

TWELFTH EDITION CONRAD PHILLIP KOTTAK



MIRROR FOR HUMANITY

A Concise Introduction
to Cultural Anthropology

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Hill



Mirror for Humanity

A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Twelfth Edition

Conrad Phillip Kottak

University of Michigan





MIRROR FOR HUMANITY: A CONCISE INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY,
TWELFTH EDITION

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Content Project Managers: *Rick Hecker/Katie Reuter*

Senior Buyer: *Laura M. Fuller*

Designer: *Egzon Shaqiri*

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To my daughter,
Dr. Juliet Kottak Mavromatis





Also available from McGraw-Hill by Conrad Phillip Kottak:

Window on Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Anthropology, 9th ed. (2020)

Anthropology: Appreciating Human Diversity, 18th ed. (2019)

Cultural Anthropology: Appreciating Cultural Diversity, 18th ed. (2019)

CULTURE, 2nd ed. (2014) (Lisa Gezon and Conrad Phillip Kottak)

On Being Different: Diversity and Multiculturalism in the North American Mainstream,
4th ed. (2012) (with Kathryn A. Kozaitis)



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Preface

Mirror for Humanity is intended to provide a concise, readable introduction to cultural anthropology. Its shorter length increases the instructor's options for assigning additional reading—case studies, readers, and other supplements—in a semester course. *Mirror* also can work well in a quarter system, for which traditional texts may be too long.

Just as anthropology is a dynamic discipline that encourages new discoveries and explores the profound changes now affecting people and societies, this edition of *Mirror for Humanity* makes a concerted effort to keep pace with changes in the way students read and learn core content today. Our digital program, **Connect Anthropology**, includes assignable and assessable quizzes, exercises, and interactive activities, organized around course-specific learning objectives. **Connect** also includes **SmartBook**, the adaptive reading experience. The tools and resources provided in Connect Anthropology are designed to engage students and enable them to improve their performance in the course. This 12th edition has benefited from feedback from more than 2,000 students who worked with these tools and programs while using the 11th edition of *Mirror* or one of my other recent texts. We were able to respond to specific areas of difficulty that students encountered, chapter by chapter. I used this extensive feedback to revise, rethink, and clarify my writing in almost every chapter. In preparing this edition, I benefited tremendously from both students' and professors' reactions to my book.

As I work on each new edition, it becomes ever more apparent to me that while any competent and useful text must present anthropology's core, that text also must demonstrate anthropology's relevance to the 21st-century world we inhabit. Accordingly, each new edition contains content changes as well as specific features relevant to our changing world. One of my primary goals is to help students make connections between what they read and their own lives. Accordingly, the "Anthropology Today" boxes placed near the end of each chapter examine recent developments in anthropology as well as contemporary topics and issues that are clearly related to anthropology's subject matter. Each chapter also contains a feature that I call "Think Like an Anthropologist," which attempts to get students to do just that—to apply their critical thinking skills as an anthropologist might.


I realize that most students who read this book will not go on to become anthropologists, or even anthropology majors. For those who do, this book should provide a solid foundation to build on. For those who don't—that is, for most of my readers—my goal is to instill a sense of understanding and appreciation of human diversity and of anthropology as a field. May this course and this text help students think differently about, and achieve greater understanding of, their own culture and its place within our globalizing world.

McGraw-Hill Connect Anthropology

Connect Anthropology is a premier digital teaching and learning tool that allows instructors to assign and assess course material. Connect Anthropology includes assignable and assessable quizzes, exercises, and interactive activities, organized around course-specific learning objectives. **NewsFlash** activities, which are updated regularly, bring in articles on current events relevant to anthropology with accompanying assessment.

The system is praised by users—faculty and students alike—for helping to make both teaching and learning more efficient, saving time and keeping class time and independent study time focused on what is most important and only those things that still need reinforcing, and shifting the teaching/learning process away from memorization and cramming. The result is better grades, better concept retention, more students staying in class and passing, and less time spent preparing for classes or studying for tests.

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 **SMARTBOOK™** Available within Connect, SmartBook makes study time as productive and efficient as possible by identifying and closing knowledge gaps. SmartBook identifies what an individual student knows and doesn't know based on the student's confidence level, responses to questions and other factors.

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New to this edition, SmartBook is now optimized for digital devices like phones and tablets; SmartBook also offers greater accessibility for students with disabilities.

