

APPLYING ANTHROPOLOGY

An Introductory Reader

TENTH EDITION

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HUMAN EVOLUTION

- 1 **Teaching Theories: The Evolution-Creation Controversy** 6
Robert Root-Bernstein and Donald L. McEachron (*The American Biology Teacher*, 1982)
Through a comparison of evolution and creationism, this article examines the logic of scientific inquiry and the characteristics of scientific theory. Scientific theories are testable and correctable, which is why they lead to new and useful knowledge.
- 2 **Re-reading Root-Bernstein and McEachron in Cobb County, Georgia: A Year Past and Present** 15
Benjamin Z. Freed (*Article written especially for Applying Anthropology*)
Cultural conflicts about evolution and creationism have centered on the American classroom. This selection describes recent debates and legal skirmishes about teaching evolution in public schools.
- 3 **Great Mysteries of Human Evolution** 21
Carl Zimmer (*Discover*, 2003)
Despite the extraordinary number of hominid fossils discovered in the past thirty years, many questions remain open about human origins and evolution. This article asks eight basic questions about what is fundamentally human.
- 4 **A New Kind of Ancestor: Ardipithecus Unveiled** 27
Ann Gibbons (*Science*, 2009)
In a 5 million-year-old forensic “cold case,” anthropologists have discovered the skeletal remains of some of our earliest human ancestors in Africa. Paleontology, genetics, and the virtual reconstruction of fossils have revealed exciting new details about lives and physiology of our earliest human ancestors.

PRIMATOLOGY

- 5 **What Are Friends For?** 32
Barbara Smuts (*Natural History*, 1987)
“Friendship” between adult males and females is an important part of the society of olive baboons of Kenya. These mutually beneficial, long-term relationships are usually based on female choice and are only indirectly related to sex. Observations of nonhuman primates make anthropologists rethink the origin and nature of human sociality.

6 Mothers and Others 38*Sarah Blaffer Hrdy (Delivered as a Tanner Lecture on Human Values)*

Based on observations of other primates and hunter-gatherers, a new way of thinking about our species challenges long-held beliefs and has implications for child rearing and gender roles, the importance of kin groups and neighbors, and the practices and policies of our day-care systems.

7 Apes, Hominids, and the Roots of Religion 45*Barbara J. King*

Can modern apes teach us about human religious life? Recent primatology research suggests that empathy, compassion, and shared emotional experiences were not only evolutionarily advantageous behaviors for our primate ancestors, but they may help us mark the origins of human religious practices.

HUMAN BIOLOGY**8 How Race Becomes Biology: Embodiment of Social Inequality 49***Clarence C. Gravlee*

Many contemporary ideas about the relationship between race and health are based on three fundamental mistakes: that race equals human biological variation, that biology equals genetics, and that race is a myth. Health inequalities between socially defined groups are the enduring result of stress in reaction to racist social interactions and discrimination, which can also cause low birth weight babies and chronic adult diseases.

9 Ancient Bodies, Modern Customs, and Our Health 64*Elizabeth D. Whitaker*

Biological anthropologists believe that our long evolutionary history has shaped our bodies and therefore strongly influences our health. Infant sleeping and breast-feeding patterns are linked to health issues like birth spacing, allergies, diarrhea, and dehydration, as well as increased risk of breast cancer and sudden infant death syndrome.

10 Ancient Genes and Modern Health 74*S. Boyd Eaton and Melvin Konner (The Leakey Foundation)*

Many of the serious health problems confronting us today may be the result of an incongruity between our genetic heritage as descendants of hunter-gatherers and our current diet and lifestyle. The study of Paleolithic people may be the key to a healthy life.

11 The Tall and the Short of It 78*Barry Bogin (Discover, 1998)*

A biological anthropologist discusses changes in the average height of populations as an example of human plasticity in the context of changing nutrition in childhood. Our environment is shaped by culture, and it affects our outward biological characteristics or phenotype.

12 Identifying Victims after a Disaster 82*Dick Gould (Anthropology News, 2005)*

Forensic anthropology has taken on an important role both in the American public imagination and on the front lines of disaster relief efforts. This selection discusses how archaeology and forensic anthropology have increasingly played a part in the identification of victims of human and natural disasters.

