## Race and Ethnicity

1. Biological Anthropology
   1. Early anthropology was concerned with classifying species, and therefore humans
   2. They were preoccupied with the notion that indeed, human biological races might exist
2. Cultural Anthropologists
   1. Interested in the ways in which people divide their social worlds into different groups
   2. Biology and geographical location has less to do with the way people separate themselves then prejudices and economic competition
   3. Race is not biological, it is a Cultural Construct, defined by cultural criteria
3. What is race?
   1. Italian and Latin root *ratio* = “species” or “kind.”
   2. In the 16th Century, used by the English to lump people with common or shared characteristics
   3. For the 200 years “race” became a classificatory term like “group”, “nation”, “people”
   4. It designated fundamental divisions within the human species
   5. Were usually described in physical terms and general “homelands”
   6. Restrictive names
      1. Europeans = Caucasoid
      2. African = Negroids
      3. Asians = Mongoloids
      4. Polar = Esquimaux
      5. American = American
   7. Scientific Racism
      1. Was the use of pseudo-science to investigate and support differences or superiority between races
      2. Often to support or validate racist attitudes
      3. The measuring of skeletons was put to racist ends
   8. Anthropology today
      1. We recognize physical differences, but culture decides which features are more important than others
      2. Phenotype: the physical features used to recognize difference
      3. Features and genetics found across all people groups
      4. <0.1% of genetic material determines phenotypes in humans (skin color, hair type, etc.)
   9. Race is ascribed
      1. Race is ascribed or defined by members *outside* the group
      2. Most countries outside the US determine race through decent
      3. The US uses hypodecent, that is children of mixed parents are ascribed the race of the socially lower group
   10. Census Information
       1. Political seats of mpower are determined through the Census
       2. Hypodecent can also give power
       3. <http://understandingrace.org/lived/global_census.html>
   11. Race Summary
       1. Race is culturally defined, **not** biologically defined
       2. Racial categories are ascribed by the dominant group and vary by culture
       3. Reasons for the ascriptions are usually supported by prejudices and are created in response to political competitions and competition over economic resources
       4. Racial ascriptions can have social, economic, and emotion consequences
       5. It is more sensitive and less ethnocentric to use terms like “people groups” to describe human variation
4. Language, Communication, and Culture
   1. Language is Universal
      1. All humans have the ability to learn and use language
      2. Language is used to the same ends across cultures
      3. Language use also marks group membership
   2. Basic Features of Language
      1. There is no such thing as a “primitive” language
      2. Languages change over time
      3. Translatable to a certain extent
      4. One of the main ways through which enculturation takes place
   3. Linguistic Anthropology
      1. Sub-discipline of Cultural anthropology
      2. Language is a major part of culture
      3. Investigates the cross-cultural variation and commonality in language
      4. Relates language to other aspects of culture and society
      5. Discovers how language helps construct, perform, and perpetuate social relations
   4. Language
      1. … is symbolic
      2. … uses displacement
         1. Humans can use language to talk about abstractions
            1. Past/present
            2. Absent or hidden
            3. Invisible
            4. Purely abstract or conceptual
            5. Even non-existent
      3. … is productive
         1. New words
         2. Sentences
         3. Langer linguistic units (lexicons, grammar)
         4. Larger performances (discourse)
      4. … is built or constructed
      5. … is performative
      6. … changes over time