

Bates College
Department of Anthropology

MAJORING IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology as a Discipline

In the past, anthropology concentrated on documenting so-called “primitive” culture. Today it is better characterized as the study of contemporary social life from more complex industrial societies to technologically simpler ones, as well as those known only by way of the archaeological record. An emerging interest in anthropology is the transnational character of most human lives.

The discipline traditionally included four subfields:

1. Social anthropology, which is concerned with institutionalized patterns of social life (e.g., economics, kinship, gender, politics, race, religion).
2. Physical anthropology, which studies human beings as biological organisms, focusing on human genetics, race, and evolution.
3. Archaeology, which investigates societies of the past by excavating and analyzing their material remains.
4. Linguistics, which studies languages as systems of communication.

Anthropology majors at Bates are exposed to all subfields, though the emphasis is on social anthropology.

Some anthropology courses have a geographical focus and others a methodological or theoretical one. Besides our shared contemporary North Atlantic culture, the department emphasizes Southern Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and the Mediterranean, as well as the prehistoric and early historic cultures of northeastern North America. The Bates Anthropology faculty include:

Bruce Bourque (Ph.D., Harvard), Senior Lecturer in Anthropology. Professor Bourque is senior archaeologist at the Maine State Museum. In addition to museum work, his research interests include cultural evolution and ecology and ethnohistory. His archaeological fieldwork has been in New England.

Patricia Buck (Ph.D., U Penn), Assistant Professor of Education. Professor Buck is trained in ethnographic methods and teaches and advises our students, although she is appointed full-time in the Education Department.

Val Carnegie (Ph.D., Johns Hopkins), Professor of Anthropology. Professor Carnegie’s interests include transnationalism, ethnicity, race, and economic development with a focus on the Caribbean.

Loring Danforth (Ph.D., Princeton), Professor of Anthropology. Professor Danforth's research interests include folklore, psychological anthropology, and the study of ethnicity and nationalism. His fieldwork has been in Greece and Australia where he has studied Macedonian immigrants.

Elizabeth Eames (Ph.D., Harvard), Associate Professor of Anthropology. Professor Eames' geographical area of specialization is Africa. Her interests include gender issues, economic anthropology, colonialism, and film.

Steven Kemper (Ph.D., Chicago), Professor of Anthropology. Professor Kemper is a South Asianist with special interests in the religions and politics of that region. His primary fieldwork has been in Sri Lanka where he researches consumption and citizenship.

Heather Lindkvist (ABD, Chicago), Visiting Instructor. Professor Lindkvist is completing her Ph.D. research in Lewiston – an ethnographic study of Somali Muslims in the diaspora. She teaches medical anthropology, the anthropology of sexuality, Islamic studies, and methodology courses in the Bates Anthropology Department.

Why Major in Anthropology?

Anthropology is exceptionally useful both intellectually and practically. Like most liberal arts disciplines, it teaches students to think in a critical and comparative way, and it exposes them to a fundamental part of the Western intellectual tradition. But it also gives them a perspective on their position in a world of cultural and political diversity.

Anthropology has a distinctive view of the world, centered on the everyday, taken-for-granted aspects of social life – what people eat, whom they marry, how they understand themselves and the natural world – as well as the connection between politics, economics and social organization and these mundane practices. One way of making these taken-for-granted practices more visible in one's own culture is by examining not one's own society, but other, more distant ones, with an eye to understanding both human difference and similarity. Traditionally this concern for other ways of being human has been expressed in anthropology's interest in non-Western societies. Nowadays, anthropologists have become interested in diasporic communities, transnational phenomena such as advertising and television, and both post-colonial and post-emancipation societies.

Anthropology is the place where undergraduates are exposed to the wide variety of human experience and to what social life in different societies can teach us about reciprocity, war and peace, social inequality and the close relationship between human beings and the natural environment. Several thousand distinct societies have existed in the history of the earth. To focus upon those of recent time in Europe and North America alone is to neglect the vast majority of forms society has taken. Indeed, most of human history has been lived by people born into hunting and gathering societies. To ignore these ways of life is to ignore humankind's most common adaptations to the environment.

Anthropology also has important career applications. Undergraduate anthropology majors can go on to medical or law school, just as they do with backgrounds in biology or political science. The major can prepare students equally well for other graduate programs, but anthropology has particular relevance to students interested in the fields of foreign affairs, international business, development, social services, community affairs and public health.

