



ANTH207

Psychological Anthropology

S2 Day 2019

Dept of Anthropology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Kevin Groark

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Contact via kevin.groark@mq.edu.au

See Unit Handbook

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

ANTH150 or ANTH151 or (12cp at 100 level or above) or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit introduces psychological anthropology, including emotional, cognitive, developmental, and perceptual dynamics across cultures. Psychological anthropology studies the relation between individual psychology and sociocultural diversity, for example, between psychopathology and social structure, between personality differences and childrearing practices, or between perceptual experience and a society's ideologies about the senses. We will explore a wide range of perspectives, from evolutionary psychology to neuroanthropology, and address such topics as consciousness including spirit possession, and cultural variation in insanity and impairment.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.

Interrogate the concept of 'human nature' to better understand the relationship between our species' universal traits and the degree of variability found in these traits, including the evolutionary implications.

Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through comparative research.

Actively participate in discussion and debate about a range of topics in psychological anthropology, some of which have everyday applications (such as gender roles, emotional variation, sex and gender across cultures, and childrearing).

Gain a greater understanding of diverse techniques for investigating individual experience, including especially anthropological techniques such as ethnography, field-based techniques, and comparative approaches.

Investigate in greater depth one area of special interest in the study of human diversity through class projects.

Improve presentation and oral expression skills through tutorial discussion of critical issues in psychological anthropology.

Improve writing and critical reading skills through online question and answer.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Tutorials	20%	No	Weekly starting 2nd week
Online Midterm (Short Essays)	40%	No	15 September
Online Final (Short Essays)	40%	No	10 November

Tutorials

Due: **Weekly starting 2nd week**

Weighting: **20%**

Students may miss up to two tutorials without needing an excuse. Students are expected to have done the reading for the week prior to the tutorial. If students are not participating in the tutorials, the tutor may ask the student to complete other work to fulfil the requirements of this evaluation. Please see Unit Handbook for full description of tutorial requirements and expectations.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.
- Interrogate the concept of 'human nature' to better understand the relationship between our species' universal traits and the degree of variability found in these traits, including the evolutionary implications.
- Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through

comparative research.

- Actively participate in discussion and debate about a range of topics in psychological anthropology, some of which have everyday applications (such as gender roles, emotional variation, sex and gender across cultures, and childrearing).
- Gain a greater understanding of diverse techniques for investigating individual experience, including especially anthropological techniques such as ethnography, field-based techniques, and comparative approaches.
- Improve presentation and oral expression skills through tutorial discussion of critical issues in psychological anthropology.

Online Midterm (Short Essays)

Due: **15 September**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will complete a set of short essays that cover the key concepts within the readings, lectures, and discussions from the first half of the semester. The short-answer midterm may be accompanied by a short multiple choice section, accessible via iLearn. Success in this assignment necessitates seminar attendance, taking careful notes, and completing the readings. Exam will be submitted via Turnitin. More details will be provided later in the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.
- Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through comparative research.
- Gain a greater understanding of diverse techniques for investigating individual experience, including especially anthropological techniques such as ethnography, field-based techniques, and comparative approaches.
- Improve writing and critical reading skills through online question and answer.

Online Final (Short Essays)

Due: **10 November**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will complete a set of short essays that cover the key concepts within the readings, lectures, and discussions from the first half of the semester. The short-answer midterm may be accompanied by a short multiple choice section, accessible via iLearn. Success in this assignment necessitates seminar attendance, taking careful notes, and completing the readings. Exam will be submitted via Turnitin. More details will be provided later in the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.
- Interrogate the concept of 'human nature' to better understand the relationship between our species' universal traits and the degree of variability found in these traits, including the evolutionary implications.
- Gain a greater understanding of diverse techniques for investigating individual experience, including especially anthropological techniques such as ethnography, field-based techniques, and comparative approaches.
- Investigate in greater depth one area of special interest in the study of human diversity through class projects.

