

**Chapter 1 : Anthropology and the Grounds of Human Rights - Oxford Handbooks**

*Franz Boas. The connection between anthropology, advocacy, and activism goes back at least to early 20th century American anthropology. Franz Boas challenged the scientific racism of Victorian anthropology to insist on racial equality and that cultures should be understood in their own terms.*

Human Rights are those that any person naturally deserves, merely by virtue of being human, in order to survive, enjoy well-being, and gain fulfillment. Moreover, not only does every human being have a right or claim to these essential rights, they are simply right in the sense of morality and justice. Although there are many different kinds of rights, human rights are the most fundamental, universal, and inalienable, and governments are expected to advance and defend them.

**Donnelly Ideas about human rights:** Ideas about universal rights for all people developed during the Enlightenment in Europe, were codified in international conventions following worldwide concern over Nazi GENOCIDE and other horrors of World War II, and have increasingly become a central concern in modern political theory and legal practice. In general, these conventions encompass the following:

**Initial isolation of anthropology from human rights concerns:** Most anthropological literature has isolated itself from mainstream discussion of these values; it has tended to regard the legalistic language and the nation-state frameworks of much discussion as falling outside its professional scope cf. Messer , and questions of better or worse socio-cultural practice as value-judgements which go against its professional ethos cf. Anthropologists have usually remained on the periphery of human rights for several reasons: Nevertheless, since the time of Franz BOAS anthropologists have occasionally become involved in human rights, as in providing expert testimony in court cases on ancestral land and resource rights for indigenous societies. Professional organizations such as the American Anthropological Association, Society for Applied Anthropology, and European Association of Social Anthropologists have all also established committees on human rights. This stance can be seen as anachronistic if not irresponsible and reactionary.

**Cultural relativism and human rights:** The thinking behind anthropological relativism is well rehearsed cf. Crawford ; Downing and Kushner It is said that ethnography evinces no universal notion of humanity, and no commonality among those notions that do exist concerning the distribution of rights, duties and dignity. It can be seen as a continuation of Kantian attempts to establish an Archimedean point that provides rational foundations for universal norms of justice; and it must be understood as part-and-parcel of the rise of capitalismâ€”a means for individual profiteering enterprises to proceed unencumbered by communitarian obligations, traditional custom or a localized morality. In its applicationâ€”in Western interference in moral issues internal to other culturesâ€”the Universal Declaration has been responsible for a particular normative blindness towards indigenous peoples and their collectivist narratives of land ownership, political determination, selfhood and so on. But then what are the so-called human rights and freedoms of individuals as distinct from rights which people practise in the context of cultural, national and spiritual communities? To enjoy individual human rights requires community rights; individual rights cannot be exercised in isolation from the communityâ€”individual rights to join a trade union or to enjoy their culture, for instance, necessitate rights of groups to preserve their trade unions or their culture. Even in a laissez-faire Western democracy, individual rights are not absolute or immutable: Alternative space for anthropology of human rights: Arguments against relativistic thinking in anthropology is logically if not equally strong. It has morally nihilistic, politically conservative and quietist consequences. It further implies a modelling of society and of culture which many would now see as outmoded. That is, society and culture are depicted as sui generis: They are modelled as entities not processes: This illusion of holism might have been legitimate currency in nineteenth-century nationalism and in Durkheimian sociology cf. Barth , but it is of little account in contemporary existential contexts. Mechanistic, social-structural notions of society and culture as organically functioning wholes must now give way to notions of human groupings as purposive and contingent political entities ethnicities, religiosities, localisms, occupational lobbies which live on as sets of symbols and interpreted meanings in the minds of their members. Individuals may have rights to cultural attachment and belonging, rights to membership of one or more cultures of their choosing , but cultures do not

