Cultural Anthropology

Welcome!!!
What is Anthropology?

- The term:
  - Derived from the Greek term, Anthropo..
  - Meaning - “Human beings or Human kind”

- Logia - “Knowledge of/The Study of ..”
- …the study of human beings…
Anthropology

- …the study of the differences and similarities, both biological and cultural, in human populations…in all periods and in all parts of the world. (Ember)

- …the *scientific* study of humankind, in all times and places. (Haviland)
Anthropology

- Anthropology - The *systematic* study of humankind.
- What do we mean by the term *systematic*?
- Scientific Method
- Empirical
- Positivism
- Concept
- Variable
Systematic - Continued

- Hypothesis
- Theory
- Other Sciences that study human behavior?
  - Sociology
  - Political Science
  - Economics
  - Psychology - others?
Branches of Anthropology

- Physical Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Anthropological Linguistics
- Cultural Anthropology
Physical Anthropology

- Concerned with **two broad areas** of investigation:
  - **Human Evolution** - Human Paleontology (Paleo- ancient/prehistoric- fossil remains)
    - Paleoanthropology
    - Primatology - Study of primates (Apes, monkeys, prosimians)
    - Forensic Anthropology
Physical Anthropology: Cont’d

- **Human Variation** - How and why the physical traits of contemporary human populations vary across the world.
- …is there such a thing as human variation?
- What?
- Anatomical Features
- Internal Physiological Traits
- Blood Composition
Archaeology

- ...the discipline that focuses on the study of the artifacts from past societies to determine the lifestyles, history, and evolution of those societies.

- **Material Culture** - Tangible products of human society. Such as? (Middens)

- **Artifacts** - (Text) ...objects that have been made or modified by humans...(and that can be removed from the site and taken to the laboratory for further analysis.)
Material Culture: Cont’d

- **Features** - …artifacts made or modified by people, but they cannot be carried away.
- **Ecofacts** - objects found in the natural environment that were not made or altered by humans but were used by them.
Archaeology: Cont’d

- **Prehistoric Archaeology** - Attempts to reconstruct cultures that existed before writing.
- **Historic Archaeology** - Reconstructs the cultures of people who used writing and about whom historical documents have been written.
- **Classical Archaeology** - Study of specific ancient civilizations.
Anthropological Linguistics

Four Branches of Linguistics

- Historical Linguistics - Deals with the emergence of language.
- Descriptive (Structural) Linguistics - Study of sound systems, grammatical systems and meaning.
- Ethnolinguistics - Examines the relationship between language and culture.
Anthropological Linguistics

- Sociolinguistics - Examines the relationship between language and social relations. (Behavior)
Cultural Anthropology

The study of specific contemporary cultures.

- **Ethnography** - The systematic description of a culture based on firsthand observation. (Participant observation, empirical analysis)

- **Ethnology** - The comparative study of contemporary cultures to determine cultural similarities and differences.
Holism - A comprehensive approach

- **Holism** - A perspective in Anthropology that attempts to study a culture by looking at all parts of the system and how those parts are interrelated.

- **Holistic Approach:**
  - Involves both biological and sociocultural aspects of humanity.
  - Involves the deepest possible time frame, from the earliest beginnings to present day.
Holism - Cont’d

- Involves the many different aspects of human experience.