

Key Debates 2009

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Assessment: The module will be assessed by way of a 6000 word review of the six debates..

Debate 1: *Aesthetics* (PD)

Debate question: Is aesthetics a cross-cultural category?

This question was the subject of a debate held by the Group for Debates in Anthropological Theory (see Morphy *et al* 1994). Some anthropologists argue that aesthetics is useful concept with which to work, provided you do not argue for a universal aesthetic. Other anthropologists argue that aesthetics is a western category and that to use it is to impose a Western point of view on other people's values. The recommended reading below gives some of the background to the views that were exchanged in the Manchester debate and takes the matter discussed up to recent years.

Firth, R. 1951/1971 The social framework of primitive art. Chapter 5 in *Elements of social organization*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Gell, A. 1992 The technology of enchantment and the enchantment of technology. In J. Coote and A. Shelton (eds) *Anthropology, art and aesthetics*, pp 40-63. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Gell, A. 1998 *Art and agency: an anthropological theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Layton, R. 2003 *Art and agency: a reassessment*, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 9(3), 447-464.

Morphy, H. *et al* 1994 *Aesthetics is a cross-cultural category*. Manchester: Group Debates in Anthropological Theory. Available on 3-day loan in main library.

The debate was re-issued in Ingold, T. (ed.) 1997 *Key debates in anthropology*. New York: Routledge.

Morphy, H. 2009 Art as a mode of action, *Journal of Material Culture* 14(1): 5-27.

Ohnuki-Tierney, E. 2004 Betrayal by idealism and aesthetics: special attack force (kamikaze) pilots and their intellectual trajectories (Part 1), *Anthropology Today* 20(2), 15-21.

Pellizzi, F. (ed.) 1992 *Anthropology and aesthetics*. Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities.

Overing, J. and Passes, A. (eds) 2000 *The anthropology of love and anger: the aesthetics of conviviality in Native Amazonia*. London: New York: Routledge.

Pinney, C. and Thomas, N. (eds) 2001 *Beyond aesthetics: art and the technologies of enchantment*. Oxford: Berg.

Debate 2: Advocacy and Ethics (SH)

The question of anthropological advocacy is of particular relevance when considering the implications of anthropological research for resolving conflict. Anthropologists are frequently well placed to act as cultural translators between their subjects of study and the wider world. But is advocacy ethical?

Debate question: Should anthropologists align themselves with a specific 'cause' or should they simply document what transpires whilst trying to remain impartial?

Burr, R. 2002. 'Shaming of the Anthropologist: Ethical Dilemmas during and in the Aftermath of the Fieldwork Process' *Anthropology Matters* <http://www.anthropologymatters.com>

Hastrup, K. 1993. 'The native voice—and the anthropological vision' *Social Anthropology*. Volume 1 (2): 173 – 186.

Hastrup, K. & Elsass, P. 1990. 'Anthropological Advocacy: A Contradiction in Terms?' *Current Anthropology*. Volume 31, Number 3.

Hodgson, D. L. 2002. 'Comparative Perspectives on the Indigenous Rights Movement in Africa and the Americas.' *American Anthropologist* 104 (4): 1037-1049.

Hodgson, D. L. 2002. 'Precarious Alliances: The Cultural Politics and Structural Predicaments of the Indigenous Rights Movement in Tanzania' *American Anthropologist*. 104(4):1086-1097.

Kellett, P. 2009. 'Advocacy in Anthropology: Active engagement or passive scholarship?' *Durham Anthropology Journal*. Volume 16(1) 2009: 22-31.

Kirsch, S. 2002. 'Anthropology and Advocacy: A Case Study of the Campaign against the Ok Tedi Mine' *Critique of Anthropology*. Volume 22 (2): 175-200

Marcus, G. E. 2005. 'The anthropologist as witness in contemporary regimes of intervention' *Cultural Politics*. Issue 1 (1): 31 – 49.