PART II Archaeology 85**13 Dawn of a New Stone Age in Eye Surgery 88***Payson D. Sheets (Archaeology: Discovering Our Past, 1993)*

An anthropologist applies his knowledge of the stone toolmaking technology of ancient Maya to the manufacture of surgical scalpels; his obsidian blades are more than 200 times sharper than the surgical steel scalpels currently in use.

- 14 Feminine Knowledge and Skill Reconsidered: Women and Flaked Stone Tools 91**
Kathryn Weedman Arthur (*American Anthropologist*, 2010)
 The idea of the naturally inclined male provider (and his dependent female) is a modern mythology that tells us more about contemporary gender constructs than it does the continuity of a prehistoric patriarchy. Experimental archaeology collaborations with present-day female foragers who make sophisticated stone tools contradict prevailing theories of the dependent and domestic foraging women.
- 15 The Secrets of Ancient Tiwanaku Are Benefiting Today's Bolivia 106**
Baird Straughan (*Smithsonian*, 1991)
 Archaeologists working at Tiwanaku discover an ingenious agricultural system used by the Inca that has led to significant increases in crop yields and the quality of life of present-day residents.
- 16 Disease and Death at Dr. Dickson's Mounds 112**
Alan H. Goodman and George J. Armelagos (*Natural History*, 1985)
 The intensification of maize agriculture among prehistoric Native Americans of the Mississippian period, combined with their involvement in a trading network, led to a drastic decline in their health.
- 17 Uncovering America's Pyramid Builders 117**
Karen Wright (*Discover*, 2004)
 An earthen mound in Illinois once served as the foundation of a 5,000-square-foot temple bigger than any of the Egyptian pyramids at Giza. This mound, now known as Monks Mound, sat at the center of a thriving civilization that disappeared approximately 700 years ago.
- 18 Battle of the Bones 121**
Robson Bonnicksen and Alan L. Schneider (*The Sciences*, 2000)
 How does one weigh the importance of new, and possibly revolutionary, knowledge about the prehistory of North America against the rights of some Native Americans to rebury the bones of those they believe to be their ancestors? The authors examine this contemporary controversy.
- 19 The Challenge of Race to American Historical Archaeology 127**
Charles E. Orser Jr. (*American Anthropologist*, 1998)
 People in the United States may sometimes misinterpret race by confusing it with ethnicity and class. Historical archaeology can help us better understand race as a social construction. This selection demonstrates how material dimensions of racial categorization reveal the dynamic nature of racial identify and class distinctions.
- 20 Archaeology and Vanua Development in Fiji 136**
Andrew Crosby (*World Archaeology*, 2002)
 While it may seem strange to non-anthropologists, indigenous mythologies and creation stories contain hints and explanations that guide the scientific discovery and analysis of archaeological artifacts. Archaeologists who collaborate with indigenous populations find ways to produce and integrate scientific knowledge with the values, priorities, and subjective points of view of indigenous populations.
- 21 Around the Mall and Beyond 148**
Michael Kernan (*Smithsonian*, 1995)
 What does your garbage reveal about you? The recent construction of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, unearthed the refuse of previous generations, allowing archaeologists a unique peek into the past.
- 22 "Clean Your Plate. There Are People Starving in Africa!": The Application of Archaeology and Ethnography to America's Food Loss Issues 151**
Timothy W. Jones
 Food waste is a growing problem in industrial countries like the United States. In this selection, an archaeologist looks at patterns of food loss as revealed not just by talking to producers and consumers, but also by looking at their garbage.

