

ANTH 100

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
ANTH 100A, Section 001
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What is Anthropology?

Learning Objectives

- Define aim and scope of anthropology.
- Introduction to course, instructor, and teaching assistants.



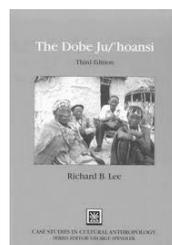
What do anthropologists do?

Learning Objectives

- What is ethnography?
- Definition of fieldwork and introduction to methods of anthropology
- Introduction to the field sites of New York, Le Guilvinec, France, and the Kalahari, Africa.



What is Ethnography?



- An interpretive description of some aspect of a society, or a part of a society. Often it is written as a description of the society at a particular time period called the 'ethnographic present.'
- Often paired with ethnology which is the analytic and comparative study of society or societies.

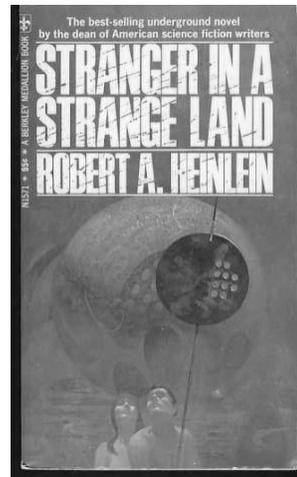
What is fieldwork?

- An extended period of close involvement with the people an anthropologist is interested in, during which anthropologists ordinarily collect most of their data.
- This is the classic anthropology story.
- Pages – 1-3 (Lee)



Key terms

- Culture shock –the sense of dislocation and/or discomfort that comes from living in a ‘strange land’
- Also a perspective that can –sometimes- help shed light on a society or culture. Seeing it through different eyes.



Anthropological Point of View



- In anthropology “we strive to look beyond the world of everyday experiences to discover the patterns and meanings that lie behind that world” Robins page 3).
- Culture: “The meanings that people give to things, events, and people” (Robins page 5).



Anthropology is a multi-disciplinary discipline:
Socio-cultural, archaeological, linguistic,
physical, applied, museum and visual
anthropologies.

Culture and Society



- Culture:
 - Sets of learned behaviours and ideas that humans acquire as members of society.
- Society:
 - The collective organization of a group of people with a shared history, culture, and social organization. Complex societies may include two or more distinctive cultural groups within a single social system)

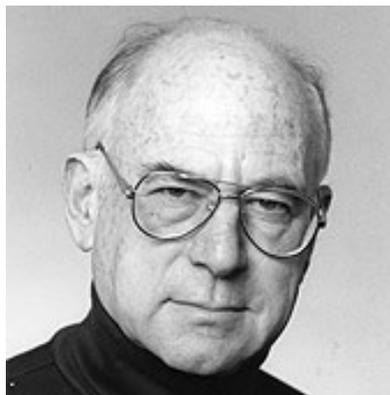
Culture and the 'happy meal.'

- What can we learn about western culture by looking beyond the taken-for-granted aspect of this 'meal.' Is it just a meal
- Meat centered with added refined sugar (about 30-40 g sugar and 26-40 g fat)
- Food ingredients part of an industrial food production system that has a vested interest in regulations that do not restrict the ingredients to go into 'food's such as the happy meal



Comparing Societies

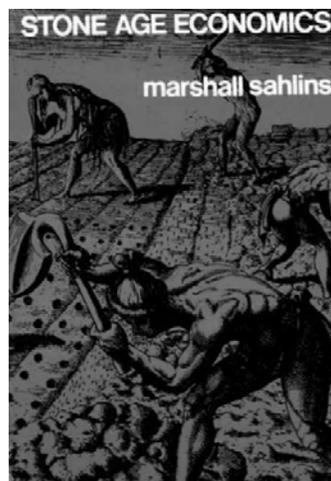
- MoP consists of
 - Relations of production
 - Forces of production
- Types
 - Kin-ordered
 - Tributary
 - Capitalist



Eric R. Wolf

The Original Affluent Society

- People in industrial societies often imagine the world of hunter gathers as being on the edge of survival.
- Affluent Society –by John Kenneth Galbraith- account of post WWII society.
- Term picked up by Marshall Sahlins.
- Hunter gathers actually spend less time meeting material needs than do people in industrial societies.