Delivery and Resources

Technology used and required

Students will need to have access to iLearn in order to complete the two online exams scheduled during the semester. Especially when taking these exams, we suggest to students that they find a high-speed, secure internet connection. At times, iLearn can be slow to reload, so students will find that, especially if their connection is weak, they may be under unnecessary stress. All lectures are recorded, and many of the materials made use of in class are available through iLearn.

Lecture and Tutorial times.

Please see the unit guide for lecture & tutorial times and locations as there are a number of tutorials.

Readings

All readings are available online. Please note that the readings have been changed since 2014 as the convenors are taking over this unit from a different convenor; old readers (and the reading lists) will not have the readings used for this year.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

Around the world and across time, human cultural variation has extended into the depths of the human psyche, shaping profoundly different ways of being human. Are we all the same 'deep down' or do the ways we treat emotion, conflict, social interaction, cognition, and other dimensions of life result in irreducible differences among people? Psychological Anthropology is a field that has traditionally focused on such themes, investigating the cultural dimensions of self, personality, cognition, emotion, psychopathology, normalcy, and deviance—in other words, subjectivity in its fullest sense. Moreover, Psychological Anthropologists seek to understanding both the variant and universal features of human emotional, cognitive, and social life—usually through first-hand experience in documenting and analyzing the wide variety of emotional, cognitive, developmental, and perceptual dynamics that exist across cultures.

In this unit, you will be introduced to the dynamic interdisciplinary field of Psychological Anthropology. Some of the core issues and questions we will be addressing include: How does culture “build” people with highly-localized systems of meaning, feeling, and morality? What is the relationship between culture and subjective experience? How do shared cultural meanings become personalized or “subjectified” by individuals? In what ways does culture shape cognition and feeling? What is the role of language in conditioning cognition? Are there dimension of subjectivity that exist prior to, or independent from, cultural shaping? And if so, how do we account for their function in the lifeworlds of social groups?

By the end of the unit, students will have gained a thorough understanding of the conceptual roots of psychological anthropology, and developed a fluency in thinking through the complex psychocultural issues that continue to animate contemporary anthropological debates about the relationship between self, psyche, and culture.

Information

The convenor of this unit make extensive use of iLearn to post relevant stories, links to resources, and answer questions.

Changes since the last offering of this unit.

The assessment structure has been changed and simplified, with weekly quizzes done away with in order to make the requirements on students simpler. Some of the topics of lectures have been changed, especially because we have introduced a new focus on the key concepts of psychological anthropology (in part because many students have no background in anthropology). Some changes have also been made in order to take advantage of the research and teaching expertise of new staff.

Readings and weekly topics

Please see iLearn for an up-to-date list of topics and readings.

Special consideration

If, for any reason, a student needs special consideration (illness, family emergency), students must apply through the special consideration process outlined on the Faculty of Arts webpage. See relevant information here: http://www.arts.mq.edu.au/current_students/undergraduate/how_to#SpecialConsideration

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)

- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.
- Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through comparative research.
- Actively participate in discussion and debate about a range of topics in psychological anthropology, some of which have everyday applications (such as gender roles, emotional variation, sex and gender across cultures, and childrearing).

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Midterm (Short Essays)
- Online Final (Short Essays)

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Gain a greater understanding of diverse techniques for investigating individual experience, including especially anthropological techniques such as ethnography, field-based techniques, and comparative approaches.
- Improve writing and critical reading skills through online question and answer.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Midterm (Short Essays)
- Online Final (Short Essays)

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.
- Interrogate the concept of 'human nature' to better understand the relationship between our species' universal traits and the degree of variability found in these traits, including the evolutionary implications.
- Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through comparative research.
- Gain a greater understanding of diverse techniques for investigating individual experience, including especially anthropological techniques such as ethnography, field-based techniques, and comparative approaches.
- Investigate in greater depth one area of special interest in the study of human diversity through class projects.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Midterm (Short Essays)

- Online Final (Short Essays)

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.
- Interrogate the concept of 'human nature' to better understand the relationship between our species' universal traits and the degree of variability found in these traits, including the evolutionary implications.
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- Improve writing and critical reading skills through online question and answer.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Midterm (Short Essays)
- Online Final (Short Essays)