have rights over individuals or members. More generally, the noble anthropological goal of seeking to understand others in their own terms cannot be employed as an excuse to avoid making moral and ethical judgements. Individuals have the right to resist and opt out of the norms and expectations of particular social and cultural groupings and chart their own course. As the testaments of refugees and asylum-seekers attest, many women have recourse only to suicide in order to avoid being forced into an unwanted marriage, and it is the responsibility of the anthropologist to support those disenfranchised individuals who find themselves under the power of others cf. However that power is locally framed and legitimated as that of elder kinsmen, religious experts, or whatever, here are relations of domination which anthropology should oppose. Moreover, even though such conceptions of individuals taking precedence over groups, of individual freedom contra cultural hegemony, derive from Western liberalism, the United Nations International Bill of Rights which these conceptions have given onto comprising the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is the only framework we have by which to make decisions on globally appropriate action. Finally, if the discourse and law of human rights are manifestations of liberalism as a modern political philosophy, then its opposition is no less political or ideological. To decry the seeming atomism of individually conceived human rights as opposed, say, to notions of collective attachment, common good, public interest, patriotism, group loyalty, respect for tradition, and so on is to extol the virtues of communitarianism: However, as an ideology it can also be critiqued cf. As with the aforementioned illusory notions of society and culture as sui generis, communitarianism can be said to represent a backward-looking myth of a situation of cognitive and behavioural commonality that never existed. In practice, communitarianism is often hierarchical, and always exclusionary with regard to those who do not belong women and slaves, savages, pagans, Jews, Communists, homosexuals. Relevance of an anthropology of human rights: Anthropology has conceptual and practical relevance to human rights. Human rights are predicated on a theory of human nature, and anthropologists can contribute to this through their cross-species and cross-cultural comparisons D. Some countries accused of violations of human rights have tried to hide behind cultural relativism and criticized their accusers of being Western moral imperialists. Every culture has its own ideas about morality, but these are usually not readily extended beyond its boundaries to other groups, let alone formulated as universals encompassing all of humankind. Anthropologists can help explore, understand, and mediate the cultural diversity of ideas about human rights An-Naim; K. Dwyer, and they can attempt to reconcile the fundamental issues of universality vs. At a practical level it must be acknowledged that violators of human rights often target individuals and groups based, at least in part, on their apparent biological, social, cultural, or linguistic differences. Anthropology can address this situation as the humanistic science that documents, interprets, and celebrates the biological and cultural unity and diversity of humankind. Moreover, during their FIELDWORK anthropologists often have a special opportunity to monitor and document human rights, although they must do so discretely because of potential dangers. This observation comes at a point when some voices in the discipline are arguing that we live in a post-cultural world with greater emancipatory potential for individual autonomy and agency. In other cases, it has led to an ethnography that focuses on global institutions and global processes themselves. Such a move displaces the universalism-relativism polarity, opening space for new or rehabilitated forms of critical evaluation based on an analysis of power and agency. For John Gledhill, to give one example of this new thinking, the problem is not about relativism or universalism, but access to global justice and the lack of accountability of rights institutions. Newer debates on power, globalization and transnationalism seem to have displaced the terms of the relativist-universalist polarity. Even more challenging is how to make that path meet the requirements of being ethical, empirically informed and conceptually sophisticated. Recent works are increasingly focus on the anthropological issues of human rights. For example Good and Navaro-Yashin focus on the processing of asylum claims in UK and European contexts, a political issue which has moved centre stage with the rise of anti-immigration right-wing parties in European elections in Human Rights in global perspective: Routledge To visit a good blog on anthropological issues of human rights can be found by clicking here To know more about Human Rights go to Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

**Chapter 2 : Human Rights - Anthropology - Oxford Bibliographies**

*Anthropology and Activism Anthropology and Activism Merry, Sally Engle New York University Anthropology and Activism: Researching Human Rights across Porous Boundaries Academic and activist endeavors are never autonomous, despite our analytical assumptions of separateness.*

Human Rights[ edit ] Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human rights are defined by the United Nations as rights inherent to all human beings, whatever nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. The United Nations replaced the League of Nations in 1945, it is tasked to promote international co-operation and to create and maintain international order. With triumphs and setbacks ranging from the American Civil Rights movement to the genocide committed by the Khmer Rouge. In America, we see notable Civil Rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. These famous leaders only scratch the surface of the history of thousands of leaders and activists fighting the never ending battle of inequality where one group of people are treated significantly worse than another group of people because of a trait that may deem that group of people as lesser. However, cultures bias, whether it be racial, socioeconomic or gender based, has always halted the many social groups of the world from achieving equal human rights. However, what is considered a human right and who benefits from these human rights has varied drastically over time. Prior to the 20th century, there were no international written documents that would declare that all people have rights, simply based on their status as human. Eleanor Roosevelt holding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Before the formation of the United Nations, many different countries had documents outlining the rights of its citizens, such as; the US Constitution, the English Bill of Rights, and many others. The League of Nations, the first world intergovernmental organization whose goal was maintaining world peace, tried to create protections for minority groups, but the League ultimately failed, and so these protections never came to pass. Franklin Delano Roosevelt called for four essential freedoms: One of the oldest known human rights activism groups is called the Amnesty International group. This group was founded in London. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights outlines that all people are born free and equal, and that they have certain rights including the right to life and security, the right to not be enslaved or tortured, and the right to be recognized as a person before the law, among others. Originally written by the United Nations -an intergovernmental organization that replaced the League of Nations in 1945 The United Nations was tasked to promote international co-operation and to create and maintain international order. Representatives from all over with different legal and cultural backgrounds wrote the Declaration, and it was drafted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. The Declaration supports that all people have rights, no matter their race, gender, religion, or social status. Some of these rights guaranteed by the UDHR come into conflict with the traditions of some cultures, and has been the cause of certain conflicts rights of a culture vs. Individual countries have created additional documents that further dedicate themselves to the ideals of the UDHR while also granting their citizens additional rights. They do not take into account how other cultures may see rights or what needs other cultures prioritize. The document, a set of civil principles, was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. This document was written in response to the travesties of WWII and the Holocaust as an agreement between the UN Nations to hold higher standards of human rights. This document was a commitment by countries to abide by certain humane regulations regarding political, social, economic, and cultural rights of humans inside of a system. The Civil and political rights form the original and main part of international human rights. It is a class of rights that restrict the higher power of authority, such as the government, social organizations and private individuals from discriminating or repressing the freedom an individual. Civil rights ensure protection from discrimination and protect the physical and mental well-being of an individual such as privacy and freedom of speech. Political rights include fairness in law, fair trial and other civil rights in the judicial system. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is monitored by the Human Rights Committee a separate body to the Human Rights Council which replaced the Commission on Human Rights under the UN Charter in 1993 with permanent standing, to consider periodic reports submitted by member States on their compliance or following with the treaty. Members of the Human Rights Committee are elected by member states, but do not represent

