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# 1 What is Anthropology

**Etymology:** Comes from the ancient Greek words anthropos (human) and logos (logic)

**Logos:** "Word" often translated as Reason, Science, Disciplined Knowledge. Becomes central to religious modes of thought (Gospel of John). Aristotle talked about logos, ethos, and pathos

**4 Fields of Anthropology in the U.S.:** Physical Anthropology, Cultural (Social) Anthropology, Archeology, Linguistic Anthropology

## 1.1 Renaissance Anthropology

- They looked to the heavenly, cosmic forms, especially the stars (astrology)
- Manilius wrote about how the signs corresponded to human conditions, natures, and types
- Looking for correspondences between the human form and the celestial form

Renaissance elites also turned to the diversity of things in the world looking for the correspondences, especially the exotic, mysterious, frightening, and monstrous - wonder and curiosity. They formed **curiosity cabinets** by assembling exotic stuff and trying to draw ties.

**Michel Foucault:** drawing from his professor, the idea was that we aren't correcting errors throughout human history, but instead the **episteme** (way of reasoning in a given moment) can only be understood separate from every other episteme. He said thinking looks like natural history, no longer looking for secret correspondences - but focused on forms and how to order them - order is fixed in time and did not change.

**Ibn Khaldun:** 14th century North African scholar who was rediscovered by Europe in the 19th century - he is sometimes taught as a harbinger of Modern social science, as the first modern social scientist - how do we hold ourselves together as a group

# 2 The 19th Century Revolution in Time

Charles Lyell was a Scottish Victorian geologist who wrote an influential book, Principles of Geology. He argues that the world was much older than 6000 years as the Bible said. This awareness of deep time was experienced by many in the 1830s as revolutionary. He was a devout Christian, troubled with the implications of his research on fossils, which showed that humans were much older than the Bible suggested.

This becomes central to the study of the animal/human and would influence Darwin and others like Edward Tyler. Tyler spoke of **The Comparative**

**Method** which said we must compare the savages (Africans, Indigenous Americans, etc.) with Europeans - this was a key clue to the origins of white British people. The dominant story is looking at a past group and trying to understand how it led to the current state.

## 2.1 A New Idea: Race

Georges Cuvier (not an evolutionist) 18th to early 19th century, humans were understood to be divided into several immutable races. Cuvier, French scholar, argued for three major races. He didn't argue the way that Adam and Eve developed into 3 races, focused on aesthetic beauty, saying his white people were more beautiful. The biological difference between people hadn't existed before - the difference could be religious like Jewish

**Monogenism:** all human races came from the same ancestors

**Polygenism:** human races all came from different origins. Louis Agassiz was a Swiss scholar in the 19th century. They argued the races couldn't have come from the same origin, but it didn't survive modern biology - he was an evolutionist he just thought there were three separate lines.

**Physical Anthropology:** emerged to infer where races fit on an evolutionary ladder. People became concerned about race mixing. People thought mixing these three different species could be eugenically dangerous.

## 2.2 A Different Anthropology: Franz Boas and "Culture"

Culture is a certain way of thinking or of organizing problems. You can point out that race is not true really as a feature of biology, but is believed to be true. Culture is much less obvious.

**Culture:** What people do that is handed down to them as children

# 3 Culture

Culture is inherited through learning from schooling and people around you. Can also be thought of as artifacts or as sophistication

Culture emerged as a key concept of anthropology in the US at the end of the 19th century - associated with Franz Boas. Emerged in the context of differentiation between distinct racial types and ranking them: **physical anthropology** which differentiated between types based upon physical measurements of the body where Northern Europeans understood themselves to be the best

Until the mid 19th century it referred to something the elites had

## 3.1 Anthropometry

Emerged across several new scientific fields in the late 19th century - one of these was **criminology** a new way to identify and keep records - were certain

racers pre-disposed to be criminals or were criminals a race (based on physical measurements)

**Colonial anthropometry:** imperial states used anthropometry to define and distinguish their colonized subjects in Asia and Africa as well as in some cases to look for traces of criminal disposition

### 3.2 Boas

Argued that much of human collective behavior, what people in groups did in common, was not only or primarily a matter of inborn bio, that is of race, but was in addition or rather learned behavior that formed part of the ethos or culture of the group - Nurture over Nature.