Chapter-by-Chapter Changes

This 12th edition of *Mirror for Humanity* has been extensively informed by student data, collected anonymously by McGraw-Hill Education's SmartBook. Using this data, we were able to graphically illustrate “hot spots,” indicating content area students struggle with. This data provided feedback at the paragraph and even sentence level. Conrad Kottak relied on this data when making decisions about material to revise, update, and improve. Professor Kottak also reviewed and, when necessary, revised probes to make SmartBook an even more efficient and effective study tool. This revision has also been informed by reviews provided by faculty at 2- and 4-year schools across the country.

The following are this edition's major or significant changes:

Chapter 1: What Is Anthropology?

- Updated “Anthropology Today” box, “School of Hope.”



Chapter 2: Culture

- Expanded discussion of cultural appropriation.
- Revised and expanded section on globalization.
- Updates throughout, especially in the “Anthropology Today” box, “Preserving Cultural Heritage.”

Chapter 3: Doing Anthropology

- The “Anthropology Today” box, “Online Ethnography,” has been revised and updated.

Chapter 4: Language and Communication

- New discussion of Jane Hill’s research into the mixed use of Spanish and English in Mexican-themed restaurants in the “Sociolinguistics” section.
- Updated “Anthropology Today” box, “Words of the Year.”

Chapter 5: Making a Living

- There is a new “Anthropology Today” box: “When the Mills Shut Down: An Anthropologist Looks at Deindustrialization.”
- The author paid special attention to clarifying writing and Learn Smart probes for this chapter.

Chapter 6: Political Systems

- The “Anthropology Today” box, “The Illegality Industry: A Failed System of Border Control,” has been updated.

Chapter 7: Families, Kinship, and Marriage

- The “Families” section has been thoroughly updated, including a new discussion of the extended families of the Moso people of southwestern China and updated statistics concerning changes in North American kinship.
- A new section, “It’s All Relative,” examines the definition of close family relations in light of the Trump administration’s Muslim travel ban.
- The “Same-Sex Marriage” section has been significantly updated.
- Recent research and a new Figure 13.4, “Why Americans Marry,” have been incorporated within the “Arranged Marriages versus Romance Marriages” section.
- The introduction to the “Plural Marriages” section has been rewritten to clarify the difference between polygyny and polyandry.
- The “The Online Marriage Market” section incorporates new research.
- The author paid special attention to clarifying writing and SmartBook probes for this chapter.

Chapter 8: Gender

- The “Gender in Industrialized Societies” section has been heavily revised and updated.
- The “Beyond Male and Female” section has been revised substantially to clarify American gender categories in flux.



Chapter 9: Religion

- The “World Religions” section has been revised to incorporate the latest statistics.
- A new section on “Religious Changes in the United States” has been added.
- Content of the previous “Anthropology Today” box, “Newtime Religion,” has been moved into the text.
- The new “Anthropology Today” box, “Great Expectations,” brings back (by popular demand) a discussion of baseball magic.

Chapter 10: Ethnicity and Race

- All sections have been substantially revised, with new photos and statistics.
- Newly available data from the 2016 census now informs the discussion of Canadian ethnic diversity.
- A new discussion of biracial Japanese has been added.
- Results of a new study of cultural/ethnic/linguistic diversity among 180 countries have been added.
- Also added are new demographic projections for the United States through 2060, including significant growth in the dependency ratio.
- Recent election results now inform the “Backlash to Multiculturalism” section.

Chapter 11: Applying Anthropology

- A new section, “Can Change Be Bad?” applies this chapter’s key point—that innovation succeeds best when it is culturally appropriate—to the international spread of programs aimed at social and economic change as well as of businesses.
- The author paid special attention to clarifying writing and Learn Smart probes for this chapter.

Chapter 12: The World System, Colonialism, and Inequality

- “The Persistence of Inequality” section, including discussion of the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, has been updated, and a new section on exposure to risks that reduce life expectancy has been added.
- The “Development/Neoliberalism” sections include an updated discussion on tariffs and trade agreements, including NAFTA (now USMCA).
- “The World System Today” and the “Anthropology Today” box have been revised and updated.
- The author paid special attention to clarifying writing and SmartBook probes for this chapter.

Chapter 13: Anthropology’s Role in a Globalizing World

- Updated statistics on energy consumption and an updated and expanded Table 13.1, Total Energy Consumption, 2017, Top Twelve Countries (in MTOE—Million Tons of Oil Equivalent) + Current Share of World Energy Consumption + Annual Percentage Increase + Per-Capita Energy Consumption by Country.



