeared to be a place where Union soldiers sought refuge after a battle. It contained lots of bullets, buttons, pipes, broken pieces from jars and whiskey bottles, and many other everyday objects used by soldiers. The house itself was burned after the 1862 battle, and the cellar was later buried by construction of the city. The cellar was a “time capsule,” to use Kiser's words, meaning that it apparently had not been disturbed in the 150 years since the Union soldiers left it.

## Cultural Anthropology

**Cultural anthropology** (also called **sociocultural anthropology** and **social anthropology**) is the study of contemporary and historically recent human societies and cultures. As its name suggests, the main focus of this subfield is culture—the customs and beliefs of some human group. (The concept of culture is discussed at length in Chapter 2.)

**historic archaeology** Field that investigates the past of literate peoples through excavation of sites and analysis of artifacts and other material remains.

**cultural anthropology (social anthropology, sociocultural anthropology)** Subfield that studies the way of life of contemporary and historically recent peoples.

As we'll see in future chapters, cultural anthropologists study an enormous number of specific subjects, far too many to list here. Here are a few of the main interests of this subfield:

- studying firsthand and reporting about the ways of living of particular human groups, including both indigenous peoples and peoples who live in modernized, industrialized nations;
- comparing diverse cultures in the search for general principles that might explain human ways of living or that might cause cultural differences;
- understanding how various dimensions of human life—economics, family life, religion, art, communication, and so forth—relate to one another in particular cultures and in cultures generally;
- analyzing the causes and consequences of cultural change, including the causes and consequences of what is commonly called globalization;
- enhancing public knowledge and appreciation of cultural differences and multicultural diversity;
- using anthropological methods and insights to aid understanding of life in today's industrialized, capitalistic nations, including the anthropologist's own nations.

The last three objectives are especially important in the twenty-first century, in which individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds regularly come into contact with one another in the rapidly changing global society. Later chapters discuss some of the work cultural anthropologists have done on globalization and in modern nation-states.

To collect information about particular cultures, researchers conduct **fieldwork**. Most fieldworkers leave their own homes and universities, moving into the communities they study and living in close, daily contact with the people. If practical, they communicate in the local language. Daily interaction with the members of a community provides fieldworkers with firsthand experiences that yield insights and information that could not be gained in

any other way. Most fieldwork requires at least a year of residence in the field site, and two or more years are common. Fieldworkers usually report the findings of their research in books or scholarly journals, where they are available to other scholars, students, and to the general public. A written account of how a single human population lives is called an **ethnography**, which means “writing about a people.” Thus, most ethnographies are reports about the culture of communities where anthropologists have conducted fieldwork. (We have more to say about the processes and problems of fieldwork in Chapter 6.)

To some people, studies of other cultures seem esoteric—“interesting but of little practical value,” they often say. Most anthropologists disagree. We think that what we learn by our descriptions, comparisons, and analyses of cultures helps to improve the human condition. For one thing, studies of other cultures help us understand our own way of life. For another, specific studies carried out by cultural anthropologists have helped solve practical problems in real human communities.

## Anthropological Linguistics

Defined as the study of human language, linguistics exists as a separate discipline from anthropology. Linguists describe and analyze the sound patterns and combinations, words, meanings, and sentence structures of human languages. The ability to communicate complex messages with great efficiency may be the most important capability of humans that makes us different from primates and other animals. Once we realize how complicated the knowledge of a language is, we realize that the communicative abilities of humans are truly unique. Certainly our ability to speak is a key factor in the evolutionary success of humans.

Cultural anthropologists are interested in language mainly because of how the language and culture of a people affect each other. The subfield of **anthropological linguistics** is concerned with the complex relationships between language and other aspects of human behavior and thought. For example, anthropological linguists are interested in how language is used in various social contexts: What style of speech must one use with people of high status? How do people of various social categories (like genders, ethnicities), classes (ultrarich, middle), and political persuasions (Tea Partiers, environmentalists) use language to promote their social and political agendas? Does the particular language we learned while growing up have any important effects on how we view the world or how we think and feel? (Chapter 3 provides more information about language and social life.)