He brought the German idea of **Kultur** into American anthropology - each **Volk** (people) has its own unique culture and anthropologist studies this beauty and aesthetics

Boas was trained in part as a geographer - they take culture as a totality, as a form or a pattern or a configuration but to tunk about how that configuration was tied to an environment

Robert Lowie: culture are things of shreds and patches

Ruth Benedict: cultures each have unique configurations or patterns: her most famous book was called Patterns of Culture

### 3.3 Matthew Arnold (Industrial England)

Argued that people tend to do what their parents and people around them do (including the people in their class) - culture was a matter of cultivating one's best self, of transcending the unthinking and selfish dictates of one's class - he said one should break out of one's and class and care and transform themselves - this is the opposite of the Boas viewpoint

### 3.4 Edward Tyler: Wholism

British anthropologist - wrote that culture is the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals ... that are acquired by man as a member of society - Nurture

He differs from Arnold because Arnold thinks you must alienate from the group

### 3.5 German Idealism

These ideas of culture drew from German Idealism: **Bildung** is something you must do to have culture (like Arnold's) you must wrestle and improve yourself to become something beautiful. **Kultur:** there are things shared by a group like language and dance that allow a group to express itself

## 4 Evolution vs Diffusion

The fact that there are pyramids in both Egypt and Central America can be explained in both. Evolution says there is a way in which kings want monuments etc. but diffusion says no way that's possible they came from the same people and the idea diffused

**Diffusion:** Certain traits, fragments of the specific patterns of unique cultures could diffuse between neighboring groups. Boas said that colonial pressure would diffuse away native cultures - he told his students to document these rich cultures that were disappearing because so much value was dying (salvage)

**Salvage** Diffusionist pressure is pushing away cultures, so we must save them before they are gone - this eventually became a dirty word because it put down the native cultures as inferior - also you want to save our culture but what about us. Boas also said you must go back a step and imagine what it was like one step before they came.

## 5 Margaret Mead: Coming of Age in Somoa

### 5.1 My initial comments from reading

- She really emphasizes how they are "primitive" people
- They seem to live care free
- The fact that the children flow from relative to relative aids the care-free environment Mead believes in - it might actually indicate other things though like a lack of structure and order
- Monogamy less stressed than it is in Europe at the time - a lot of adultery and informal sex, and simple divorce process
- Women can not have a higher title than their husbands
- Mead argues that adolescent girl's lives aren't really stressful as it is a slow process filled with casual sex and a slow coming of age. They have the simple goal of having relations with guys and then marrying one in her village and having kids.
- First key difference is a lack of specialization of feeling
- Their children are more well adjusted - they don't have to make as many choices
- They are eased into birth, death, and sex early on and don't feel fear or anything towards them

## 5.2 Background

Somoa became a valuable harbor and stopping/fueling point for trade ships in the 19th century. Britain, German, and US made territorial claims on Somoa - Somoan elites would make alliances with them. 1889 - battle between German and American ships over control. 1899 - Somoa split between Germans and Americans.

The ethnographic present: she erases all things she understands to not be a part of native culture

## 5.3 The Historical Method

Find a culture less influenced by European cultures - she find a part of the island least Westernized to imagine what things were like before the diffusion of Western forms but people are now Protestant and there is a global economy and focus on only the traditional things - this is known as the **Ethnographic Present**. They saw the world as made up of ethnic group, whether this be races or cultures. The hope was to get to some theory that could generalize about the development of culture

**Not in My Village:** preventing generalizations by showing a counterexample - In Somoa its different - this goes against the theory that all teens are stressed and fight with their parents about sex

## 5.4 G. Stanley Hall and Adolescence

He wrote an influential book called Adolescence in 1907 that argued that youth was a distinct phase of life; we now take it for granted that kids go through this "storm and stress" (German romantic idea tied to the importance of **Bildung**)

**Moral Panic:** Mead says that maybe all these experts are coming together with an idea that is diffusing but its all smoke and just hormones in response to the pastors criticizing the youth of the day losing their values

## 5.5 Culture as Patterns of Life

Groups have worked out solutions to classic human problems like how to live together, survive, reproduce, and eat. She says "our" own culture (Indo-European culture - "Aryan race" came out of Sanskrit - trying to distance themselves from Hebrew) is a set of patterns that we shouldn't take for granted. Each pattern has aesthetic value.

### How does one study a pattern?

Spending time immersed in the culture (ethnography/fieldwork). She tries to give a sense of every day life from dawn until dusk and dawn again. She says

what is heard, seen, sensed - the actors in her story are both human and non-human (bird, roosters, etc.) to paint the full picture. She also gives a sense of social structure by kinship and marriage (villages/households). Most important principal in the village is age. Although the youth live a flexible life where they can move around between households - always a variety of relations of people who can care for each other

The **Taupo** (ceremonial princess/virgin) demonstrate fame/honor of the village/household. Their behavior is monitored very closely. (Mead was made one interestingly)

## 5.6 Normal and Pathological

Every culture selects a certain range of biological possibility (a given set of norms). Depending on a culture's normal, its abnormal (or pathological) would differ accordingly. Empire of Temperament - country selecting its traits over time

Mead found variety of New Guinea cultures with varying aggression in men and women to make this point (two Gaussian curves society selects where the mean is)

Each culture selects certain traits as normal and others as pathological (**Culture and Personality School**) - human beings may have a common biology but all these cultures came from different child rearing (later generations of Boas thought)

## 5.7 Non-controversy vs Local Controversy

Despite all the new/challenging material, it was not very controversial. Mead confirmed a story about the hyper-sexual Polynesian culture - whether that is a good thing/sign of relaxation or bad/sinful/heathen thing

Over time, Somoa became more Christians and many came to resent her book because it was not who they were any more or ever were - she's lying. Somoa became so famous in anthro, another non-Somoan anthropologist Derek Freeman did a restudy. He went to the same islands and he was also made a chief and spent a lot of time with him. These men described a different Somoa - one in which daughters are kept close at hand to make sure they are moral people.