- The “Global Climate Change” section incorporates the latest statistics, has two new subheads: “Emissions and Global Warming” and “Climate Change,” and adds a discussion of the implications of the devastating 2017 hurricanes (Harvey, Irma, and Maria).
- The “Interethnic Contact” section adds new information and statistics on media penetration and impact in Brazil and the Middle East.
- The author paid special attention to clarifying writing and SmartBook probes for this chapter.

Content and Organization

No single or monolithic theoretical perspective orients this book. My e-mail, along with reviewers’ comments, confirms that instructors with a very wide range of views and approaches have been pleased with *Mirror* as a teaching tool.

- In Chapter 1, anthropology is introduced as an integrated four-field discipline, with academic and applied dimensions, that examines human biological and cultural diversity in time and space. Anthropology is discussed as a comparative and holistic science, featuring biological, social, cultural, linguistic, humanistic, and historical approaches. Chapter 2 examines the central anthropological concept of culture, including its symbolic and adaptive features. Chapter 3 is about doing anthropology—the methods and ethics of research in anthropology’s subfields.
- Chapters 4–13 are organized to place related content close together—although they are sufficiently independent to be assigned in any order the instructor might select. Thus, “Political Systems” (Chapter 6) logically follows “Making a Living” (Chapter 5). Chapters 7 and 8 (“Families, Kinship, and Marriage” and “Gender,” respectively) also form a coherent unit. The chapter on religion (9) covers not just traditional religious practices but also contemporary world religions and religious movements. It is followed by four chapters (10–13) that form a natural unit exploring sociocultural transformations and expressions in today’s world.
- Those last four chapters address several important questions: How are race and ethnicity socially constructed and handled in different societies, and how do they generate prejudice, discrimination, and conflict? How and why did the modern world system emerge and expand? How has world capitalism affected patterns of stratification and inequality within and among nations? What were colonialism, imperialism, and Communism, and what are their legacies? How do people today actively interpret and confront the world system and the products of globalization? What factors threaten continued human diversity? How can anthropologists work to ensure the preservation of that diversity?
- Let me also single out two chapters present in *Mirror for Humanity* but not found consistently in other anthropology texts: “Ethnicity and Race” (Chapter 10) and “Gender” (Chapter 8). I believe that systematic consideration of race, ethnicity, and gender is vital in any introductory anthropology text. Anthropology’s distinctive four-field approach can shed special light on these topics, as we see especially in Chapter 10



(“Ethnicity and Race”). Race and gender studies are fields in which anthropology always has taken the lead. I’m convinced that anthropology’s special contributions to understanding the biological, social, cultural, and linguistic dimensions of race, ethnicity, and gender should be highlighted in any introductory text.

Teaching Resources

The following instructor resources can be accessed through the Library tab in Connect Anthropology:

- Instructor’s manual
- PowerPoint lecture slides
- Word version of the test bank

New to this edition and available within Connect, Test Builder is a cloud-based tool that enables instructors to format tests that can be printed or administered within a Learning Management System. Test Builder offers a modern, streamlined interface for easy content configuration that matches course needs, without requiring a download.

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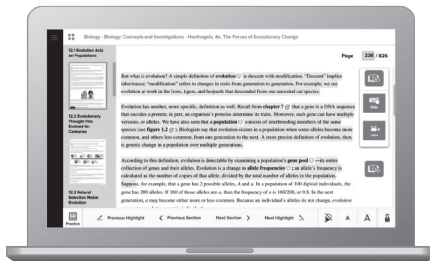


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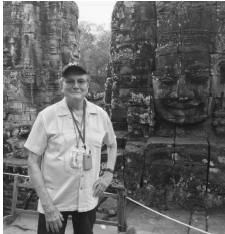
Conrad Phillip Kottak

Seabrook Island, South Carolina

ckottak@bellsouth.net



About the Author



The author at Bayon temple, Angkor Thom, Cambodia in February 2018. Courtesy Isabel Wagley Kottak

Conrad Phillip Kottak,

who received his AB and PhD degrees from Columbia University, is the Julian H. Steward Collegiate Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Michigan, where he served as anthropology department chair from 1996 to 2006. He has been honored for his teaching by the university and the state of Michigan and by the American Anthropological Association. He is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences, where he chaired Section 51, Anthropology, from 2010 to 2013. He co-edits *General Anthropology*, the biannual bulletin of the General Anthropology Division of the American Anthropological Association.