any State. The Covenant contains two Optional Protocols. The first optional protocol creates an individual complaints mechanism whereby individuals in member States can submit complaints, known as communications, to be reviewed by the Human Rights Committee. Its rulings under the first optional protocol have created the most complex jurisprudence or the theory or philosophy of law in the UN international human rights law system. The second optional protocol abolishes the death penalty; however, countries were permitted to make a reservation allowing for use of death penalty for the most serious crimes of a military nature, committed during wartime. It commits its parties to granting economic, social, and cultural rights ESCR to individuals; including labor rights, rights to health, education, and an adequate standard of living. The UN in its attempt to regain this cultures natural human rights programs are working to put the rebel forces out. In the interest of globalization, companies continue to move their production to underdeveloped countries with less regulation and cheaper labor. Globalization can be defined as the process through which businesses or other organizations develop international influence or operate on an international scale. Exploitation of laborers can include long hours, unsafe working conditions, lack of sick leave, vacation, or compensation. Compensations usually refers to money, awarded to someone as a recompense for loss, injury or suffering. This all renders the chances of upward mobility non-existent. Manufacturing industries of apparel and agriculture are some of the industries with the worst of these problems. It is dedicated to tackling international labor issues and is composed of member states of the UN. The organization received the Noble Peace Prize. Because of the higher profit margins to be made with production in developing countries, labor is moved abroad, and fiercely competed for. Though awareness of these practices has become more publicized, the demand for inexpensive goods has only risen with time. This includes the right to plan a family, terminate a pregnancy, use contraceptives, receive sex education in public schools, and gain access to reproductive health services [1]. As reproduction rights are more clearly defined later in this section, the main question to be asked is: If someone considers themselves to be pro-life, that does not automatically mean that they are anti-choice and vice versa. Pro-choice supporters support the movement or idea that women have the right to choose whether or not they will bring a child into the world. Pro-choice gives the opportunity for people to have a safe abortion. It allows them to make their own "choice". Pro-life, on the other hand, is usually categorized as not being in favor of abortions because they violate the babies rights. For some it goes as far as to wanting abortions to be illegal in the United states again. The main reason behind this is that babies in the womb are still considered to be humans, and it is illegal to kill another human being. However many pro-choice supporters counter this and would argue that if a woman does not have the financial stability, health care, support, etc. Overall, this topic is still an issue that the United States is facing today and perhaps one way to solving it is an understanding of both perspectives before preconceived judgement makes the decision first. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act[ edit ] On 16 November , a United States federal law passed that requires federal agencies and institutions to return Native American human remains and cultural items to their respective peoples. Some of these cultural artifacts include funeral objects, religious objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. Patrimony is property that is passed down from father to son, or from one male ancestor to another. These federal agencies and institutions receive funding in order to do this. With this act, people are entitled to their culture both during life and after death. A NAGPRA outline allows us to know who should gain ownership of the remains if it is unclear to who it should belong to. This includes aspects such as the right to take part in cultural life, a guarantee of cultural conservation but still development, and protection from harmful cultural practices. In discussing rights and culture there are two assumptions that people often make: These assumptions may cause problems within a group of people in multiple ways. When new rights are accepted in a culture that is normally unchanging, that new right may create conflict within the culture due to many of the varying viewpoints within the group. For example the issue of unveiling Muslim women so that they would no longer be oppressed. While Westerners are using the etic point of view without understanding fully what the veil means to the Muslim women as part of their culture and their religion. This is where rights and culture may not agree. Culture and human rights sometimes disagree, and new human rights may contradict accepted norms within a culture. Even with human rights clearly defined in a universal list of 30 articles; there still can be unclear cultural practices that question these articles by law and by

morality of some. Today many organizations have been formed to protect and fight for the rights of all man-kind. The oldest, largest human rights group focused on individual, local human rights activism. Because AI stays strictly out of politics and avoids getting involved in issues outside its rather narrow mandate area of concern , people from all sorts of political and religious backgrounds are members and work together. Founded to promote and extend the concept of civil liberties to on-line communications. While the EFF is a U. Founded in as Helsinki Watch, is a coalition formed by a number of independent regional human groups. They are perhaps the best human rights researchers in the field at presentâ€”their reports are extremely thorough, carefully written, and backed by impressive amounts of detail and numerous sources. They are a non-profit organization that defends the rights of people world-wide by staying neutral in political situations and by publishing over detailed reports in 90 countries on human rights conditions. They also meet with government leaders and groups like the United Nations and the African Union along with financial institutions and corporations to attempt to press change upon nations struggling in human rights. Not a human rights group itself, but rather the first and largest computer network for activists in peace, human rights, and related issues. It is a member of the Association for Progressive Communications, an international coalition of networks for peace and human rights activists. This is a good group for the hard core, on-line activists. Today woman hold the right to vote, birth control, formal education, own land, divorce, etc. The African Charter references women only twice: Article 2 includes sex in a broad non-discrimination clause and Article 18 3 requires states to eliminate every discrimination against women. The definition of employment at the most general level an activity for which one receives payment needs some elaboration in the African context. Yet the Protocol adheres to a definition of labor that differentiates between employment and agricultural work. The rights related to employment focus on equal pay and freedom from harassment- however the consequences regarding women are not clearly instated. Living wage refers to the pay rate that allows for one to meet the basic needs within their household. Before analyzing the provisions regarding labor and employment in the Protocol more carefully, it is useful to explore the context in which many African women perform their labor. Although specific employment patterns diverge across Africa, regional patterns seem to exist: Clerical work includes work in an office, especially routine documentation and administrative tasks. Sub-Saharan African countries, like Kenya, reflect similar employment patterns: Each year, more than 3 million young girls and women are at risk of undergoing FGC. Mostly practiced in Africa, female genital cutting FGC has many different levels of severity, with three main varieties of the procedure.