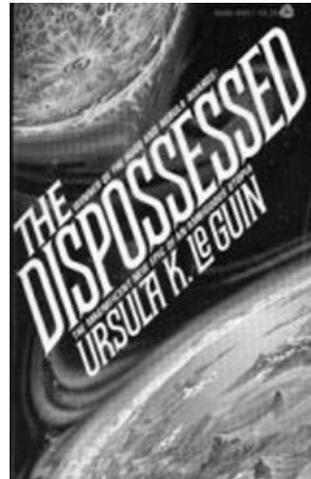


The Transition to Agriculture

- Progress thesis argues that human society naturally evolves from simple to complex.
- An alternative perspective views the change from hunting and gathering to modern industrial society less as progress and more as a necessary evil.
 - This perspective emphasizes the influences of population growth and population density, the number of people living in a given area.
- A further perspective focuses on the development of private property and social inequality as the central driving force in the transition to agriculture and thus to greater social complexity.

Capitalism: Some Basic Concepts

- Use value: *the utility of an object, its ability to satisfy a human need.*
- In pre- or non-capitalist societies people make things (i.e. food, shelter, clothing) for use or barter.
- Exchange value: *is independent of use value.*
- In capitalism, people produce things for the purpose of exchange.



Labour Theory of Value

- Underlying **value** is abstract labour.
- Under capitalism commodities once produced must be exchanged. Thus the exchange value is related to what is called socially necessary labour time (not the total abstract labour invested in an object).
- Socially necessary labour time:
 - The labour-time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society.
- Implications: only those producers able to meet or exceed the current standard will stay in business.
- Capitalism is a system in which individual producers do not know in advance whether their products meet a social need. This is a major departure from other modes of production.

Strikes, material conditions & symbols

- Symbols in the past and the past as a symbol in the present.
- 1880s-1930s two symbols
 - Red flag
 - Singing the Internationale
- Symbols in the present struggle



Globalization and T-shirts

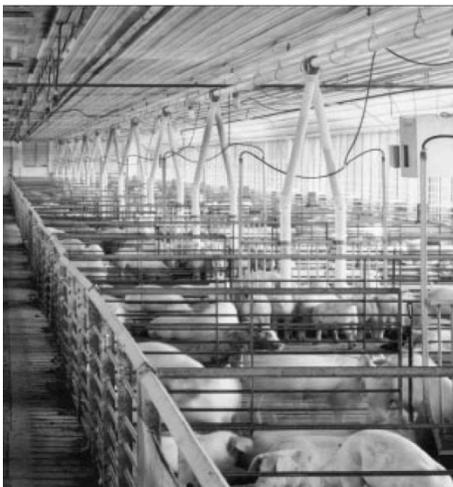


How Do We Define Happiness and Well-Being?

- As members of contemporary society, the key is money and a “market economy.”
- While **money** is a source of individual well-being, the **GDP** is a measure of national well-being.
- A brief history of money



Hog Hotels



- Modern hog farms are factory complexes.
- the culmination of industrialized agriculture.
- Conditions akin to concentration camp.

The Emergence of Neoliberalism.

- **Neoliberalism:**
 - individual entrepreneurs operate with out restriction.
 - Limit role of the state to enforcement of civil society.
- **Nation State:**
 - Economic regulation
 - Laws externalize costs
 - Monopoly of coercive force



Neoliberalism and the Culture of Capitalism

- Case studies of the culture of capitalism
 - T-shirts
 - Hog hotels
 - Bigouden fishery
- Key cultural values
 - Individualism
 - Free trade
 - Business control over labour process
 - State control over force



Making a living at sea & ashore

- The anthropological study of work involves:
 - Understanding the physical nature of the work setting
 - Understanding aspects of the labour process
 - Understanding methods of payment
 - Understanding the wider social context within this work takes place.