Professor Kottak has done ethnographic fieldwork in Brazil, Madagascar, and the United States. His general interests are in the processes by which local cultures are incorporated—and resist incorporation—into larger systems. This interest links his earlier work on ecology and state formation in Africa and Madagascar to his more recent research on globalization, national and international culture, and media, including new media and social media.

Kottak's popular case study *Assault on Paradise: The Globalization of a Little Community in Brazil* (2006, reissued and updated by Waveland Press in 2018) describes his long-term and continuing fieldwork in Arembepe, Bahia, Brazil. His book *Prime-Time Society: An Anthropological Analysis of Television and Culture* (2009) is a comparative study of the nature and impact of television in Brazil and the United States.

Kottak's other books include *The Past in the Present: History, Ecology and Cultural Variation in Highland Madagascar* (1980), *Researching American Culture: A Guide for Student Anthropologists* (1982), *Madagascar: Society and History* (1986), and *Media and Middle Class Moms: Images and Realities of Work and Family* (with Lara Descartes, 2009). The most recent editions (18th) of his texts *Anthropology: Appreciating Human Diversity* and *Cultural Anthropology: Appreciating Cultural Diversity* were published by McGraw-Hill in 2019. He also is the author of *Window on Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Anthropology* (9th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2020) and of this book—*Mirror for Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (12th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2020).

Kottak's articles have appeared in academic journals, including *American Anthropologist*, *Journal of Anthropological Research*, *American Ethnologist*, *Ethnology*, *Human Organization*, and *Luso-Brazilian Review*. He also has written for more popular journals, including *Transaction/SOCIETY*, *Natural History*, *Psychology Today*, and *General Anthropology*.

In other research projects, Professor Kottak and his colleagues have investigated ecological awareness in Brazil, biodiversity conservation in Madagascar, and media use by



modern American families. Most recently, he has collaborated with Professor Richard Pace and several graduate students on research investigating “The Evolution of Media Impact: A Longitudinal and Multi-Site Study of Television and New Electronic/Digital Media in Brazil,” a project supported by the National Science Foundation.

Conrad Kottak appreciates comments about his books from professors and students. He can be reached at the following e-mail address: ckottak@bellsouth.net.





Chapter 1

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Anthropology Today: School of Hope

The Cross-Cultural Perspective

“That’s just human nature.” “People are pretty much the same all over the world.” Opinions like these, which we hear in conversations, in media, and in other scenes in daily life, promote the erroneous idea that people in other countries have the same desires, feelings, values, and aspirations that we do. Such statements imply that because people are essentially the same, they are eager to receive the ideas, beliefs, values, institutions, practices, and products of an expansive North American culture. Often this assumption turns out to be wrong.

Anthropology offers a broader view—a distinctive comparative, cross-cultural perspective. Most people think that anthropologists study nonindustrial societies, and they do. My research has taken me to remote villages in Brazil and Madagascar, a large island off the southeast coast of Africa. In Brazil I sailed with fishers in simple sailboats on Atlantic waters. Among Madagascar’s Betsileo people, I worked in rice fields and took part in ceremonies in which I entered tombs to rewrap the corpses of decaying ancestors.

However, anthropology is much more than the study of nonindustrial peoples. It is a comparative science that examines all societies, ancient and modern, simple and complex. Most of the other social sciences tend to focus on a single society, usually an industrial nation such as the United States or Canada. Anthropology offers a unique cross-cultural perspective, constantly comparing the customs of one society with those of others.





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Today's anthropologists work in varied roles and settings. Nory Condor Alarcon (top photo) is an anthropologist who works for the Forensic Laboratory of the Public Ministry of Ayacucho, Peru. Here she comforts a young woman as she confirms that the lab's forensic team has identified the remains of several of her close relatives. In the bottom photo, a group of experts including anthropologist Mac Chapin (left), hold a press conference at UN Headquarters in New York introducing a new high-tech map of Indigenous Peoples of Central America. (top): Robin Hammond/IDRC/Panos Pictures/Redux Pictures; (bottom): Eduardo Munoz Alvarez/AFP/Getty Images



Among scholarly disciplines, anthropology stands out as the field that provides the cross-cultural test. How much would we know about human behavior, thought, and feeling if we studied only our own kind? What if our entire understanding of human behavior were based on analysis of questionnaires filled out by American college students? That question should make you think about the basis for statements about what humans are like, individually or as a group. A primary reason anthropology can uncover so much about what it means to be human is that the discipline is based on the cross-cultural perspective. A single culture simply cannot tell us everything we need to know about what it means to be human. We need to compare and contrast.