**Chapter 3 : Anthropology - Wikipedia**

*Human rights are defined by the United Nations as rights inherent to all human beings, whatever nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status.*

Turning Anthropology from Science into Political Activism Feb 17, Glynn Custred 0 Comments Beginning in the 1960s, a movement developed in academia with the aim of transforming scholarly pursuits into instruments of social change. It was motivated by intellectually fashionable ideas, such as Marxism and feminism, and by a trendy antipathy towards Western Civilization in general. Eventually it overwhelmed the humanities and deeply affected the social sciences. The impact of the movement on my field, anthropology, was varied, since anthropology, with its four sub-disciplines, spans the range of scholarly activity from the physical sciences through the social sciences to the humanities. Three of those sub-disciplines archeology, physical anthropology, and linguistic anthropology have remained mostly unscathed by the efforts to transform anthropology into another politically correct university outpost. But the largest of the four, sociocultural anthropology the study of social and cultural variation around the world, has been greatly distorted. It has been redefined from a science to an instrument of political ideology. Since then the organization has focused on trendy issues such as the environment, violence, climate change, race, etc. Different sections have appeared within the AAA reflecting radical politics, such as the Association for Feminist Anthropology, the Association for Queer Anthropology their designation, and other internal organizations that are highly politicized. Committees expend much energy on political issues and the formation of task forces like the Global Climate Task Force and the Task Force on Race and Racism. Western expansion, as seen from this perspective, was not a phase in history, similar in many respects to the phenomenon of cyclical empires that goes back to the beginning of civilization, but rather an abiding sin for which activist anthropologists have vowed to make amends. This narrative holds that the original state of nature was one of peace, harmony and perfect ecological balance. It was a primeval paradise, a secular Eden. Therefore, competition, strife, crime, social disharmony, and warfare so often seen among native peoples around the world and described by anthropologists must have been caused by the intrusive and disruptive forces of Western Civilization. In order to protect and propagate that narrative, activists have attempted to expunge the anthropological literature of inconvenient facts, either by denying them or by casting aspersions on those who report them. The record shows ample evidence that contradicts the Noble Savage myth: None of that was introduced into the imagined paradise of the Noble Savage by the evil intrusion of the West. They were features common to the human species from its earliest days. But the activists want to stop such research and sweep that which has already been done down the memory hole. Their political agenda is more important. For we know how scientific ideas in the past have been distorted and used for ideological, economic and political purposes. Rather than leaving the study of possible biological links with human behavior open, subjecting claims in that regard to rigorous scrutiny, activist anthropology regards any mention of such a link on any level as a heresy that must be extirpated. A prominent example of this is the nasty treatment of University of Missouri anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon at the hands of the politicized AAA. Such little-contacted societies had all but disappeared when Chagnon first made contact and he had the opportunity to live among them and describe their Stone Age way of life. What Chagnon saw and described was an endemic pattern of warfare. There was no competition for resources that might explain that pattern, and contact with the world was so minimal that outside influences could not account for it. On the basis of his observations and native testimony, the reason they waged war, Chagnon stated, was to acquire women and to retaliate for previous raids. He had not only refuted the Noble Savage myth, but had also taken seriously the proposition that violence might have a biological basis. Because of his stature in the profession, Chagnon had to be discredited. Wild and inflammatory charges against him were based only on a sensational book by a journalist, but the AAA caved in and convened a task force to investigate. That task force began in 1973 but took until 1978 to repudiate the charges. The issue was pretty much forgotten until when Chagnon published his book *Noble Savages*: It placed on record only one, although the most spectacular, incident in the decline of anthropology as a profession. There is hope for anthropology. The

evidence-based sub-disciplines—physical anthropology and archeology, as well as much of linguistic anthropology—continue as before, and a section within the AAA, the Society for Scientific Anthropology, continues the traditional scientific approach. It is also possible that the militant, politicized faction may run out of steam as sociocultural anthropology further retreats into its own, ever-narrower sphere of self-interest and inanity, ignoring the basic questions that called the science into existence in the first place. Woody Allen, who has a sharp eye for trends and a witty way of exploiting them, shows the lead character in his recent film *Blue Jasmine* on a flight to San Francisco, talking to herself out loud. To emphasize the flakiness of the character, he has her say in her monologue, addressed to no one, that she majored in anthropology.

