

START TOMORROW TODAY

The Potential for Anthropology in Innovating Provision

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Aims

- To have a sense of what anthropology is and involves
- To understand how it relates to the curriculum
- To acknowledge the potential for it within the curriculum
- To appreciate the utility of its research method
- To understand how it promotes an Equality & Diversity approach

Whistle-stop tour



What is anthropology?

Biological or Physical Anthropology

Social or Cultural Anthropology

What do we mean by culture?

“I should like to invoke a taboo on the word culture.”

(A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, 1957, *A Natural Science of Society*)



Image source: Wikimedia, 2015

“Culture [...] is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and other capabilities and habits acquired by [a hu-]man in society”

(Edward Burnett Tyler,
1871, *Primitive Culture*)



E.B. Tyler Act. 67
From a photograph by Ansell and Fox

Image source: Wikimedia, 2006

Anthropology and learning

- Anthropology has an essential link to learning, as a key focus of social anthropology is cultural transmission, or social reproduction, namely how culture is passed on from generation to generation.
- There is no one single theory of learning or education that explains all anthropological phenomena.
- The approach the anthropologist takes is perhaps best likened to situated learning.

Three key attributes

- Cultural relativism
- Participant observation
- The ethnography or ethnographic film

Searching for a course in anthropology

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying 'https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/search/?q=anthropology'. The page content includes a search bar with 'anthropology' entered, a 'SEARCH' button, and a list of search results. The results are categorized by tabs: 'All', 'Research', 'Courses', and 'News / Events'. The 'Courses' tab is selected. There are four search results listed, each with a title, a brief description, a URL, and a 'Labeled Courses' tag. The results are: 1. 'Adventure Education - University of the Highlands and Islands', 2. 'Archaeology - University of the Highlands and Islands', 3. 'Courses - University of the Highlands and Islands', and 4. 'Sociology and Criminology - University of the Highlands and Islands'. A page number '1' is visible at the bottom left of the search results area. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons and the system clock indicating 07:30 on 20/06/2017.

Scope for anthropology in FE



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Home > Qualifications > HNCs and HNDs > HN Subjects > Social Sciences > Social Anthropology

Qualifications

National Qualifications

Awards

Baccalaureates

HNCs and HNDs

Browse HN subjects

HN unit search

Assessment support materials

Notification of changes

About HNCs and HNDs

Core Skills

International Vocational Awards (IVAs)

NCs and NPAs (NQGA)

Social Anthropology

There are 3 Higher National units in Social Anthropology. The units are:

HG55 33 Social Anthropology: Who does it and how to do it (SCQF level 6)

HJ2V 34 Social Anthropology: The Body and its Life Course (SCQF level 7)

HK4Y 35 Social Anthropology: Ethnographies of Scottish Peoples (SCQF level 8)

The units are included in the optional section of the HNC and HND Social Sciences awards.

There is a National unit at SCQF level 5:

HG1M 45 Social Anthropology: Understanding Our Place in the World

This unit is included in the optional section of the National Certificate in Social Sciences at SCQF levels 5 and 6.

[This resource list includes books, journals and websites](#) (156 KB)

Related Information

[Social Sciences Blog](#)

Contact Information

[Candidate Enquiries](#)



A case study

- In 2010, a tertiary education provider (students typically of 16-19 years of age) had 12 students studying anthropology.
- By 2013, this had reached between 50-70 students per year.
- Half of the first cohort went onto study anthropology jointly or singularly in HE.

Potential for anthropology in HE

- Anthropology modules could supplement and build on existing programmes.
- Opportunity to revitalise cultural studies programmes by adding a comparative dimension and by learning about other cultures.
- Potential for a half-framework role with minimal additional development.
- Merits a full-framework programme.
- Will have USP if online.

Anthropology's research methodology

Philosophy: Cultural relativism

Method: Participant Observation

Product: Ethnography

Cultural relativism

- American linguistic anthropologist Franz Boas is credited with coming up with the idea of **cultural relativism**, which is an approach that is key to anthropology
- This is the idea that to understand a culture or society, we first have to learn to see things from that culture or society's own point of view
- This is different to many other disciplinary approaches
- Thus, for anthropologists, **context** is one of the most important things