To become a cultural anthropologist, one typically does *ethnography* (the firsthand, personal study of local settings). Ethnographic fieldwork usually entails spending a year or more in another society, living with the local people and learning about their way of life. No matter how much the ethnographer discovers about that society, he or she remains an alien there. That experience of alienation has a profound impact. Having learned to respect other customs and beliefs, anthropologists can never forget that there is a wider world. There are normal ways of thinking and acting other than our own.

Human Adaptability

Anthropologists study human beings wherever and whenever they find them—in a Turkish café, a Mesopotamian tomb, or a North American shopping mall. Anthropology is the exploration of human diversity in time and space. Anthropology studies the whole of the human condition: past, present, and future; biology, society, language, and culture. Of particular interest is the diversity that comes through human adaptability.

Humans are among the world's most adaptable animals. In the Andes of South America, people wake up in villages 16,000 feet above sea level and then trek 1,500 feet higher to work in tin mines. Tribes in the Australian desert worship animals and discuss philosophy. People survive malaria in the tropics. Men have walked on the moon. The model of the *Star Trek* starship *Enterprise* in Washington's Smithsonian Institution is a symbol of the *Star Trek* mission "to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no one has gone before." Wishes to know the unknown, control the uncontrollable, and create order out of chaos find expression among all peoples. Creativity, adaptability, and flexibility are basic human attributes, and human diversity is the subject matter of anthropology.

Students often are surprised by the breadth of **anthropology**, which is the study of humans around the world and through time. Anthropology is a uniquely comparative and **holistic** science. *Holism* refers to the study of the whole of the human condition: past, present, and future; biology, society, language, and culture.

People share **society**—organized life in groups—with other animals, including baboons, wolves, mole rats, and even ants. Culture, however, is more distinctly human. **Cultures** are traditions and customs, transmitted through learning, that form and guide the beliefs and behavior of the people exposed to them. Children learn such a tradition by growing up in a particular society, through a process called *enculturation*. Cultural traditions include customs and opinions, developed over the generations, about proper and improper behavior. These traditions answer such questions as: How should we do things? How do we

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make sense of the world? How do we tell right from wrong? A culture produces a degree of consistency in behavior and thought among the people who live in a particular society.

The most critical element of cultural traditions is their transmission through learning rather than through biological inheritance. Culture is not itself biological, but it rests on certain features of human biology. For more than a million years, humans have had at least some of the biological capacities on which culture depends. These abilities are to learn, to think symbolically, to use language, and to employ tools and other products in organizing their lives and adapting to their environments.

Anthropology confronts and ponders major questions of human existence as it explores human biological and cultural diversity in time and space. By examining ancient bones and tools, we unravel the mysteries of human origins. When did our ancestors separate from those remote great-aunts and great-uncles whose descendants are the apes? Where and when did *Homo sapiens* originate? How has our species changed? What are we now, and where are we going? How have changes in culture and society influenced biological change? Our genus, *Homo*, has been changing for more than 2 million years. Humans continue to adapt and change both biologically and culturally.

Adaptation, Variation, and Change

Adaptation refers to the processes by which organisms cope with environmental forces and stresses, such as those posed by climate and *topography* or terrains, also called landforms. How do organisms change to fit their environments, such as dry climates or high mountain altitudes? Like other animals, humans use biological means of adaptation. But humans are unique in also having cultural means of adaptation.

Mountainous terrains pose particular challenges, those associated with high altitude and oxygen deprivation. Consider four ways (one cultural and three biological) in which humans may cope with low oxygen pressure at high altitudes. Illustrating cultural (technological) adaptation would be a pressurized airplane cabin equipped with oxygen masks. There are three ways of adapting biologically to high altitudes: genetic adaptation, long-term physiological adaptation, and short-term physiological adaptation. First, native populations of high-altitude areas, such as the Andes of Peru and the Himalayas of Tibet and Nepal, seem to have acquired certain genetic advantages for life at very high altitudes. The Andean tendency to develop a voluminous chest and lungs probably has a genetic basis. Second, regardless of their genes, people who grow up at a high altitude become physiologically more efficient there than genetically similar people who have grown up at sea level would be. This illustrates long-term physiological adaptation during the body's growth and development. Third, humans also have the capacity for short-term or immediate physiological adaptation. Thus, when lowlanders arrive in the highlands, they immediately increase their breathing and heart rates. Hyperventilation increases the oxygen in their lungs and arteries. As the pulse also increases, blood reaches their tissues more rapidly. All these varied adaptive responses—cultural and biological—achieve a single goal: maintaining an adequate supply of oxygen to the body. Table 1.1 summarizes the cultural and biological means that humans use to adapt to high altitudes.

