

Anthropology

Anthropology concerns itself with humans as complex social beings with a capacity for language, thought and culture. The study of anthropology is about understanding biological and cultural aspects of life among peoples throughout the world. All humans are born with the same basic physical characteristics but, depending on where they grow up, each individual is exposed to different climates, foods, languages, religious beliefs, and so on. However, human beings are not simply shaped by their environment, they also actively shape the worlds in which they live. A key aim of anthropology is to understand the common constraints within which human beings operate as well as the differences which are evident between particular societies and cultures.

Departmental Facts

Anthropology has been taught at LSE since 1904. The Department rose to prominence under Bronislaw Malinowski, who arrived in 1910 and developed what was to become British social anthropology. Many of the leading figures within this evolving tradition, and others whose work has built in new directions, have been associated with LSE as students and/or teachers, including Raymond Firth, E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Hortense Powdermaker, Edmund Leach, Michael Taussig, Jean and John Comaroff, Maurice Bloch, and a great many others.

The Department continues to combine innovative research in the unfolding contemporary world with maintenance of the core anthropological traditions: long-term empirical research, commitment to a broad comparative enquiry on the nature of human sociality and human nature, and a constructive but critical engagement with social theory. The weekly Friday morning Research Seminar has, since Malinowski's time, been the venue for cutting-edge, intensive debate on current research in the discipline.

Anthropology at LSE has a strong international reputation and a long and distinguished history of leadership in the discipline. The Department offers a dynamic and engaged research culture with a strong

commitment to teaching and to promoting an inclusive environment. In the 2008 RAE (Research Assessment Exercise), the Department scored the highest percentage of the maximum 4* grades among all anthropology departments in the UK. Furthermore, the Department ranked second in the UK in the subject tables of the Independent newspaper Complete University Guide 2010.

Careers

Anthropologists are equipped with a portfolio of skills which employers in all sectors look for. In its study of people and cultures, the scope of anthropology is unusually broad, including:

- the ability to communicate complex ideas verbally and in writing and to engage in constructive group discussions;
- the ability to read critically, write coherently and reason effectively.

Whilst only a minority of anthropology graduates will go into careers that make direct use of their anthropological knowledge, many will go into careers which utilise some of the skills they have gained from their studies. Typical career areas that anthropologists enter include social research; development work; health work; social work; education, media and a range of commercial functions.

Anthropology courses available to General Course students include:

AN100 Introduction to Social Anthropology	AN227 The Anthropology of Economic Institutions and their Social Transformations
AN101 Ethnography and Theory: Selected Texts	AN237 The Anthropology of Development
AN102 Reading Other Cultures: Anthropological Interpretation of Text and Film	AN243 Children and Youth in Contemporary Ethnography
AN200 The Anthropology of Kinship, Sex and Gender	AN245 The Anthropology of Borders and Boundaries
AN205 The Anthropology of Melanesia	AN265 Medical Anthropology
AN221 The Anthropology of Christianity	AN300 Advanced Theory of Social Anthropology
AN226 Political and Legal Anthropology	AN301 The Anthropology of Religion