Malinowski and the Trobriand Islanders

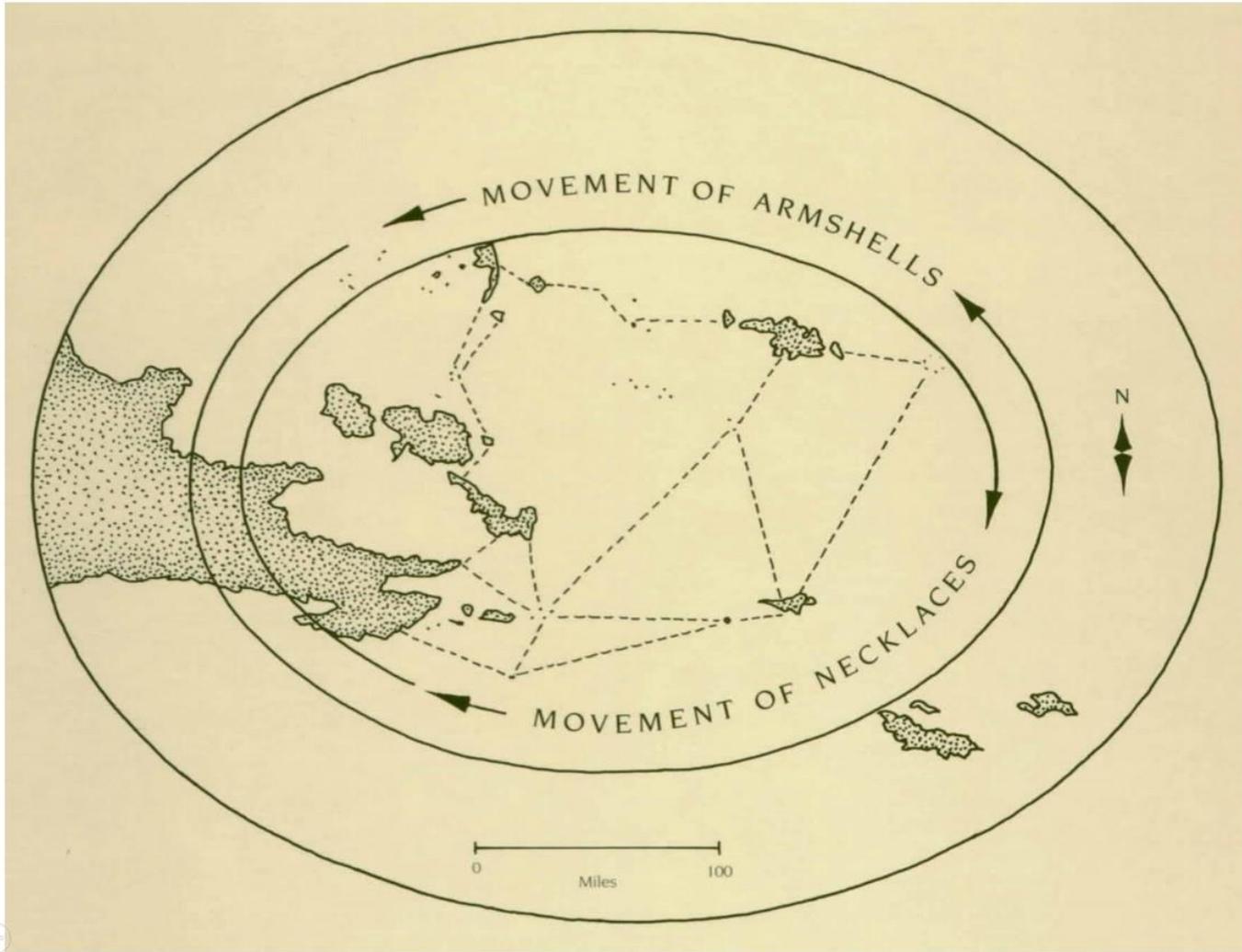


Location



Kula items





From the armchair to ethnography

- Bronislaw **Malinowski** was the British anthropologist who made participant observation the cornerstone of British social anthropology
- **Participant observation** is the long term study of a community by living amongst them and joining in with their ways of life
- The written study of a people produced by an anthropologist is called **ethnography**
- Prior to this time, many scholars of human cultures carried out their research by correspondence or reading other studies



Contribution anthropology can make

- Research method that can be taught and used in other programmes.
- Complements the aims of other disciplines.
- Promotes an inclusive approach.

Promoting Equality and Diversity

- Students' experiences on how a culturally relative approach and studying anthropology impacted on them.

Student comments:

- “After studying Anthropology, I see even the most trivial things differently. For example, I sat on holiday wondering why people travel to holiday resorts just to lie in the sun and congregate around water. Is there something innate to humans that makes water and sunshine special? I don’t think I’d ever really thought deeply about the way people behave until I studied Anthropology.”
- “I think before studying it, I was quick to point out differences between other cultures and ours, but in reality there are an equal amount of similarities. This has made me feel a lot more united with our world I guess. The whole idea about race being a social construct has also impacted [on] my thinking and I am quite surprised I wasn’t taught it before! It seems such an appropriate thing to include in the various PSHE [Personal, Social and Health Education] lessons we had on racism!”
- “Cultural relativity, and an understanding of the reasons behind different social practices, has changed my perception of others to a more reasoned and inquisitive approach.”

Student comments:

- “I now look for reasons other than the obvious to explain someone’s behaviour.”
- “There’s an explanation for everything in society.”
- “It has allowed me to form educated opinions about important issues such as evolution, globalisation and some politics.”
- “I have learnt that the environment has a massive impact on certain cultures and how I could help the environment and people.”
- “It has allowed me to understand the impacts of globalisation and how this affects other cultures.”

anthropology helps you to...

learn about people in different parts of the world

broaden your mind broaden your horizons

carry out a fieldwork project

see things from other people's points of view

understand cultural diversity

make the world a better place

understand people better

Any questions?

References

- Lindley-Highfield, M. (2013) 'All Change! An examination of the role of transition and change in enriching teaching and learning in undergraduate and A Level Anthropology', *Teaching Amidst Change*, Annual conference of the Teaching Anthropology Network, Department of Education, University of Oxford, 5-6 September 2013.
- Malinowski, B. (1922) *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagos of Melanesian New Guinea*, London: G. Routledge & Sons.
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- Tyler, E. B. (1871) *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*, vols. 1 & 2, London: J. Murray.