**Chapter 4 : Cultural Anthropology/Human Rights - Wikibooks, open books for an open world**

*Human rights, as described in documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are a set of moral and legal principles that apply to all human beings irrespective of their age, sex, religion, nationality, and other such characteristics.*

December marks the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On December 11th, The Washington Post p. At the ceremony, Mrs. Clinton spoke out against the treatment of women in Afghanistan who are not allowed to work or attend school. Cultural relativism asserts that since each culture has its own inherent integrity with unique values and practices, value judgments should be withheld or suspended until cultural context is taken into account. While some anthropologists would still agree with this view, others, both inside the field and outside, especially in the arena of human rights, are challenging this concept. It is important to state at the outset that universal human rights and cultural relativism are not philosophically or morally opposed to one another. The terrain between them is fluid and rich. The world has changed since the Executive Board of the American Anthropological Association decided in not to participate in the discussions that produced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights , used subsequently as a foundation for opposition to authoritarian and politically repressive regimes. Since then some anthropologists have been active in cultural survival and human rights of threatened groups. As I explained in my article in The Chronicle of Higher Education, anthropologists "are in a unique position to lend knowledge and expertise to the international debate regarding human rights. They have testified in U. But there are other human rights issues, from domestic abuse to female circumcision to culturally based forms of homicide, about which anthropologists have remained silent. Thus, anthropologists have not built up accumulated experience in the area of human rights informed by cultural relativist considerations This article is an attempt to lay out some of the basic issues and considerations in this arena, looking at the intersection of cultural relativism and the human rights issues that have gained more public awareness than ever before. The Limits of Cultural Relativism Cultural relativism may be taken to extremes. This extreme relativist position is actually a form of absolutism with which few anthropologists would agree. Anthropologists did not defend Nazi genocide or South African apartheid with cultural relativist arguments, and many have been critical of relativist defenses especially of Western practices they see as harmful, such as cultural institutions emphasizing violence. The truth about our complex world of cultural difference is that moral perplexity abounds. Relativism can be used as a way of living in society with others. An egalitarian relativist sees all human beings as moral agents with equal potential for making ethical judgments. Though moral judgments in and of themselves are not scientific, they can be socially analyzed. That is, relativism and universalism in cultural values or practices including international standards of human rights need not be opposed morally, but they can be discussed, debated, and assessed by the social sciences, including anthropology. Relativist Challenge to Universal Rights: Islamic Societies and the West In the conflict between cultural relativism and universal rights, one area where there is a seeming clash between cultures and a war of words is where the West meets the Islamic world. The highly politicized context of this oppositional discourse and occasional real warfare reminds us of another kind of cold war between the U. The subjective perceptions of morality and immorality, of right and wrong, on both sides can be so powerful that objective discourse and cultural negotiation may seem impossible. Islamic governments from Iran to Afghanistan to Sudan have claimed cultural and religious immunity from international human rights standards. For example, the perceived Islamic responsibility to protect women by restricting their activities has been asserted in defense of public morality. This stand has been criticized in the context of Western human rights and feminism. Islamic philosophers and political activists may deny that a woman can be a head of a family or a head of state. Western nations actually have proportionately fewer female heads of state and may be accused of hypocrisy in their finger pointing at the Islamic world. Debates over sexual and reproductive health and over sexual orientation as universal rights of women met with opposition not only from Muslim nations, like Iran and Egypt, but also from the Vatican and other Catholic representatives at the conference. In the end, disagreements were aired that proved not to be destructive and

there was frank acknowledgment that reasonable persons and by extension, cultures could disagree. This is a relativist solution to different views about "universal rights" of women. But consensus was achieved on a host of other issues, including: Relativism expressed with respect to the religious sentiments of some delegates eased the negotiated terrain and permitted dialogue that achieved consensus on many other points while allowing reasonable difference to be asserted on other matters. Universal Rights Challenge Relativism: The issue of female circumcision has set Western feminism against African cultural traditions and Islam, and has pitted Muslim against Muslim and African against African. There is no consensus among Muslim scholars or among African Muslims about whether female circumcision is mandated by religion. Religious interpretation in the Sudan as early as determined that female circumcision is only "desirable" manduh , and not compulsory Fluehr-Lobban, I have previously written about confronting my own personal struggle between cultural relativism and universal rights regarding female circumcision in the Sudan Fluehr-Lobban, For nearly 25 years, I have conducted research in the Sudan, one of the African countries where the practice of female circumcision is widespread, affecting the vast majority of females in the northern Sudan. Chronic infections are a common result, and sexual intercourse and childbirth are rendered difficult and painful. British colonial officials outlawed the practice in , but this served only to make it surreptitious and thus more dangerous. Women found it harder to get treatment for mistakes or for side effects of the illegal surgery. For a long time I felt trapped between my anthropological understanding of the custom and of the sensitivities about it among the people with whom I was working, on the one side, and the largely feminist campaign in the West to eradicate what critics sees as a "barbaric" custom, on the other hand. To ally myself with Western feminists and condemn female circumcision seemed to me a betrayal of the value system and culture of the Sudan which I had come to understand. But as I was asked over the years to comment on female circumcision because of my expertise in the Sudan, I came to realize how deeply I felt that the practice was harmful and wrong. In , female circumcision was one of the practices deemed harmful by delegates at the International Human Rights Conference in Vienna. During their discussions, they came to view circumcision as a violation of the rights of children as well as of the women who suffer its consequences throughout life. Those discussions made me realize that there was a moral agenda larger than myself, larger than Western culture or the culture of the northern Sudan, or of my discipline. I decided to join colleagues from other disciplines and cultures in speaking out against the practice. While I would not hesitate to criticize breast implants or other Western surgical adjustments of the female body, I withheld judgment of female circumcision as though the moral considerations were fundamentally different. My socialization as an anthropology undergraduate and graduate student, along with years of anthropology teaching, conditioned a relativist reflex to almost any challenge to cultural practice on moral or philosophical grounds, especially ones that appeared to privilege the West. However, I realized that a double standard had crept into my teaching. For example, I would readily criticize rampant domestic violence in the U. Of course, cultural context is critical and the reading of cultural difference our stock-in-trade. One may lament the rising divorce rate and destruction of family life in the U. At times relativism may frame and enlighten the debate, but, in the end, moral judgment and human rights take precedence and choices must be made. What changed my view away from the conditioned relativist response was the international, cross-cultural, interdisciplinary dialogue that placed female circumcision on a level of such harm that whatever social good it represents in terms of sexual propriety and marriage norms , the harm to the more basic rights of women and girls outweighed the culturally understandable "good. In other words, a broad spectrum of the human community has come to an agreement that genital mutilation of girls and women is wrong. Legal Context Beyond these cultural and moral considerations is a changed legal environment in the U. The granting of political asylum by the U. Prior to this decision, articles had appeared in American law journals arguing for the U. Authors also argued against the cultural relativist or traditionalist justification for female circumcision. Typical customary cultural arguments in defense of female circumcision include: Defenders of the practice, female and male, African and Western, inevitably invoke cultural relativism and ethnocentrism. Opponents argue that while the morality and values of a person are certainly shaped by the culture and history of a given society, this does not negate the philosophical theory that human rights, defined as the rights to which one is entitled simply by virtue of being human, are universal by

