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| Chapter Themes | Introduces the discipline of anthropology, including its questions, its sub-disciplines, its perspective, and its relevance for the modern world |
| Chapter Learning Goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how anthropology is related to yet different from other human sciences like psychology and sociology • Be able to identify the distinct questions posed by anthropologists • Recognize the four sub-disciplines of anthropology and their specific questions, forms of evidence, and methods • Know the specialized areas of anthropology like urban anthropology and medical anthropology • Appreciate the activities and accomplishments of applied anthropology • See the career opportunities in anthropology • Understand the anthropological perspective, including cross-cultural study, holism, and cultural relativism • Be able to explain the relevance of anthropology |
| Chapter Highlights | <p>Anthropology is more than the study of humanity. It is the study of the diversity of humans, in body and behavior, in the past and present. It is the study of and the appreciation of the particular and the local in human ways of life.</p> <p>Anthropology asks unique questions about humanity, such as the range of diversity, the causes of diversity, the changes in diversity over time, the relation between different aspects of this diversity, and, in the modern</p> |

world, the relation between different cultures and societies.

There are four main sub-disciplines in anthropology: physical or biological anthropology, archaeology, linguistic anthropology, and cultural anthropology.

Anthropology has evolved into many more specialties than the basic four sub-disciplines, including urban anthropology, medical anthropology, forensic anthropology, ethnomusicology, development anthropology, and many others.

Anthropology is not only a pure science but an applied one as well, with many specific and useful applications in the modern world, including examining subcultures in modern Western societies; consulting for governments, agencies, and corporations; and representing and advocating for indigenous peoples.

Anthropologists recognize that particular cultures and societies no longer exist in isolation but are part of larger national, regional, and global networks. However, the global does not erase the local but rather mixes with it to produce many diverse “glocal” responses.

The anthropological perspective emphasizes the group over the individual and the shared over the subjective, while recognizing that the individual and the subjective exist but are shaped by cultural forces.

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| | <p>Cross-cultural or comparative study is necessary to learn about the full range of human diversity as well as its commonalities.</p> <p>Holism reminds us that each part of a culture is connected to every other part and affects its operation.</p> <p>Cultural relativism is crucial for understanding a culture in its own terms, avoiding ethnocentrism and negative or irrelevant judgments of others.</p> <p>The findings and message of anthropology are highly relevant for the modern world and for citizens other than professional anthropologists, because they make us aware of important cultural processes and cultural differences that must be considered when we interact with other peoples.</p> |
| <p>Chapter Key Terms</p> | <p>Anthropological perspective, Archaeology, Artifacts, Cross-cultural study, Cultural anthropology, Cultural relativism, Culture shock, Ecofacts, Ethnocentrism, Ethnography, Features, Glocalization, Holism, Linguistic anthropology, Physical anthropology, Primatology</p> |