

# Anthropology

The use of anthropological knowledge and perspective to analyze practical problems and issues

- Medical Anthropology- the evolution of health and disease
- Nutritional Anthropology- evolution of human diet and customs
- Educational Anthropology- the study of educational problems, methods and institutions in cultural context
- Environmental Anthropology- the relationship of humans and their surrounding
- Developmental Anthropology- the sociocultural changes associated with economic development in less developed societies

## In What Ways Does Anthropology Share Context and Methods With?

Natural Sciences:

- uses data and methods of science
- studies natural phenomenon or the biological features of the human species

Social Sciences:

- deals with the behavioral patterns of human group
- use the methods and data from the social science

Humanities:

- deals with enthoart, enthnodance, ethnomusicology, folklore, religion and language

Differs:

- emphasizes the little traditions rather than the classical arts
- interest in the sociocultural relations:  
discontent, nationalism, class relations, revolutions

## What are the Major Differences Between Anthropology and:

Sociology is:

- less cross-cultural
- more statistical stressing survey research while anthropology stresses participant observation

Psychology is:

- less cross-cultural
- less group oriented
- more controlled and precise
- interested in how we learn to learn (focuses on brain function)
- while anthropology studies how we learn and how it is taught

Geography is:

- interested in many of the same problems and cross-cultural research
- more interested in spatial analysis and planning
- both borrow from each other
- geography stresses environmental interactions more

- less similarity as geography shifts towards planning

History is:

- important in the interpretation of culture
- past mistakes, successes, atrocities impact the present
- anthropology is interested in changes in sociocultural terms or patterns
- rather than important dates, events and personnel

### **With is Ethnohistory?**

the study of non-literate culture from written sources recorded by outsiders

- eg. explorers, missionaries, travelers, colonial officials (often incomplete and biased)
- the study of the interface of the interface of written history and prehistory  
eg. 1000 Newfoundland, 1540 SW USA, 1885 Central Alaska
- it is a cultural biography based on as many kinds of testimony as possible over a specific time period  
eg. music, maps, ecology, painting, museum collections, excavations, oral traditions

### **In What Ways Has Anthropology Been Sometimes Misused by Anthropologists, Government, Museums and the Media**

often has aided the subjugation and exploration of colonized people

fieldwork often benefits only the apologists and not the people studied

degree, job, promotions, raises, grants, prestige people studied can become laboratory species:

receive no benefits, sometimes harmed by researched

- our materials have sometimes been used for entertainment rather than understanding
  - out of context exhibits, sensational accounts on TV and in the press, courses in high school and continuing education that reinforce stereotypes, leading to inaccurate and or racist stereotypes
- failing to take a stand on important issues
  - fear of value judgement
  - subjectives judgements on issues are two types:
    - uniformed opinion
    - informed subjectively

we must get out of the "Ivory Tower" sometimes

- be a witness, not just a spectator
- our writing and reports can expose evil and injustice
- we can identify problems in a spirit of solidarity (comrades)

- Anthropology is both a field of knowledge and a field of action  
activist, morally engaged, sometimes politically committed  
eg. partisan anthropologist

## **What are the different types of Ethnography?**

baseline ethnography- describes people before any significant contact

reconstructed ethnography- describes life ways based on informant knowledge of past history

- acculturative ethnography - description of life ways after prolonged contact

## **What are the basic ethnographic techniques?**

- participant observation
  - personal journal (or diary)
  - structured field notes
- Genealogical Mapping
  - relationships
  - history of families and groups
- prolonged interviews
  - structured
  - unstructured
- life history of individuals
  - shows diversity
- picking a well-informed informant (or a connected one)