definition. So, although human behavior is necessarily culturally relative, human rights are universal entitlements that are grounded in cross culturally recognized moral values. There is nothing particularly African, Sudanese or Nigerian about violence or injustice. This is true of violations of human rights whether they are in the form of arbitrary arrest, detention and torture inflicted by the state, or female circumcision imposed by custom. Moreover, many African progressives have taken an active role in evaluating the contemporary legitimacy and relevance of cultural practices arguing for the retention of useful traditions and the abandonment of practices that inflict harm or injury. Ethnic scarification has all but disappeared among peoples for whom this practice was routine only a few generations removed from the present day. And the fact that female circumcision is an ancient custom found in many diverse cultures does not legitimate its continued persistence.

Lawrence, The case revolved around the issues of Muslim persecution of Christians and the fear of female circumcision for the two young daughters of the parents, the wife having already undergone circumcision. My testimony involved responding to questions about female circumcision from the attorney for the Nigerian family and the judge. I was examined and cross-examined especially on the issue of the probability that the girls would be circumcised in their home community in northern Nigeria even if the father and mother opposed this. Interestingly, after the Kasinga case, the U. State Department issued guidelines to the INS and its courts suggesting that uncircumcised girls would not be at risk if their fathers opposed the practice. I explained that on the basis of my knowledge of the practice in a comparable African Muslim context, female circumcision is the province of female kin. Even in the Sudan, where female circumcision has been illegal since , there has been little or no enforcement of the law. These arguments persuaded the judge in to suspend deportation and to consider a positive case for asylum for the family. It is the notion of harm done to individuals or groups that can be used to explore the terrain between universal rights and cultural relativism. When reasonable persons from different cultural backgrounds agree that certain institutions or cultural practices cause harm, then the moral neutrality of cultural relativism must be suspended. Avoidance of harm has been the key concept in the development of ethical guidelines in medical and biological research and also in federal regulations regulating research in the behavioral sciences.

Fluehr-Lobban, Philosophers have also refined concepts of harm and benefit; however, the discussion more frequently occurs around the prevention of harm rather than the promotion of benefit. Even the most experienced anthropological field worker must negotiate the terrain between universal rights and cultural relativism with caution, to avoid the pitfalls of scientific or discipline superiority. The anthropologist is capable of hearing, recording, and incorporating the multiple voices that speak to issues of cultural specificity and universal human rights, as some have done admirably.

Dwyer, When various perspectives are taken into consideration, still in the end a judgment may have to be made when harm is a factor. Darar comes from the same root as that which is used to describe a strike or a physical blow. However, darar in Muslim family law as a ground for divorce has been interpreted to include both physical harm and emotional harm, the latter usually described as insulting words or behavior. It is probably most clear to make a determination between human rights and cultural practice when physical harm or abuse is taking place. It is simpler to stand against physical abuse of women within a marriage. Indeed, Western ideas of physical and mental cruelty as grounds for divorce mesh well with the concept of harm as reflected in "talaq al-darar," divorce due to harm or abuse. A woman who comes to court, alleges harm, proves it with her own testimony or that of witnesses, and is granted a divorce is probably a woman who has experienced the abuse for some time and is using the court, as women often do in Muslim settings, as a last resort. The divorced husband often does not acknowledge the harm, as is frequently the case with abusive husbands in other countries where the "right" of a husband to discipline a wife is a cultural norm. My own research shows that wives have often "disobeyed" their husbands and repeatedly fled from abusive domestic cohabitation.

Fluehr-Lobban, Historically, the frequency of such cases in the Islamic courts led to practical reform favorable to abused wives whereby "obedience" orders to return to their husbands were issued a maximum of three times only.

