

ANTH 201g

Introduction to Anthropology

Fall 2024

Dr. Emily Zeamer
zeamer@usc.edu

Data is not enough to understand the human world...

Anthropology is the study of human differences -- including the diversity of human worldviews, values, symbols, and institutions.

What sets anthropology apart from the other social sciences is how anthropologists study culture and society. By participating the life of a community, an anthropologist looks to people themselves to gain insight into the meanings and experiences that shape their everyday lives. This humanistic, grounded, and practice-based approach to research, also known as ethnography, can offer subtle and surprising insights into how human institutions and social worlds *actually* work. It allows us to make sense of patterns that big data can miss, **explaining not just *what* is happening, but *why*.**

Through lectures, readings and films we will cover key topics in contemporary anthropology, including corporate cultures, humans and environment, media and identity, health and society, ritual and belief, and technological change. Along the way, we will consider the ethical challenges of cross-cultural study and the role of anthropology in the world at large. In the culminating project for this class, students will apply techniques and concepts they have learned to complete an independent ethnographic investigation into a social phenomenon of their choosing.



(FT 29 May 2021)