

Peoples  
and Bailey

# HUMANITY

An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology



# HUMANITY

An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

James Peoples

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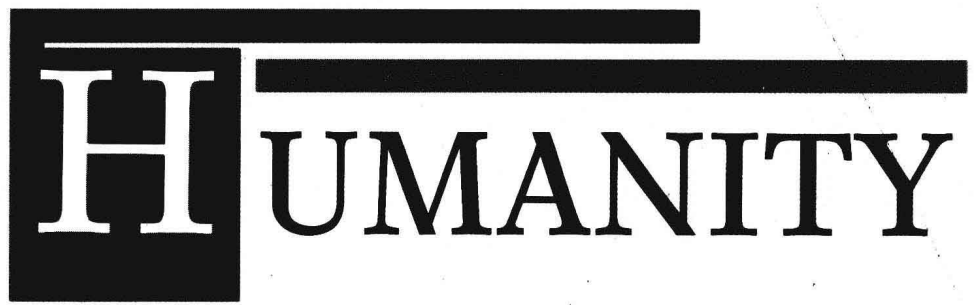
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*Credits continue on page 484*



# HUMANITY

*To Deborah and Roberta, for their trouble.*

# About the Authors

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James Peoples has taught at Southern Illinois University, the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, the University of Tulsa, and the University of California at Davis, from where he received a Ph.D. in 1977. His main research interests are in human ecology, economic and development anthropology, and the peoples of Oceania. The author of several articles, he also has published *Island in Trust*, a book about the impact of American policy on the economy of a Micronesian island.

Garrick Bailey received his undergraduate degree in history from the University of Oklahoma, and his Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Oregon. His primary research interests are in historic changes and contemporary sociocultural systems of Native American peoples. Although most of his field research has been among Native Americans in the Southwest and Oklahoma, he has also worked in Western Samoa. Presently Professor of Anthropology at the University of Tulsa, his publications include *Changes in Osage Social Organization: 1673-1906*, *Historic Navajo Occupation of the Northern Chaco Plateau*, and *A History of the Navajo: The Reservation Years*, the latter two coauthored with Roberta Bailey.

# Preface

Our intention in writing *Humanity* is to provide first-time students with a solid overview of the important concepts, methods, theories, findings, and applications of cultural anthropology. In the process, we hope to provide those students who will pursue further studies in anthropology with a grounding in the fundamentals of the discipline. We try to convey to the one-time-only student a sense of the excitement of discovering other ways of human life and of thinking about other people the way anthropologists do. We hope to convince all our readers of the practical value of understanding other cultural traditions as interaction between the peoples of the world increases.

The broad scope of cultural anthropology leads to especially hard choices about which topics to include in an introductory textbook. Our decisions have been guided by the probable interest of the material to students, the degree to which certain information corrects popular misconceptions, the likelihood that a topic is covered in class by most instructors, our own abilities to present the material confidently and competently, and—of course—our biases about the importance of the subject.

Textbooks in any discipline should teach several things. First, they should introduce the important concepts that scholars have found helpful in describing and analyzing the field's subject matter. Concepts such as culture, relativism, group, and role are used by all anthropologists. We discuss these concepts in part 1. Part 1 also clarifies a point of confusion for many students, the relationship between human biology and sociocultural phenomena. We discuss the evidence that biological differences have little to do with sociocultural differences between populations. Finally, because language is such a fruitful source of concepts and analogies in analyzing culture, we have chosen also to discuss it in this part (chapter 4).

Second, texts ought to cover the main questions asked by a field

and the most important theoretical approaches and methodologies used to answer them. This is our goal in part 2. Chapter 5 shows how anthropological thinking about humankind has changed over the past century, introducing the major theoretical orientations used today. Chapter 6 describes how anthropologists go about their work—how they collect data, how they interpret the information acquired, and the problems they encounter in working with other peoples. Fieldwork, ethnohistory, and comparative methodologies are covered. The use of cross-cultural data to test various hypotheses about sociocultural systems is exemplified in many of the later chapters.

