
PREFACE



Mirror for Humanity (*MFH*) is intended to provide a concise, relatively low-cost introduction to cultural anthropology. The combination of shorter length and lower cost increases the instructor's options for assigning additional reading—case studies, readers, and other supplements—in a semester course. Based on experience with the first five editions, I can say that *MFH* also works well in a quarter system, since traditional cultural anthropology texts may be too long for a one-quarter course.

As a college student, I was drawn to anthropology by its breadth and because of what it could tell me about the human condition. Cultural anthropology has compiled an impressive body of knowledge about human similarities and differences. I'm eager to introduce that knowledge in the pages that follow. I believe strongly in anthropology's capacity to enlighten and inform. Anthropology's subject matter is intrinsically fascinating, and its focus on diversity helps students understand and interact with their fellow human beings in an increasingly interconnected world and an increasingly diverse North America.

I decided to write my first textbook back in 1972, when there were far fewer introductory anthropology texts than there are today. The texts back then tended to be overly encyclopedic. I found them too long and too unfocused for my course and my image of contemporary anthropology. The field of anthropology was changing rapidly. Anthropologists were writing about a “new archaeology” and a “new ethnography.” Studies of language as actually used in society were revolutionizing overly formal and static linguistic models. Symbolic and interpretive approaches were joining ecological and materialist ones within cultural anthropology.

Cultural anthropology hasn't lost its excitement. Profound changes have affected the people and societies ethnographers have traditionally studied. In cultural anthropology it's increasingly difficult to know when to write in the present and when to write in the past tense. Yet many texts ignore change—except maybe with a chapter tacked on at the end—and write as though cultural anthropology and the people it studies were the same as they were decades ago. While any competent text must present cultural anthropology's core, it should also demonstrate anthropology's relevance to today's world.

I try to keep *MFH* up to date. Because anthropology, reflecting the world itself, seems to change at an increasing rate, the introductory text should not restrict itself to subject matter defined more than a generation ago, ignoring the pervasive changes affecting the peoples, places, and topics traditionally studied by anthropologists. *MFH* thus includes discussions of ethnicity and nationalism in a global context and of diversity

and multiculturalism in North America. Also highlighted are anthropology's increasingly transnational, multilocal, and longitudinal perspectives.

Rapid change notwithstanding, anthropology has a core—the subject matter, perspectives, and approaches that first attracted me when I was an undergraduate. Even the briefest text must expose anthropology's nature, scope, and roles as a science, a humanities field, and a mirror for humanity. Anthropology is a science—a “systematic field of study or body of knowledge that aims, through experiment, observation, and deduction, to produce reliable explanations of phenomena, with reference to the material and physical world” (*Webster's New World Encyclopedia*, 1993, p. 937). Clyde Kluckhohn called anthropology “the science of human similarities and differences,” and his statement of the need for such a science still stands: “Anthropology provides a scientific basis for dealing with the crucial dilemma of the world today: how can peoples of different appearance, mutually unintelligible languages, and dissimilar ways of life get along peaceably together?” (Kluckhohn 1944, p. 9).

Anthropology also has strong links to the humanities. Cultural anthropology may well be the most humanistic of academic fields because of its fundamental respect for human diversity. Anthropologists listen to, record, and represent voices from a multitude of nations and cultures. We strive to convince our students of the value of local knowledge, of diverse world views and perspectives. Cultural anthropology brings a comparative and nonelitist perspective to forms of creative expression, including art, narratives, music, and dance. Cultural anthropology is influenced by and influences the humanities. For example, adopting an anthropological view of creativity in its social and cultural context, recent approaches in the humanities have paid greater attention to mass and popular culture and to local creative expressions.

Anthropology's final basic role is as a mirror for humanity—a term derived from Clyde Kluckhohn's metaphor, expressed in his book *Mirror for Man* (1944), which suggested the title of this text. By looking at other cultures we can see ourselves more clearly:

Ordinarily we are unaware of the special lens through which we look at life. It would hardly be fish who discovered the existence of water. Students who had not yet gone beyond the horizon of their own society could not be expected to perceive custom which was the stuff of their own thinking. Anthropology holds up a great mirror to man and lets him look at himself in his infinite variety. (Kluckhohn 1944, p. 16)

This point reminds me of one of my teachers, Margaret Mead, who is remembered for her unparalleled success in demonstrating anthropology's value and relevance in allowing Americans to reflect on cultural variation and the plasticity of human nature. Mead represented anthropology so effectively because she viewed it as a humanistic science of unique value in understanding and improving the human condition. This book is written in the belief that anthropologists should remember and emulate Dr. Mead's example.

➔ CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

No single or monolithic theoretical perspective orients this book. My e-mail, along with reviewers' comments, confirms that instructors with a wide range of views and approaches have been pleased with *MFH* as a teaching tool.