PART III *Linguistic Anthropology* 157

- 23 From Heofonum to Heavens 159**
Yudhijit Bhattacharjee (Science, 2004)
 Languages evolve to fit the needs and lives of the people who use them. This selection explores how computer modeling helps linguists see the influence of children, migration, and nationalism on linguistic evolution throughout the history of humankind.
- 24 “To Give up on Words”: Silence in Western Apache Culture 163**
Keith H. Basso (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 1970)
 Cross-cultural communication involves more than differences in language and gesture. This sociolinguistic analysis explores the role of silence in Apache society in particular situational contexts. There are social rules that dictate when talking is appropriate, and these rules vary across cultures.
- 25 Village of the Deaf: In a Bedouin Town, a Language Is Born 173**
Margalit Fox (Discover, 2007)
 This selection describes the evolution of language through an analysis of the development of Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language. This unique sign language was created in a remote Israeli village where an inherited form of deafness has created an incidence of deafness approximately forty times that of the general population.
- 26 Shifting Norms of Linguistic and Cultural Respect: Hybrid Sociolinguistic Zulu Identities 177**
Stephanie Inge Rudwick
 The idea of respecting your elders is not complicated, but translating that relatively universal idea into practice is another matter.
- 27 Lost in Translation 187**
Lera Boroditsky (The Wall Street Journal, 2010)
 Anthropologists have been thinking for decades about the relationship between how we speak and how we think. Recent collaborations between sociolinguists and other researchers explains that what we see, how we understand, and what we remember may be the result of the language we speak.
- 28 Talk in the Intimate Relationship: His and Hers 190**
Deborah Tannen
 Within a given culture, conversations rely on unspoken understandings about tone of voice, visual cues, silence, and a variety of other subtle conventions. A sociolinguistic analysis of male–female conversation reveals that contrasting communication styles may be to blame when marriages and long-term male–female relationships fail.

PART IV *Cultural Anthropology* 197**FIELDWORK**

- 29 Body Ritual among the Nacirema 200**
Horace Miner (American Anthropologist, 1956)
 The examination and analysis of the rituals of this tribe shed light on the meaning of culture and help us reflect on our own way of life.

- 30 Shakespeare in the Bush 204**
Laura Bohannon (Natural History, 1966)
 Laura Bohannon finds great difficulty in communicating the dramatic themes (and basic story line) of Hamlet to the Tiv of Nigeria. Assumptions about human motivations, morality, and the nature of reality are embedded in a cultural context and limit the possible understanding of the story. Great art does not necessarily transcend cultural boundaries.
- 31 Eating Christmas in the Kalahari 210**
Richard Borshay Lee (Natural History, 1969)
 When the !Kung San make fun of an ox that the anthropologist wants to give the group for a Christmas feast, Richard Lee learns about the important value of reciprocity in a food foraging band.

FAMILY & KINSHIP

- 32 Our Babies, Ourselves 215**
Meredith F. Small (Natural History, 1997)
 Cross-cultural research on parenting and child development demonstrates a wide variety of parenting styles, particularly in regard to baby care. All these variations produce culturally competent adults. Parenting variations make sense given the diversity of social contexts as well as differences in cultural values.
- 33 How Many Fathers Are Best for a Child? 222**
Meredith F. Small (Discover, 2003)
 Kinship is a central topic of anthropological research, as anthropologists examine how people use culture to create variations in understandings of human biology. This selection considers the Barí of South America, whose children have one mother and several fathers.
- 34 When Brothers Share a Wife 226**
Melvin C. Goldstein (Natural History, 1987)
 Fraternal polyandry, a rare form of plural marriage, has both benefits and costs for the people of Tibet. Given the economy and ecology of this area, the practice of polyandry has adaptive functions.
- 35 How Families Work: Love, Labor and Mediated Oppositions in American Domestic Ritual 231**
Mark Auslander
 Recent studies show that in comparison with workers in all other industrial countries, Americans spend more hours at work and receive less paid vacation and sick time. Domestic rituals like weddings and holiday celebrations are one way that middle-class Americans mediate heavy work demands with family life.

GENDER & SEXUALITY

- 36 “Strange Country This”: An Introduction to North American Gender Diversity 249**
Will Roscoe (Changing Ones, 1998)
 Unlike contemporary terms like *gay*, *lesbian*, *bisexual*, and *transgender*, the term *two-spirit* represents people whose societies respectfully understand them as both male and female. This selection describes the two-spirit tradition in Native North America, including how two-spirit people differed from region to region and tribe to tribe.

- 37 Tricking and Tripping: Fieldwork on Prostitution in the Era of AIDS 257**
Claire E. Sterk (2000)
 An anthropologist who works at a school of public health describes the fieldwork methods she used to study women’s health and sexual behavior among prostitutes in New York City and Atlanta. Gaining access, establishing rapport, and leaving the field create both methodological and emotional challenges.
- 38 Law, Custom, and Crimes against Women: The Problem of Dowry Death in India 265**
John van Willigen and V. C. Channa (*Human Organization*, 1991)
 Dowry-related violence against women in northern India is a serious and perplexing problem, difficult to explain with an anthropological functionalist approach. Economic transformations have negatively affected the status of women and have intensified economic pressures on families to provide a dowry at the marriage of daughters.

MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY & GLOBAL HEALTH

- 39 Culture and the Evolution of Obesity 276**
Peter J. Brown (*Human Nature*, 1991)
 Why do people get fat? Is it cultural or is it in our genes—or, as with most things, is it some of each? This selection provides a cross-cultural and evolutionary analysis of how both biological and cultural factors in obesity evolved.
- 40 Pocahontas Goes to the Clinic: Popular Culture as Lingua Franca in a Cultural Borderland 287**
Cheryl Mattingly (*American Anthropologist*, 2006)
 Establishing effective communication and understanding between patients and caregivers is complicated by ethnic divisions, differences in language, and racial/ethnic stereotyping. Nonetheless, creative clinicians have found ways to bridge these differences through the use of global icons like Disney characters and Spider Man.
- 41 Culture, Poverty, and HIV Transmission: The Case of Rural Haiti 297**
Paul Farmer (*Infections and Inequalities*, 1999)
 Diseases are sometimes blamed on their stigmatized victims. Anthropologists describe and explain patterns of transmission of HIV in the global AIDS pandemic. Social and political circumstances beyond their control put poor Haitians at high risk for HIV infection.
- 42 Circumcision, Pluralism, and Dilemmas of Cultural Relativism 310**
Corinne A. Kratz
 There are a variety of cultural practices throughout the world that involve surgical genital modification, and some of these carry risks of medical complications. Female circumcision practices in Africa have been targeted for elimination by a variety of international groups for nearly a century. Understanding how this practice is interpreted by people in different cultural contexts is the key to understanding the current controversy.

WORK, BUSINESS, & ECONOMY

- 43 Conflict and Confluence in Advertising Meetings 322**
Robert J. Morais (*Human Organization*, 2007)
 Anthropology can help businesses reach consumers and develop successful new products, but it can also help business executives and account managers understand and improve their relationships with employees, clients, and each other.

44 Just Another Job?: The Commodification of Domestic Labor 334*Bridget Anderson*

Millions of people from poor countries travel across land and sea seeking work in wealthier countries. Globalization creates challenges for transnational migrants as they try to support their own families by performing difficult and sometimes demeaning work in the homes of strangers.

LAW, CONFLICT, & WAR**45 Contemporary Warfare in the New Guinea Highlands 340***Aaron Podolefsky (Ethnology, 1984)*

Intertribal warfare flares up in the highlands of Papua New Guinea even after decades of relative peace. To understand why, anthropologists focus on changes in the local economic system that have, in turn, changed marriage patterns.

46 The Kpelle Moot 349*James L. Gibbs, Jr. (Africa, 1963)*

The informal moot, a method of resolving disputes among the Kpelle of Liberia, is significantly different from our court system. It emphasizes the mending of social relations between the disputing parties; the process of the hearing is therapeutic. The moot is a useful alternative model for settling disputes in our own society.

47 Army Enlists Anthropology in War Zones 357*David Rohde (The New York Times, 2007)*

In hopes of helping U.S. soldiers better understand the cultural landscape in Iraq and Afghanistan, a \$41 million military project places anthropologists in combat zones to advise and help develop counterinsurgency operations.

GLOBALIZATION & CULTURE CHANGE**48 Moral Fibers of Farmer Cooperatives: Creating Poverty and Wealth with Cotton in Southern Mali 360***Scott M. Lacy (2008)*

Development officials promote cotton production as a means to combat endemic poverty in rural Malian communities, but cotton farming can create poverty as well. When world cotton prices are high, cotton-producing countries like Mali may reap financial benefits, but when prices fall, small-scale cotton farmers pay the price.

49 Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?: Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others 368*Lila Abu-Lughod (American Anthropologist, 2002)*

One of the rationales used for war in Afghanistan after September 11, 2001, was the liberation of Afghani women from the oppression of strict Muslim orthodoxy. Western ethnocentrism of that rationale has obscured more complex historical and political dimensions of violence in Afghanistan.

50 The Price of Progress 375*John H. Bodley (Victims of Progress, 1999)*

Economic development, sometimes called "progress," can bring about unintended social and medical consequences, especially for marginalized tribal peoples. New disease burdens, ecological degradation, and increased discrimination are among the hidden costs of economic change for many people.