As human history has unfolded, the social and cultural means of adaptation have become increasingly important. In this process, humans have devised diverse ways of coping with a wide range of environments. The rate of cultural adaptation and change has

TABLE 1.1 Forms of Cultural and Biological Adaptation (to High Altitude)

Form of Adaptation	Type of Adaptation	Example
Technology	Cultural	Pressurized airplane cabin with oxygen masks
Genetic adaptation (occurs over generations)	Biological	Larger “barrel chests” of native highlanders
Long-term physiological adaptation (occurs during growth and development of the individual organism)	Biological	More efficient respiratory system, to extract oxygen from “thin air”
Short-term physiological adaptation (occurs spontaneously when the individual organism enters a new environment)	Biological	Increased heart rate, hyperventilation

accelerated, particularly during the past 10,000 years. For millions of years, hunting and gathering of nature’s bounty—*foraging*—was the sole basis of human subsistence. However, it took only a few thousand years for **food production** (the cultivation of plants and domestication of animals), which originated some 12,000–10,000 years ago, to replace foraging in most areas. Between 6000 and 5000 B.P. (before the present), the first civilizations arose. These were large, powerful, and complex societies, such as ancient Egypt, that conquered and governed large geographic areas.

Much more recently, the spread of industrial production and the forces of globalization have profoundly affected human life. Throughout human history, major innovations have spread at the expense of earlier ones. Each economic revolution has had social and cultural repercussions. Today’s global economy and communications link all contemporary people, directly or indirectly, in the modern world system. People must cope with forces generated by progressively larger systems—region, nation, and world. The study of such contemporary adaptations generates new challenges for anthropology: “The cultures of world peoples need to be constantly rediscovered as these people reinvent them in changing historical circumstances” (Marcus and Fischer 1986, p. 24).

Cultural Forces Shape Human Biology

Anthropology’s comparative, biocultural perspective recognizes that cultural forces constantly mold human biology. (**Biocultural** refers to using and combining both biological and cultural perspectives and approaches to analyze and understand a particular issue or problem.) Culture is a key environmental force in determining how human bodies grow and develop. Cultural traditions promote certain activities and abilities, discourage others, and set standards of physical well-being and attractiveness. Consider how this works in sports. North American girls are encouraged to pursue, and therefore do well in, competition involving figure skating, gymnastics, track and field, swimming, diving, and many other sports. Brazilian girls, although excelling in the team sports of basketball and volleyball, haven’t fared nearly as well in individual sports as have their American and Canadian counterparts.

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Cultural standards of attractiveness and propriety influence participation and achievement in sports. Americans run or swim not just to compete but also to keep trim and fit. Brazil's beauty standards traditionally have accepted more fat, especially in female buttocks and hips. Brazilian men have had significant international success in swimming and running, including at the Olympics. Brazilian women have been less successful in those competitive individual sports. One reason why Brazilian women may avoid competitive swimming in particular may be that sport's effects on the body. Years of swimming sculpt a distinctive physique: an enlarged upper torso, a massive neck, and powerful shoulders and back. Successful female swimmers tend to be big, strong, and bulky. The nations that have produced them most consistently are the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany, the Scandinavian nations, the Netherlands, and former Soviet countries, especially Russia. In those countries, this body type isn't as stigmatized as it is in Latin countries. For women, Brazilian culture traditionally has preferred developed hips and buttocks to a muscled upper body. Many young female swimmers in Brazil choose to abandon the sport rather than their culture's "feminine" body ideal.

When you grew up, which sport did you appreciate the most—soccer, swimming, football, baseball, tennis, golf, or some other sport (or perhaps none at all)? Is this because of "who you are" or because of the opportunities you had as a child to practice and participate in this particular activity? When you were young, your parents might have told you that drinking milk and eating vegetables would help you grow up "big and strong." They probably didn't as readily recognize the role that *culture* plays in shaping bodies,



Athletes primed for the start of the 10 kilometer women's marathon swim at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. Years of swimming sculpt a distinctive physique—an enlarged upper torso and neck, and powerful shoulders and back. Tim de Waele/Corbis/Getty Images