The chapters are organized to place related content close together (although they are sufficiently independent of one another to be assigned in any order the instructor might select). Culture and language are covered in Chapters 3 and 4. The chapter “Ethnicity and Race” has been moved from Chapter 4 to Chapter 11, following the advice of several readers and my own feeling that it would fit better near related material toward the end of the book. “Political Systems” (Chapter 6) logically follows “Making a Living” (Chapter 5). Chapters 7 and 8 (“Families, Kinship, and Marriage” and “Gender,” respectively) also form a coherent unit.

The chapter on religion (9) covers not just traditional religious practices but also contemporary world religions and religious movements. It is followed by four chapters (10–13) that form a natural unit exploring sociocultural transformations and expressions in the modern world. This concluding unit represents one of the key differences between this text and others. Several important questions are addressed in these four chapters: How and why did the modern world system emerge? How has world capitalism affected patterns of stratification and inequality within and among nations? What were colonialism, imperialism, and Communism, and what are their legacies? How are race and ethnicity socially constructed and handled in different societies, and how do they generate prejudice, discrimination, and conflict? How do economic development and globalization affect the peoples, societies, and communities among which anthropologists traditionally have worked? How do people today actively interpret and confront the world system and the products of globalization? What factors threaten continued human diversity? How can anthropologists work to ensure the preservation of that diversity?

Let me also focus here on two chapters present in *Mirror for Humanity* but not found consistently in other anthropology texts: “Ethnicity and Race” (Chapter 11) and “Gender” (Chapter 8). I believe that systematic consideration of ethnicity, race, and gender is vital in an introductory anthropology text. Anthropology’s distinctive four-field approach can shed special light on these subjects. Race and gender studies are fields in which anthropology always has taken the lead. I’m convinced that anthropology’s special contributions to understanding the biological, social, cultural, and linguistic dimensions of ethnicity, race, and gender should be highlighted in any introductory text. So significant to anthropology do I consider ideas about race that I included in Chapter 1 of this edition a new discussion of problems with the race concept. Ever since the writings of Franz Boas, a founder of American anthropology, issues of race, language, and culture have been central to anthropology. I make every attempt to illuminate them in this book.

➔ NEW IN THE SIXTH EDITION

There are some changes in chapter order and content. “Ethnicity and Race” has been moved from Chapter 4 to Chapter 11. Material on colonialism formerly in Chapter 12 has been combined with historical material on the world system in a new Chapter 10, “The World System and Colonialism.” The discussion of development anthropology has been moved from the chapter titled “Colonialism and Development” in the last edition to a new chapter (12) on applied anthropology. The discussion of applied anthropology formerly in Chapter 1 is now in Chapter 12, “Applying Anthropology.” Chapter 12

highlights the importance of this second dimension of anthropology. All chapters have been updated, and some have been revised substantially (1, 10, 11, 12, and 13). Charts, tables, and statistics have been updated with the most recent figures available. Two new end-of-chapter boxes are included, to bring home anthropology's relevance to current issues and events. The focus on global themes, trends, and issues has been strengthened even further in this edition.

➔ CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER CHANGES

Chapter 1: What Is Anthropology?

A substantially revised Chapter 1 introduces anthropology as a four-field, integrated, biocultural discipline that focuses on human biological and cultural diversity in time and space. Anthropology is discussed as a comparative and holistic science, with links to the natural and social sciences and the humanities. The four subfields are described in greater detail than in the last edition. Chapter 1 now includes a discussion of problems with the race concept. A new box on anthropological fieldwork in northern Kenya concludes the chapter. Applying anthropology has been removed from this chapter to its own (12).

Chapter 2: Ethics and Methods

Chapter 2 focuses on ethical issues and research methods. The ethical issues anthropologists increasingly confront are highlighted. Students learn how anthropologists do their work and how that work is relevant in understanding ourselves. This chapter has been updated throughout.

Chapter 3: Culture

This chapter, which examines the anthropological concept of culture, including its symbolic and adaptive features, has been updated based on recent writing and statistics. A new discussion distinguishes between the moral and methodological meanings of cultural relativism.

Chapter 4: Language and Communication

Chapter 4 introduces methods and topics in linguistic anthropology, including nonverbal communication, descriptive and historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, and language and culture. A new section examines primate communication and differences between call systems and language. A new box on restoring lost languages, with a focus on Native American languages, concludes the chapter.

Chapter 5: Making a Living

Chapter 5 surveys economic anthropology, including adaptive strategies (systems of food production) and exchange systems. Included is a discussion of recent legal rulings

affecting the San people of Botswana. The idea of industrial alienation is illustrated here by Ong's study of Malaysian factory women. The discussion of potlatching has been revised. The concluding box on scarcity has been updated based on the author's 2006 revisit to Madagascar.

Chapter 6: Political Systems

Using case material from various societies, Chapter 6 discusses political systems, in terms of scale and types of conflict resolution. The section on "Foraging Bands" has been revised. The discussion of status, formerly in the chapter "Ethnicity and Race," has been moved here, where it fits more appropriately.