Chapter 5 : Anthrozoology - Wikipedia

*The impact of the movement on my field, anthropology, was varied, since anthropology, with its four sub-disciplines, spans the range of scholarly activity from the physical sciences through the social sciences to the humanities.*

Important publications now number in the hundreds, even when limited as this article is only to works by cultural anthropologists and not forensic anthropologists, which directly reference human rights and not works that are relevant but make no more than a passing mention of human rights. Whether current scholarship in anthropology focuses on human rights as practice or as discourse, its common signature is to foreground the local, national, and international political and economic processes in which human rights and larger social justice projects are embedded. Two publications that appeared in marked a watershed in the development of new modes of anthropological engagement with human rights. One, the contributory volume edited by Richard Wilson, *Human Rights, Culture and Context* Wilson, cited under General Overviews, anticipated research and writing relating to both the practice and discourse of human rights. Anthropology has been torn between analytic and critical dispositions toward human rights and divided about what substantive matters matter most, even as convergence around theory and method has been discernible since the late s. Therefore, no single overview may capture the diversity of the subfield, even as a reading of several overviews can be of benefit to both newcomer and specialist. Merry has the comprehensive scope proper to a review article but focuses fairly narrowly on anthropological contributions to the study of international law. *Toward a critical anthropology of human rights. Locating rights, envisioning law between the global and the local. In The practice of human rights: Tracking law between the global and the local. Cambridge, UK, and New York: With some overlap in themes with Goodale, this introduction defines four themes in anthropological studies of the practice of human rights: An anthropology of human rights. Anthropology and international law. Annual Review of Anthropology Anthropology, human rights, and social transformation. Edited by Mark Goodale, Wilson, Richard Ashby, ed. Human rights, culture and context: The social life of human rights. The anthropology of human rights and transnational law. Users without a subscription are not able to see the full content on this page. Please subscribe or login. How to Subscribe Oxford Bibliographies Online is available by subscription and perpetual access to institutions. For more information or to contact an Oxford Sales Representative click here.*

**Chapter 6 : Graduate Program | PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review**

*There are substantial international conventions on human rights, such as the International Bill of Human Rights of the United Nations, which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant of Political and Civil Rights, and the International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.*

Her research focuses, in part, on the legal construction of gender and how legal conceptions of gender difference—“and its intersections with theories of crime, punishment, and rehabilitation”—construct women as improvable subjects in drug court and court-mandated drug rehabilitation. His current work is on advocacy organizations in Hong Kong and their activism on behalf of the queer community. Helena Zeweri is a doctoral candidate in Anthropology at Rice University. She is interested in personhood, sovereignty, humanitarianism, and migration. Her dissertation examines modes of measuring and assessing violence and risk. Jessica Bray is a doctoral student in Anthropology at Rice University. Her work focuses on the cross-cultural study of sexuality, law, gender, and personhood online and in the physical world. Her dissertation explored questions of harm and evidence in relation to oil production in the northeastern corner of the Ecuadorian Amazon. Her research interests include social movements, indigenous rights, political ecology, and media studies. Her dissertation looked at the strategies people employ when they engage in debates over transnational mining projects in Guatemala. She studies issues pertaining to post-liberal politics, social movements, the rule of law, and gendered patterns of political participation in the context of extractivism. Her research focuses on examining the nexus of gendered anti-mining activism and state enactments of legitimate politics in Cajamarca, Peru. His research interests include property, municipal governance, and urban renewal in post-Katrina New Orleans. Kathleen Mannard is currently a JD candidate at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, pursuing a concentration in environmental law. She has a bachelors degree in Anthropology, with minors in History and Legal Studies, from the University of Pittsburgh. Her research interests include infrastructure, citizenship, oil, and collective memory. Her dissertation explores institutional dialogue, power structures and legal consciousness of African Americans in the early twentieth century. Her interests include militarization, peacebuilding, human rights, gender, and political economy. She is currently an assistant professor of anthropology at Georgia College. She is conducting research on immigration law, specifically the implementation of a Statutory Instrument concerning labor restrictions against Bulgarians and Romanians in the United Kingdom.

**Chapter 7 : ANTHROPOLOGY FOR BEGINNERS: ANTHROPOLOGY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

1 Nona Moskowitz, *Engagement, Alienation, and Anthropology's New Moral Dilemmas, Anthropology and Humanism*, , 40, 1, 35Wiley Online Library 2 Nolan Kline, Rachel Newcomb, *The Forgotten Farmworkers of Apopka, Florida: Prospects for Collaborative Research and Activism to Assist African American Former Farmworkers, Anthropology and Humanism*.