**fieldwork** Ethnographic research that involves observing and interviewing a community in order to document and describe their way of life.

**ethnography** Written description of the way of life of some human population.

**anthropological linguistics** Subfield that focuses on the interrelationships between language and other aspects of a people's culture.

As our brief summary of the four subdisciplines confirms, anthropology is a broad field. Even by itself, cultural anthropology—the main subject of this text—is enormously broad: modern fieldworkers live among and study human communities in all parts of the world, from the mountains of Tibet to the deserts of the American Southwest, from the streets of Chicago to the plains of East Africa.

Today's anthropology is quite different than 30 or 40 years ago. Still, the discipline does have a distinctive focus. More so than other fields, anthropology's focus is *human diversity*. Humankind is diverse in a multitude of ways, but two are most important to anthropologists. First, although all modern humans are members of the same species, human populations differ somewhat in their genetic heritage, making humans diverse *biologically*. Second, the customs and beliefs of one society or ethnic group differ from those of other societies or ethnic groups, reflecting the fact that humans are diverse *culturally*. Archaeologists also investigate diversity in the past, between the world's major regions (e.g., how did the prehistoric peoples of Europe differ from those of East Asia 5,000 years ago?). Archaeologists also trace changes in ways of life over long time spans (e.g., how did human life change in the southeastern United States between 4,000 and 1,000 years ago?). Cultural anthropologists investigate, describe, and try to understand cultural diversity today and in the recent past.

## Applications of Anthropology

Not too long ago, most professional anthropologists spent their careers in some form of educational institution, either in colleges and universities or in museums. However, since around 1990, more and more anthropologists have jobs in other kinds of institutions. The American Anthropological Association (AAA, often called “Triple A”) is the professional association of anthropologists. In its 2006 *Annual Report*, the AAA reported that more than half of anthropologists work outside academic settings, in government agencies, international organizations, nonprofit groups, or private companies. Hundreds of others make their living as consultants to such organizations and institutions.

### Applied Anthropology

**Applied anthropology** use anthropological methods, theories, concepts, and insights to help public

institutions or private enterprises deal with practical, real-world problems. Applied anthropology sometimes is viewed as a fifth subfield, but all applied anthropologists have been trained in one or more of the traditional four fields. In this sense, applied anthropology cuts across the other subfields and individuals in all subfields may also do applied work—that is, work that contributes directly to problem solving in an organization.

We discuss some of the ways applied anthropologists have contributed to the alleviation of human problems in later chapters. For now, a few examples illustrate some of the work they do.

*Development anthropology* is one area in which anthropologists apply their expertise to the solution of practical human problems, usually in developing countries. Working both as full-time employees and as consultants, development anthropologists provide information about communities that helps agencies adapt projects to local conditions and needs. Examples of agencies and institutions that employ development anthropologists include the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme. One important role of the anthropologist in such institutions is to provide policymakers with knowledge of local-level ecological and cultural conditions, so that projects will avoid unanticipated problems and minimize negative impacts.

*Educational anthropology* offers jobs in public agencies and private institutions. Some roles of educational anthropologists include advising in bilingual education, conducting detailed observations of classroom interactions, training personnel in multicultural issues, and adapting teaching styles to local customs and needs. Many modern nations, including those of Europe and the Americas, are becoming more culturally diverse due to immigration. As a response to this trend, an increasingly important role for educational anthropologists working in North America is to help professional educators understand the learning styles and behavior of children from various ethnic and national backgrounds. Persons trained in both linguistic and cultural anthropology are especially likely to work in educational anthropology.

**applied anthropology** Subfield whose practitioners use anthropological methods, theories, and concepts to solve practical, real-world problems; practitioners are often employed by a governmental agency or private organization.