The heart of any text in cultural anthropology is a discussion of the major empirical finding of the field: the sociocultural diversity of the human species. In part 3 (chapters 7 through 16) we describe and document this diversity as lucidly as we can. Some subjects covered are the standard ones: adaptation (foraging and domestication), exchange, economic organization, domestic life (marriage, family, residence patterns), forms of kinship, variations in political and legal systems, religion, and personality. Other topics are discussed only in passing by many existing texts, including forms of control over resources, gender, inequality, and the life cycle. Part 3 often emphasizes the integration of sociocultural systems, showing how many puzzling beliefs and customs make sense when understood in the local sociocultural context. Where credible hypotheses exist to help students understand the possible causes of particular sociocultural elements, we describe them—although their tentative nature is always emphasized. Ethnographic examples appear throughout the book, but are used especially liberally in this part.

With the recent surge of interest in the applications of knowledge to technical or social problems, it is appropriate that the practical insights offered by anthropology be made explicit. This is our primary aim in part 4, which includes chapters discussing anthropological perspectives on world history since 1500, anthropological insights on population growth and world hunger, and the survival of indigenous peoples. It is impossible to suggest how anthropological findings and theories are relevant to the understanding and solution of such problems without adopting a political stance. We state ours as left-liberal, and hope that part 4 will be read with this in mind.

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## Design Features

The book has several design features that enhance its interest to and comprehension by students.

### Maps

World maps showing the location of peoples described or referred to in the text appear in the front and back of the book. Additional



distributional maps are found in chapters 7 and 8, showing the location of biomes, foragers, horticulturalists, intensive agriculturalists, and the ancient civilizations. Historical maps are used in chapter 17 to document the discussion in text.

## Chapter Features

Each chapter includes a separate contents page, which serves as a preview of its topics. Each begins with a paragraph or two introducing its subject matter. End summaries review the major points covered. Key words are boldfaced in the chapter text, and are listed at the end of each chapter. Those interested in pursuing some subject will find suggested readings, briefly annotated.

## Glossary

A list and brief definition of all key words appears at the end of the book, alphabetically arranged. This can be used as a quick reference for studying, or to find a precisely worded definition of a term whose meaning might not be immediately apparent in the text passage.

## Boxes

All chapters contain at least one box, which presents new material. Some discuss subjects that do not fit neatly into the chapter as written, but which are of sufficient interest that they deserve treatment in the text. Examples are Box 3.1 and 10.1. Other boxed material presents anthropological insights on modern life, such as Box 1.1, 9.1, and 15.2. Finally, a few boxes are used for technical discussions (e.g., Box 4.1) or to illustrate anthropological debates (e.g., Box 5.1).

## References

*Humanity* does not cite references in the text passage itself, except for direct quotations. The footnote method of citation is widely and justifiably despised, and many students find the common scientific citation style (e.g., Smith 1988) distracting. To maximize the readability of the book, we have collected all references at the end, arranged by chapter and major heading. To avoid confusion about which passages are taken from which sources, we have annotated the references. In order to give full credit in the text itself to the many scholars whose works we cite, we have worked their names into the passage whenever possible. Hopefully, those who wish to search out the source of a particular passage or bit of information will not be too inconvenienced by this concession we make to those students who do not wish to be distracted by citations.

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## Content Features

*Humanity* includes several innovations in content lacking in most other texts of comparable scope.

Chapter 2 has an unusually thorough and systematic discussion of the culture concept (which we define as shared, socially learned knowledge—without committing ourselves to the idealist theoretical orientation usually implied by this definition), of the relation between culture and patterns of behavior, and of the special characteristics of social learning.

Chapter 3 offers a unique discussion of the relation between human biology and sociocultural phenomena. It carefully and effectively distinguishes between the issues of (1) whether biological *differences* are causally related to sociocultural differences and (2) how the *common* evolutionary heritage of all humanity might affect sociocultural systems. Chapter 3 also describes how individuals fit into their societies as members of groups, performers of roles, and participants in networks. Box 3.1 addresses a subject not found in any other text—why black Americans are overrepresented in certain professional sports.