Various short-lived organizations of anthropologists had already been formed. Its members were primarily anti-slavery activists. They maintained international connections. Anthropology and many other current fields are the intellectual results of the comparative methods developed in the earlier 19th century. Theorists in such diverse fields as anatomy, linguistics, and Ethnology, making feature-by-feature comparisons of their subject matters, were beginning to suspect that similarities between animals, languages, and folkways were the result of processes or laws unknown to them then. Darwin himself arrived at his conclusions through comparison of species he had seen in agronomy and in the wild. Darwin and Wallace unveiled evolution in the late 1800s. There was an immediate rush to bring it into the social sciences. He wanted to localize the difference between man and the other animals, which appeared to reside in speech. The title was soon translated as "The Anthropology of Primitive Peoples". The last two volumes were published posthumously. Waitz defined anthropology as "the science of the nature of man". By nature he meant matter animated by "the Divine breath"; [13] i. He stresses that the data of comparison must be empirical, gathered by experimentation. It is to be presumed fundamentally that the species, man, is a unity, and that "the same laws of thought are applicable to all men". In the explorer Richard Francis Burton and the speech therapist James Hunt broke away from the Ethnological Society of London to form the Anthropological Society of London, which henceforward would follow the path of the new anthropology rather than just ethnology. It was the 2nd society dedicated to general anthropology in existence. In his keynote address, printed in the first volume of its new publication, *The Anthropological Review*, Hunt stressed the work of Waitz, adopting his definitions as a standard. Previously Edward had referred to himself as an ethnologist; subsequently, an anthropologist. Similar organizations in other countries followed: The majority of these were evolutionist. One notable exception was the Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology, and Prehistory founded by Rudolph Virchow, known for his vituperative attacks on the evolutionists. During the last three decades of the 19th century, a proliferation of anthropological societies and associations occurred, most independent, most publishing their own journals, and all international in membership and association. The major theorists belonged to these organizations. They supported the gradual osmosis of anthropology curricula into the major institutions of higher learning. By the American Association for the Advancement of Science was able to report that 48 educational institutions in 13 countries had some curriculum in anthropology. None of the 75 faculty members were under a department named anthropology. Anthropology has diversified from a few major subdivisions to dozens more. Practical Anthropology, the use of anthropological knowledge and technique to solve specific problems, has arrived; for example, the presence of buried victims might stimulate the use of a forensic archaeologist to recreate the final scene. The organization has reached global level. For example, the World Council of Anthropological Associations WCAA, "a network of national, regional and international associations that aims to promote worldwide communication and cooperation in anthropology", currently contains members from about three dozen nations. Cultural anthropology, in particular, has emphasized cultural relativism, holism, and the use of findings to frame cultural critiques. Ethnography is one of its primary research designs as well as the text that is generated from anthropological fieldwork. In the United States, anthropology has traditionally been divided into the four field approach developed by Franz Boas in the early 20th century: These fields frequently overlap but tend to use different methodologies and techniques. European countries with overseas colonies tended to practice more ethnology a term coined and defined by Adam F. It is sometimes referred to as sociocultural anthropology in the parts of the world that were influenced by the European tradition. American anthropology Anthropology is a global discipline involving humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. Anthropology builds upon knowledge from natural sciences, including the discoveries about the origin and

evolution of Homo sapiens , human physical traits, human behavior , the variations among different groups of humans, how the evolutionary past of Homo sapiens has influenced its social organization and culture, and from social sciences , including the organization of human social and cultural relations, institutions, social conflicts, etc. According to Clifford Geertz , "anthropology is perhaps the last of the great nineteenth-century conglomerate disciplines still for the most part organizationally intact. Long after natural history, moral philosophy, philology, and political economy have dissolved into their specialized successors, it has remained a diffuse assemblage of ethnology, human biology, comparative linguistics, and prehistory, held together mainly by the vested interests, sunk costs, and administrative habits of academia, and by a romantic image of comprehensive scholarship. During the s and s, there was an epistemological shift away from the positivist traditions that had largely informed the discipline. In contrast, archaeology and biological anthropology remained largely positivist. Due to this difference in epistemology, the four sub-fields of anthropology have lacked cohesion over the last several decades. Cultural anthropology , Social anthropology , and Sociocultural anthropology Sociocultural anthropology draws together the principle axes of cultural anthropology and social anthropology. Cultural anthropology is the comparative study of the manifold ways in which people make sense of the world around them, while social anthropology is the study of the relationships among individuals and groups. There is no hard-and-fast distinction between them, and these categories overlap to a considerable degree. Inquiry in sociocultural anthropology is guided in part by cultural relativism , the attempt to understand other societies in terms of their own cultural symbols and values. Ethnography can refer to both a methodology and the product of ethnographic research, i. As a methodology, ethnography is based upon long-term fieldwork within a community or other research site. Participant observation is one of the foundational methods of social and cultural anthropology. The process of participant-observation can be especially helpful to understanding a culture from an emic conceptual, vs. The study of kinship and social organization is a central focus of sociocultural anthropology, as kinship is a human universal. Sociocultural anthropology also covers economic and political organization , law and conflict resolution, patterns of consumption and exchange, material culture, technology, infrastructure, gender relations, ethnicity, childrearing and socialization, religion, myth, symbols, values, etiquette, worldview, sports, music, nutrition, recreation, games, food, festivals, and language which is also the object of study in linguistic anthropology. Comparison across cultures is a key element of method in sociocultural anthropology, including the industrialized and de-industrialized West.

### Chapter 8 : NMNH AnthroNotes Winter 98

*Courses examine human rights activism and advocacy, social movements, racial justice organizing, feminist activism, LGBTQ movements, NGOs, humanitarianism, and social justice education. On this pathway, you can learn to analyze these movements and gain a set of ethical orientations that can help transform your reflections into consequential.*

### Chapter 9 : Human Rights Summit - San Francisco State University

*The Department of Anthropology's doctoral program offers advanced training in social/cultural anthropology and archaeology. Regardless of a student's field of specialization, the department believes that the best scholarship emerges from a collaborative, rather than competitive, model of training.*