- Obermeyer, C. M. 2003. 'The Health Consequences of Female Circumcision: Science, Advocacy, and Standards of Evidence' *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*. 17 (3): 394 – 412. Available as a free download at:
<http://cenhum.wustl.edu/~anthro/articles/MAQ%20Jul%2003.pdf>
- Robins, S. 2001. 'NGOs, 'Bushman' and Double Vision: The ≠khomani San Land Claim and the Cultural Politics of 'Community' and 'Development' in the Kalahari' *Journal of Southern African Studies*. Volume 27 (4): 833-853(21). Available as a free download at:
<http://www.research4development.info/PDF/Outputs/CentreOnCitizenship/robins.pdf>
- Rylko-Bauer, B., Singer, M. & van Willigen, J. 2006. 'Reclaiming Applied Anthropology: Its Past, Present, and Future' *American Anthropologist*. 108 (1): 178-190.
- Scheper-Hughes, N. 1995. 'The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology' *Current Anthropologist*, Vol. 36 (3), 409-440
- Scheper-Hughes, N. 1992. *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*, Berkeley:
 University of California Press.
- Sillitoe, P. 2007. 'Anthropologists only need apply: challenges of applied anthropology' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. 13 (1): 147-165
- Sillitoe, P. 2006. 'Ethnobiology and applied anthropology: rapprochement of the academic with the practical' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* Volume 12 (s1): S119-S142
- Singer, M. 1990. 'Another Perspective on Advocacy' *Current Anthropology*. Volume 13 (5).
- Taylor, J. J. 2007. 'Celebrating San victory too soon? Reflections on the outcome of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve case' *Anthropology Today*. Volume 23 (5): 3 - 5
- Wright, R. M. 1988. 'Anthropological Presuppositions of Indigenous Advocacy' *Annual Review of Anthropology*. Vol. 17: 365-390.
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Debate 3: Culture and Evolution (SH)

Debate question: Why does social anthropology reject evolutionary biology as a possible explanatory framework for the understanding of human cultures?

- Boyd, R. & Richerson, P. J. 1996. 'Why Culture is Common, but Cultural Evolution is Rare' *Proceedings of the British Academy*.
<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/anthro/faculty/boyd/BoydRichersonProcBritAcad96.pdf>
- Carrithers, M. 1992. *Why humans have cultures : explaining anthropology and social diversity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Castro, L. & Toro, M. A. 2004. 'The evolution of culture: From primate social learning to human culture' *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*. <http://www.pnas.org/content/101/27/10235.full>
- Diamond, J. 1997. *Guns, germs, and steel : the fates of human societies*. New York : W.W. Norton & Co.
- Durham, W. H. 1991. *Coevolution: genes, culture, and human diversity*. Stanford Uni Press.
- Gibson, K. R. & Ingold, T. 1993. *Tools, language and cognition in human evolution*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Ingold, T. 1986. *Evolution and social life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ingold, T. 2000. *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London: Routledge.
- Ingold, T. 2007. 'The trouble with 'evolutionary biology'' *Anthropology Today*. Volume 23 (2): 13 – 17. (Plus see additional comments generated by this article in subsequent issues of *AT*).
- Kellert, S. R. & Wilson, E. O. 1993. *The Biophilia hypothesis*. Washington, D.C : Island Press.
- McGrew, W. C. 2004. *The cultured chimpanzee : reflections on cultural primatology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Marks, J. 2007. 'Anthropological taxonomy as subject and object. The consequences of descent from Darwin and Durkheim' *Anthropology Today*. Volume 23 (4): 7 – 12.
- Sperber, D. 1996. *Explaining culture: a naturalistic approach*. Oxford : Blackwell.
- Whitehouse, H. 2001. *The debated mind : evolutionary psychology versus ethnography*. Oxford: Berg.
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Debate 4: *Darkness in El Dorado - The Yanomami Controversy (PL)*

El Dorado Task Force Papers, final report volumes I & II submitted to the American Anthropological Association May 18 2002, available to download as PDFs at:
<http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/Preface-for-El-Dorado-Task-Force-Papers.cfm>

Chagnon, N. 1971. *Yanomamo: The Fierce People*. New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.
301.2987 CHA

Chagnon, N 1974. *Studying The Yanomamo*. New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.
301.2987 CHA

Ferguson, B.R. 2000 [1992]. A Savage Encounter: Western Contact and The Yanomami War Complex. In *War in The Tribal Zone: Expanding States and Indigenous Warfare* (eds) B.R. Ferguson & N.L. Whitehead. Oxford: James Currey. PDF in Political Systems folder in ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY FOLDER on P-Drive