Chapter 7: Families, Kinship, and Marriage

Chapter 7 discusses families, households, descent groups, and marriage cross-culturally, and also with reference to updated U.S. and Canadian census data. Various definitions of *family* now are considered. The discussion of marriage examines exogamy, endogamy, the incest taboo, caste, postmarital residence rules, marital exchanges, replacement marriage, and plural marriage cross-culturally. Also covered are divorce and same-sex marriage, updated to reflect recent events and legal decisions in the United States and Canada. There is a new section titled "Although Tabooed, Incest Does Happen."

Chapter 8: Gender

A thoroughly updated Chapter 8 examines cross-cultural similarities and differences in male and female roles, rights, and responsibilities. Systems of gender stratification and multiple genders are examined. There is information on contemporary gender roles and issues, including the feminization of poverty. The latest relevant census data are included.

Chapter 9: Religion

Chapter 9 surveys time-honored anthropological approaches to religion while also discussing contemporary world religions and religious movements. This chapter concludes with a box on Islam's expansion. The section on contemporary world religions has been revised and updated, with a new table and figure illustrating numbers of adherents.

Chapter 10: The World System and Colonialism

This chapter brings together historical material previously included in Chapters 11 and 12 of the last edition. Topics include the emergence and nature of the modern world system, including industrial and postindustrial systems of stratification and their impact on nonindustrial societies. Also discussed are colonial systems and development policies that have impinged on the people and societies anthropologists traditionally have studied. Major sections examine neoliberalism, Communism and its fall, and post-socialist transitions. The chapter concludes with an updated discussions of global energy consumption.

Chapter 11: Ethnicity and Race

This repositioned chapter (from 4 to 11) now is placed nearer related material in adjacent chapters. It discusses the social construction of race and ethnicity and offers cross-cultural examples of variation in racial classification and ethnic relations. This chapter has been thoroughly updated, with the most recent sources and census data for the United States and Canada available in key tables. There is new material on Iraq and on an ethnically diverse United States, whose population now exceeds 300 million people.

Chapter 12: Applying Anthropology

In the last edition, applied anthropology was discussed under “Anthropology and Its Applications,” in Chapter 1. Now this second dimension of anthropology has its own chapter, placed near related material in adjacent chapters. Examples of applied anthropology from the four subfields are provided. The section on development anthropology (formerly discussed with colonialism) has been moved here, where it belongs as an important focus of applied anthropology. I’ve rewritten the sections on urban and medical anthropology, including recent studies. The chapter introduction has been totally rewritten. There is an expanded discussion of ethical dilemmas in applied anthropology.

Chapter 13: Cultural Exchange and Survival

Chapter 13 continues the examination of how development and globalization affect the peoples, societies, and communities in which anthropologists traditionally have worked. Using recent examples, it shows how local people actively confront the world system and the products of globalization. There is a major new section on indigenous peoples. The chapter concludes with a final consideration of the role of the anthropologist in ensuring the continuance and preservation of cultural diversity.

→ PEDAGOGY

This sixth edition incorporates suggestions made by users of my other texts as well as reviewers of previous editions of *MFH*. The result, I hope, is a sound, well-organized, interesting, and “user-friendly” introduction to cultural anthropology.

MFH contains “Anthropology Today” boxes at the end of each chapter, intended to give students a chance to consider anthropology’s relevance to today’s world and to their own lives. Some boxes examine current events or debates. Others are more personal accounts, which add human feeling to the presentation of cultural anthropology’s subject matter. Many boxes illustrate a point with examples familiar to students from their enculturation or everyday experience.

A glossary defining key terms presented in each chapter is found at the end of the book, along with a bibliography of references cited.

End-of-chapter summaries are numbered, to make major points stand out.

➔ SUPPLEMENTS

Visit our Online Learning Center Web site at www.mhhe.com/kottakmfh6 for robust student and instructor resources.

For Students

Student resources include self-quizzes (multiple choice, true or false, essay), Internet exercises, and chapter study aides.

For Instructors

The password-protected instructor portion of the Web site includes the instructor's manual, a comprehensive computerized test bank, PowerPoint lecture slides, and a variety of additional instructor resources.

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Students, too, regularly share their insights about *MFH* via e-mail. Anyone—student or instructor—with access to e-mail can reach me at the following address: ckottak@bellsouth.net.

As usual, my family has offered me understanding, support, and inspiration during the preparation of *MFH*. Dr. Nicholas Kottak regularly shares his insights with me, as does Isabel Wagley Kottak, my companion in the field and in life for more than four decades. This book is dedicated to my daughter, Dr. Juliet Kottak Mavromatis, who continues our family tradition of exploring human diversity and diagnosing and treating the human condition.

During a teaching career that began in 1968, I have benefited from the knowledge, help, and advice of so many friends, colleagues, teaching assistants, and students that I can no longer fit their names into a short preface. I hope they know who they are and accept my thanks.

Since 1968 I've taught Anthropology 101 (Introduction to Anthropology), with the help of several teaching assistants (graduate student instructors) each time. Feedback from students and teaching assistants keeps me up to date on the interests, needs, and views of the people for whom *MFH* is written. I continue to believe that effective textbooks are based in enthusiasm and in practice—in the enjoyment of teaching. I hope this product of my experience will continue to be helpful to others.

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