**Derek Freeman** goes farther and says that the entire Boas project is wrong - teenagers do go through stressful times objectively - took on Nature vs Nurture and took the side of Nature strongly. He became a celebrity. On his second trip back he found a girl who had talked to Margaret Mead who said she lied to Margaret Mead...get PWNED...they resisted her power to force them to reveal their lives to her questions. But this woman had been a taupo - had very restricted lives - so Mead didn't really rely on her

## 5.8 Mead vs Freeman

Position 1: Mead - evidence in her book - culture is real and informs behavior

Position 2: Freeman - evidence in his book - anthropologists underestimated importance of biology - challenging racial hierarchy

Position 3: They were both right a point in the following ways:

- History: they were there at different times in a changing world - two different moments in time - both useful
- Situated Knowledge: he is talking to older men about what young girls and she is talking to young girls about what young girls do. But the vantage of the chiefs still matters and we must bring them together (knowledge depends on vantage point)
- Anthropology itself had changed - the categories of nature and nurture just weren't helpful - the biology is out of date and the idea of culture didn't fit any more

## 6 Franz Boas: Instability of Human Types

### 6.1 My initial comments from reading

- He thinks there are clear differences (physically) between the races
- He argues that these differences can change over time however - very interested in migrants and the way their children develop

### 6.2 Historical Anthropology for Boas

He looks at the physical body in combination with cultural norms, material culture, and language. These four fields come to dominate US anthropology.

He is always anxious about generalization though

In 1911 he makes two claims:

The story was not a process of evolution where groups are fixed on it, but rather the more that society and culture evolve, the more the physical body will change

- nutritional/environmental factors will transform the body (like head size)  
- **plasticity** of anthropometric race
- humans are more or less domesticated - difference between Europeans and southern African bushmen is like that between a domesticated animal and a non-domesticated animal

Boas says there are three bodily effects of domestication on animals:

- Nutrition and use of the body



- Selection (I want fluffy dog)
- Crossing (Breeding)

The normal condition of humans is relatively easy access to food supplies. Boas argues that humans select sexual partners based on cultural distinctions like being part of the right class and not anthropomorphic distinctions like being really tall (endogamy - marry someone like me race/religion) - exogamy is the opposite and the dividing line is incest

## 7 The Body as an Ethnological Object

**Settler Society:** arrival of Europeans, migrations from Asia, forced migration of Africans, displacement of Native Americans - was also very diverse

**Nature** became a concept of race as fixed and hierarchical and one dominant way race was made powerful claim on expanding diversity was by measurement of the human body (anthropometry)

### 7.1 Challenging 19th Century Race

Claims of nature replaced with biology (different claims of nature) - anthropology questioned the idea of a racial hierarchy

Every society is only given certain set of tools to think and reason with - not all given the same thing - this is close to the idea of episteme (way of getting at truth) - this came to be called **the social construction** argument: any understanding of nature/anthropos is a particular model or store people tell about their world; it is not reality or even a mirror of reality but an effort to understand

### 7.2 Cultural Patterns and Norms Create Bodily Forms - Culture Makes Nature

Cultural norms of diet create physical conditions of weight.

## 8 Marcel Mauss: Techniques of the Body

### 8.1 My initial comments from reading

- Talks about habits like swimming which differ among peoples and generations
- "technique an action which is effective and traditional (and you will see that in this it is no different from a magical, religious or symbolic action"
- "Two things were immediately apparent given the notion of techniques of the body: they are divided and vary by sex and by age."
- "Training, like the assembly of a machine, is the search for, the acquisition of an efficiency"

## 8.2 Background

French scholar part of the new school of sociology that emerged at the end of the 19th century

Anthropologists study the other (usually marginal others on a power gradient), and sociologists study us. Anthropologists also focus on the specific while sociologists focus on the general. Anthropologists primary method is ethnography while for sociologists they divide quantitative survey research and ethnography

**Ethnography:** description and documentation, the individual case

**Ethnology:** comparison and generalization/analysis, careful generalization and distinction

One needs multiple examples to generalize (ethnography)

Mauss thinks its useful to study things that others don't care about or categorize  
- science advances at the fringe

## 8.3 Habitus

The acquired ability and faculty of Aristotle - not just a habit.

Mauss says introduces psychology - a habit is never simply a psychological state  
- it becomes part of the physical body

He emphasizes education and the way people use their bodies usually come from imitation, which some people are better at than others.

**Education** not only the power of others - authority: it is people who have as well as prestige, who models oneself on older relations and teachers, the coach/trainer, the cynosure (role model), the sone, the tool