Chapter 5 describes the social and intellectual context that gave rise to the discipline of anthropology in western Europe. It discusses the main theoretical split in contemporary anthropological thought, effectively and lucidly illustrating the difference between materialism and idealism in a box describing two interpretations of the Moslem and Jewish prohibition on the consumption of pork.

Chapters 7 and 8 have as a major focus the impact of adaptation and the organization of production on the overall way of life of a people. Maps in these two chapters reveal the distribution of adaptive systems and how their location is affected by climatic, edaphic, and biotic factors.

Chapter 9 has an insightful discussion of the social uses of balanced reciprocity in modern North America. It also includes a synthetic summary of systems of control over the process of production and distribution, revealing the range of variability in the inequality of such control and its consequences for sociocultural evolution.

Chapters 10 and 11 do not shy away from those most forbidding of all anthropological topics to most students—marriage, incest taboos, residence patterns, forms of kinship and marriage, and systems of terminology. We have done our best to make these subjects interesting by a variety of stylistic and pedagogical devices.

Chapter 12 presents a description of relationships between the sexes, concentrating on the influences on the sexual division of labor, on how and why the development of intensive agriculture affected it, and on how “the” status of women in human societies is influenced by other sociocultural forces.

Chapter 13 includes an unusually thorough description of the diverse legal systems found among humanity, showing not only how they are structured but also how they work.

After distinguishing the range of variability in systems of inequality, chapter 14 discusses the mechanisms that maintain a high degree of inequality in a society. It also includes an up to date description of the unequal distribution of wealth in the contemporary United States. The chapter concludes with a description of the two fundamental explanations of inequality, showing how ethnographic data contributes to choosing between them.

Chapter 17 discusses the historical interaction between the world's peoples brought about by the expansion of European influence and colonialism. It shows how the spread of European technology, ideas, control, and peoples affected indigenous peoples of all continents and thus created the political and economic system of the modern world.

Chapter 18 shows how anthropological research contributes to our understanding of two worldwide problems, population growth and hunger. By bringing together quantitative data on the energetic requirements of various food systems, it shows why mechanized technology is unlikely to be the solution to the world food problem. It also argues that inequality in the distribution of food-producing resources is a more important cause of hunger than an absolute scarcity of such resources.

Chapter 19 deals with the fate of indigenous peoples, both in the past and present. It presents ethical arguments for halting the further destruction of preindustrial lifeways. It also discusses pragmatic reasons for allowing such peoples to retain their ways of life, if that is their choice.

Some instructors will not want to assign every chapter, or will assign them in a different order than they appear in the book. We therefore have made most of the chapters reasonably self-contained, even at the expense of some minor overlap in coverage in a few places. Cross-references to material in other chapters are provided where appropriate.

The Instructor's Manual includes suggested films/videos, possible supplementary lectures, classroom discussion topics, multiple choice examination questions, and essay examination questions, for each chapter.

Many readers are curious about who wrote what in coauthored books. Our original intent was for a 50-50 split. Bailey had so many other commitments that he was unable to contribute as much as he'd planned. In the end, he wrote the material on ethnographic and ethnohistoric methods in chapter 6, the section on the life cycle in chapter 16, all of 13, and all of 17. Peoples was primarily responsible for the rest. Of course, we read each other's chapters and made suggestions, leading to many corrections, deletions, additions, and rewrites.

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manuscript used in writing chapter 14.

Many of the illustrations were provided by our friends Annette B. Fromm, Lamont Lindstrom, Michael Whalen, and Donald Henry. John Wilson kindly loaned us an ogre kachina from his collection for an illustration, as well as prints of Hopi photos from the Jo Mora collection at the University of Northern Arizona. We also thank Tom Brashaw and Dan McPike at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa and the library at Northern Arizona University for allowing us to reproduce negatives in their possession at minimal cost.

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