Gender, work and life experience

- How do ideologies of gender shape what people do in their lives?
- Two aspects to question that need response:
 - Gender ideologies
 - Behaviour
- Case Study:
 - Bigoudennic

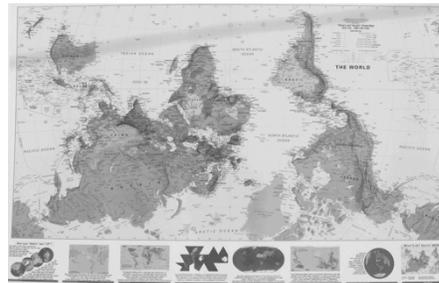


Power and reality

- What is power?
 - Transformative
 - Two aspects
- How is power put into action?
- Eric Wolf – 4 modalities
 - The **power of potency** or **capability** of an individual.
 - **Interpersonal power**
 - **Organizational or tactical power.**
 - **Structural power**

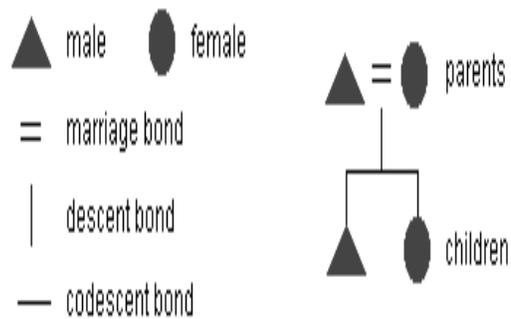
World view

- A picture of reality.
- Widest possible understanding.
- Conflicting & contradictory.
- Differences derive from different experience and power.



Kinship

- Social relationships
 - marriage,
 - descent,
 - nurturance .



Difference a Family Makes

•20th century Breton fisheries underwent a major transformation in which the number of fishermen dropped by over 60%

•Who stayed? Who got pushed out?

•The answer? It depended upon one's family history of property ownership



The Black Family and Homelessness

Consumption Family

- Nuclear and neo-local in its norms and is built around:
 - voluntary companionate marriage;
 - the shared values, identity markers, and consumption patterns of its members,
 - and the right to seek individual accomplishment and emotional self-realization.

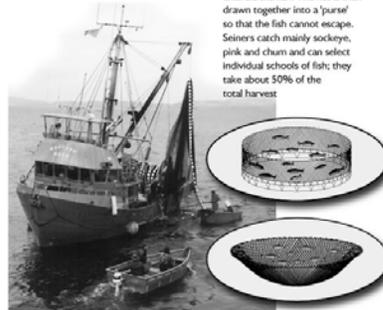
Accumulation Family

- Built around
 - extended kin networks,
 - intense group sacrifice; delayed or permanently postponed gratification;
 - large amounts of captive low-wage or unpaid family-based labour (particularly from women and children)
 - and less recourse to external labour options and social rights.

Race as a Cultural Construction

- Example: **Indian or White**. A story of two men and the social construction of race.
- Context –**assimilative and misogynist laws** designed to ‘whiten’ subject populations.
- An economic system that was trying to construct a clear ‘white’ sector as part of a struggle between two groups of businessmen.

SEINING



Seine boats use large nets to encircle the fish. The net is then drawn together into a 'purse' so that the fish cannot escape. Seiners catch mainly sockeye, pink and chum and can select individual schools of fish; they take about 50% of the total harvest.

Culture & Violence

- How do societies create a bias in favor of collective violence?
- How do societies create a bias against violent conflict?
- What are the economic, political, or social differences between peaceful and violent societies?



They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. — Isaiah 2:4

How do societies create a bias against violence?

- Peaceful societies create a bias against violence by:
 - Sharing
 - Valuing nonaggressive behavior
 - Building relations of dependence between individuals and groups
 - Engaging in collective behaviors that promote harmony



Moro Morality Play

- 1950s-70s period of revolutionary movements.
- Red Army Faction, The Weathermen, Red Brigade, IRA, PLO, FLQ, etc.
- March 16, 1978 kidnapping of Aldo Moro, former Italian prime minister by Red Brigade.

