

Unit 1: Anthropology & the basics...

What is "anthropology?"

- Anthros - Man
- Logos - study of
- Discipline of "infinite curiosity" about the human being--
holistic study
- Requires comparisons from all areas and all time periods
 - Tends to focus on "non-Western" cultures

What is culture?

- way someone is raised
- way we live
- where we come from
- Beliefs
- Daily activities

Cultural Relativism

↳ belief that no particular culture is right or wrong

Ethnocentrism

Xenophobia

↳ belief that one culture is better than others.

↳ fear of other cultures

Body Ritual Among the Nacirema

10 Observations of Nacireman behaviors/opinions



Forms of Anthropology:

1. Physical anthropology
2. Archaeology
3. Linguistics
4. Cultural anthropology

↓
focus on non-material studies
- looking at behaviors or
attitudes of people

Some assumptions about culture

- Culture is adaptive—New Guinea tribes often view women as unclean—they need to adapt or go extinct
 - Maladaptive behavior → leads to death of society
 - Adaptive behavior → leads to change + survival
 - Tropical cultures often have a post-partum sex taboo

More assumptions

- Culture is integrated into a society—traits of a culture are not just thrown into a society; it's there for a reason
 - This means we cannot just think of things from other cultures we could apply to us.

– How would a post-partum sex taboo affect us?

3rd assumption

- Culture is always changing
 - Change in environment can cause a change in culture
- EX: global warming—how will that change our culture?



Noteworthy Anthropologists

- Franz Boas (1858-1942) German-American
 - Father of American Anthropology
 - Famous for applying scientific method to cultural studies
 - Studied the Inuits in Canada
 - Appealed to all anthropologists to not treat studied cultures with a bias/disdain
- Jane Goodall (1934-) English primatologist
 - Has led study of chimpanzee social and family life for last 45 years in Africa
 - Advocate for chimpanzees and environment
 - Discovered tool-making abilities in chimpanzees
- Margaret Mead (1901-1978) American
 - Studied problems adolescents in US face by living with and studying Samoans
 - Does our civilization cause adolescent angst or is it natural across culture?
 - She concluded that transition from childhood to adulthood lacks the emotional or psychological distress our teenagers face



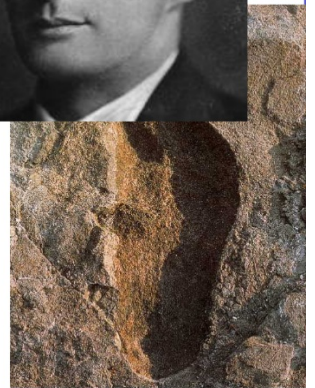
Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942)

- Polish
- Studied **reciprocity** in Papua New Guinea
- Began use of direct study and observation
 - Prior techniques involving interviewing subjects often led to cultural misunderstanding
 - One must be embedded in the world of the subjects



Mary Leakey (1913-1996)

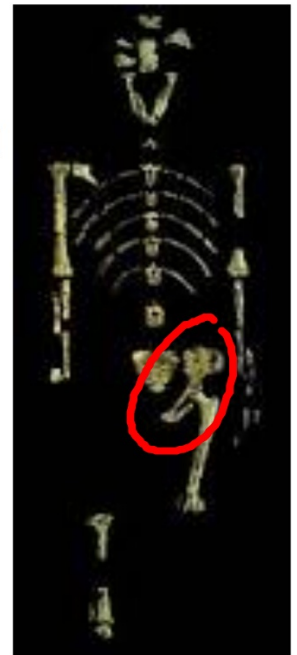
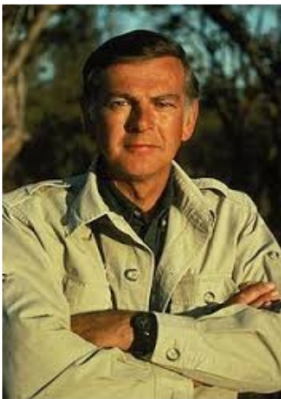
- English
- Studied and researched with husband and son in Tanzania
- Focused studies on theory of evolution in human species
- Most famous find was the "Laetoli Footprints"
 - Evidence that early man was **bipedal**



↪ 2 feet

Donald Johansson (1943-)

- American
- Most famous find was an Afarensis hominid in Ethiopia in 1974
- Nicknamed Afarensis "Lucy" →
- Biological evidence showed Lucy was bipedal
 - Pelvic bones were more modern shaped



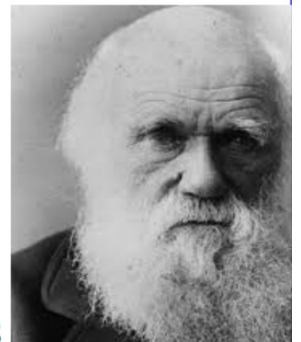
Charles Darwin (1809-1882)



- English naturalist
- Authored *The Origin of Species* in 1859
- Rejected belief that all species are created independently (Creationism)
- Detailed findings from voyage to Galapagos Islands in 1830s
- Focused research on biological differences amongst species of animals in different habitats (FINCHES)
- Natural Selection:

- Adaptation:

when nature permits only the strong to survive
slight genetic change
in a species



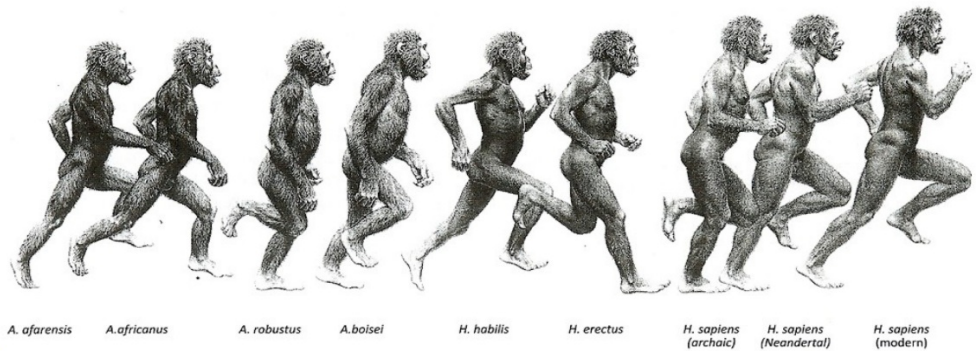
Leaves

Darwin's Finches
ADAPTIVE RADIATION

Seeds



Buds / Fruit



Human Evolution:

Hominid: human

Most researched human species:

- A. Afarensis
- A. Africanus
- A. Robustus
- A. Boisei
- Homo Habilis
- Homo Erectus
- Homo Neanderthalensis
- Homo Sapiens

Homo Neanderthalensis

- Died out 30,000 years ago?
- Found in Europe and Western Asia
- Stone tool users
- Did not discover fire; believed they learned to harness it
- Bodies were adapted to cold climates
 - Men: 5 1/2 feet tall
 - Suffered extreme arthritis
- Belief they could make vocal sounds (language?) b/c of hyoid bone & FoxP2
- Evidence of some ritualistic burials (religion?)



Neanderthal vs. Homo Sapiens: The Grudge Match

- Direct competition btw homo sapiens & homo neanderthals
 - Fought over food and land
 - Food moved south due to Ice Age
 - Neanderthal remained in colder north
 - Birth rates of Neanderthal slowed