Lizot, J. 1985. *Tales of The Yanomami: Daily Life in The Venezuelan Forest*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 301.2987 LIZ

Ramos, A.R. 1995. *Sanumá Memories: Yanomami Ethnography in Times of Crisis*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 301.2987 RAM

Rocha, J. 1999. *Murder in The Rainforest: The Yanomami, The Gold Miners and The Amazon*. London: Latin American Bureau. 301.2987 ROC

Unavailable in The Lampeter library, but highly relevant (try to obtain from National Library):

Borofsky, R. 2005. *Yanomami: The Fierce Controversy and What We Can Learn From It* (California Series in Public Anthropology 12. London: University of California Press.

Tierney, P. 2001. *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated The Amazon*. London: W W Norton.

Debate 5: *Mead/Freeman Controversy (PL)*

Clifford, J. 1983. On Ethnographic Authority. *Representations* 1, 118-146. JSTOR

Freeman, D. 1984. *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 301.299613 FRE

- . 1992. Paradigms in Collision: The Far-Reaching Controversy Over The Samoan Researches of Margaret Mead and Its Significance for The Human Sciences. *Academic Questions* **5**, 23-33. PDF in 'Controversies' folder in ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY folder on P-Drive
- Marshall, M. 1993. The Wizard from Oz Meets the Wicked Witch of the East: Freeman, Mead, and Ethnographic Authority. *American Ethnologist* **20**, 604-617. JSTOR
- Mead, M. 1943. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Study of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 301.299613 MEA or:
- Mead, M. 1934. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation*. New York: Blue Ribbon Books. 301.299613 MEA
- Rosaldo, R. 1986. From The Door of His Tent: The Fieldworker and The Inquisitor. In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (eds) J. Clifford & G. Marcus. Berkely: University of California Press.
- Shankman, P. 1996. The History of Samoan Sexual Conduct and The Mead-Freeman Controversy. *American Anthropologist* **98**, 555-567. JSTOR
- Unavailable readings indicative of the furore caused or of supplementary relevance:**
- Behar, R. & D.A. Gordon (eds) 1995. *Women Writing Culture*. London: University of California Press.
- Côté, J.E. 1994. *Adolescent Storm and Stress: An Evaluation of The Mead-Freeman Controversy*: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Holmes, L. 1988. *Quest for The Real Samoa: Mead/Freeman Controversy and Beyond*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Shankman, P. 2000. Culture, Biology and Evolution: The Mead-Freeman Controversy Revisited. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* **29**, 539-556.
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Debate 6: *Sacrifice* (PD)

Debate question: Why are symbolic transformations involved in animal sacrifice so complex?

In the Old Testament, the book of Genesis relates that God punished animal and humankind for the wickedness of human beings, saving only Noah and his household and selected representatives of animal and bird species and of 'all that crawls on the ground'. Following the flood, Noah constructed an altar and made animal sacrifices to God, whereupon God smelt 'the

appeasing fragrance' and vowed never to curse the earth again because of human wrongdoing (Genesis 8, vs 20-21). The notion of animal sacrifice and the scapegoat is part of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. But do other people regard animals as substitutes for what they perceive to be human failings? What other complex symbolic transformations take place when human beings sacrifice non-human animals?

Bloch, M. 1992 *Prey into hunter: the politics of religious experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read especially chapter 3 on anthropological treatments of sacrifice.

Dransart, P. 2002 Concepts of spiritual nourishment in the Andes and Europe: rosaries in cross-cultural contexts, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8(1), 1-21.

Ingold, T. 1986 Hunting, sacrifice and the domestication of animals. Chapter 10 in *The appropriation of nature: essays on human ecology and social relations*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Robertson-Smith, W. 1894/1901 *Lectures on the religion of the Semites: first series; the fundamental institutions*. London: Adam and Charles Black. Read especially chapters VI, VIII and IX.

Sallnow, M.J. 1987 *Pilgrims of the Andes: regional cults in Cusco*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press. Read especially chapter 6, 'Ordering the microcosm'.

Werbner, P. 2003 *Pilgrims of love: the anthropology of a global sufi cult*. London: Hurst & Co.