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through comparative research.
- Actively participate in discussion and debate about a range of topics in psychological anthropology, some of which have everyday applications (such as gender roles, emotional variation, sex and gender across cultures, and childrearing).
- Gain a greater understanding of diverse techniques for investigating individual experience, including especially anthropological techniques such as ethnography, field-based techniques, and comparative approaches.
- Investigate in greater depth one area of special interest in the study of human diversity through class projects.
- Improve writing and critical reading skills through online question and answer.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Midterm (Short Essays)
- Online Final (Short Essays)

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Actively participate in discussion and debate about a range of topics in psychological anthropology, some of which have everyday applications (such as gender roles, emotional variation, sex and gender across cultures, and childrearing).
- Investigate in greater depth one area of special interest in the study of human diversity through class projects.
- Improve presentation and oral expression skills through tutorial discussion of critical issues in psychological anthropology.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Final (Short Essays)

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.
- Interrogate the concept of 'human nature' to better understand the relationship between our species' universal traits and the degree of variability found in these traits, including the evolutionary implications.
- Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through comparative research.
- Actively participate in discussion and debate about a range of topics in psychological anthropology, some of which have everyday applications (such as gender roles, emotional variation, sex and gender across cultures, and childrearing).
- Improve presentation and oral expression skills through tutorial discussion of critical issues in psychological anthropology.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Midterm (Short Essays)
- Online Final (Short Essays)

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Discover and appreciate the variety of humanity, including the peculiarity of familiar Western personality traits, ways we understand ourselves, and common social roles.

- Interrogate the concept of ‘human nature’ to better understand the relationship between our species’ universal traits and the degree of variability found in these traits, including the evolutionary implications.
- Explore the role of social setting and norms in shaping human development through comparative research.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorials
- Online Midterm (Short Essays)

Changes from Previous Offering

The unit has a new co-convenor so some significant changes have been instituted:

- A simplified assessment structure including doing away with weekly quizzes.
- A set of new readings and topics on the foundations of psychological anthropology have been introduced to make full use of the expertise of new staff, and because many of our students are relatively unfamiliar with anthropology.

Unit description

Around the world and across time, human cultural variation has extended into the depths of the human psyche, shaping profoundly different ways of being human. Are we all the same ‘deep down’ or do the ways we treat emotion, conflict, social interaction, cognition, and other dimensions of life result in irreducible differences among people? Psychological Anthropology is a field that has traditionally focused on such themes, investigating the cultural dimensions of self, personality, cognition, emotion, psychopathology, normalcy, and deviance—in other words, subjectivity in its fullest sense. Moreover, Psychological Anthropologists seek to understanding both the variant and universal features of human emotional, cognitive, and social life—usually through first-hand experience in documenting and analyzing the wide variety of emotional, cognitive, developmental, and perceptual dynamics that exist across cultures.

In this unit, you will be introduced to the dynamic interdisciplinary field of Psychological Anthropology. Some of the core issues and questions we will be addressing include: How does culture “build” people with highly-localized systems of meaning, feeling, and morality? What is the relationship between culture and subjective experience? How do shared cultural meanings become personalized or “subjectified” by individuals? In what ways does culture shape cognition and feeling? What is the role of language in conditioning cognition? Are there dimension of subjectivity that exist prior to, or independent from, cultural shaping? And if so, how do we account for their function in the lifeworlds of social groups?

This unit will cover both the historical development of the field, as well as its core conceptual foundations. As you will come to see, many of these foundational concerns remain front and center in contemporary debates. A number of thematic topics and case studies that integrate the theoretical perspectives we examine will be presented.

By the end of the unit, students will have gained a thorough understanding of the conceptual roots of psychological anthropology, and developed a fluency in thinking through the complex psychocultural issues that continue to animate contemporary anthropological debates about the relationship between self, psyche, and culture. Note: This is a theory-heavy course, best suited for anthropology majors or psych majors with an interest in the relation between the individual and the cultural. This is not a "light" course, and significant work will be required of you in terms of engaging with and understanding the unit readings, which are essential to your performance.