A more constructive way to suggest how anthropology serves students' career interests is to cite particular cases. A small sample may serve to convey the range of career options our graduates have chosen:

Tom Blackford, '81. After graduation, Tom worked as a guide and resource person at Norlands, a 19th century Maine "living farm museum" near Livermore Falls. With his wife Deborah, Bates '81, Tom then worked as a Peace Corps volunteer in Belize. They now own and operate an inn on the Maine Coast.

Renee Leduc Clarke '98. A double major in biology and anthropology, Renee received a Fulbright award to expand her honors research into elephant-human interaction in Southern Africa. She then received her Masters from American University and is now an International Relations Specialist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Julie A. Draper '97. Julie is the Education Coordinator at the Children's Museum of Maine in Portland.

Stu Eldridge, '77. Stu went from Bates to the University of Pennsylvania where he completed his Ph.D. degree in anthropology on Maine Coastal archaeology. Since then he has taught anthropology at Mt. Hermon-Northfield Academy.

Andrea Eschen, '81. Andrea went on to graduate work at New York University in the field of Health and Family Planning in an international context, carrying on an interest in medical anthropology she developed at Bates. She now works for a family planning program in New York City.

Corey Harris, '91. Wrote an honors thesis on pidgin and creole languages stemming from his junior semester abroad in Cameroon. A Watson Fellowship enabled him to pursue a comparison of the West African case with Melanesian linguistic dynamics. After completing a two year stint with Teach For America, posted to a rural school in the Mississippi delta, he launched his award-winning career recording and performing Delta Blues. Corey Harris was featured in Martin Scorsese's recent PBS Series on *The Blues*.

Colleen Kaman, '95. Colleen was just accepted for a graduate program in journalism at Columbia. She has deferred and is still working as a producer for CNN.

Erika Lilja, '96. Practicing Veterinary medicine in Illinois.

Yain Lu, '84. With majors in both biology and anthropology, Yain completed graduate studies in archaeology at the City University of New York. Her graduate studies continued innovative work on identifying tool functions by blood traces which she began at Bates.

Caitrin Lynch '90. Dr. Lynch received her Ph.D. and M.A. in cultural anthropology from the University of Chicago. Prior to joining Olin College, Dr. Lynch was at Drew University, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her expertise in the cultural dimensions of offshore manufacturing, experience in consumer research with an eye to design implications, a commitment to understanding social behavior in global contexts and a devotion to encouraging students to use qualitative methods to think critically about the world around them derive directly from her work here at Bates.

Laura Palmer, '89. After her junior year on a University of Wisconsin program in Thailand, Laura returned to Bates, graduated in anthropology, and worked for several years in Chicago. She worked as an archaeologist with the U.S. Forestry Service at Gila National Park in New Mexico, and then finished Public Policy School at the University of Michigan.

Brian M. Powers '94. Brian is now the proud owner of Strange Brew Beer & Winemaking, Marlboro, Massachusetts.

Jim Ratcliffe, '95. Building on a Junior semester program he did in Nepal, Jim runs a non-profit called the Himalayan Educators Development Project and edits middle-school science textbooks for Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. In a letter to Steve Kemper, he says, "I really feel like my anthropology degree was the best preparation I could have gotten for this."

Sarah E. Standiford '97. Sarah Standiford serves as Executive Director of the Maine Women's Lobby and its sister organization, the Maine Women's Policy Center. She oversees the public policy development, research, and organizing efforts of these two multi-issue women's organizations dedicated to expanding opportunities for all Maine women and girls. Sarah came to the organization in July 2003, from Planned Parenthood of Northern New England. She has significant training experience, including work with the association of Uganda Women Medical Doctors. Prior to working for PPNNE, Sarah campaigned with the Maine League of Conservation Voters and directed the Maine People's Alliance field canvas.

Jolene Vaillancourt, '81. After studying Spanish at Bates and spending her junior year in Columbia, Jolene went on to work with Spanish-speaking Americans in southern New Hampshire.

What is your dream job? How can we help?

Course Requirements for the Major

Six specific courses and one unit are required for the major:

Anthro 101: Social Anthropology
Anthro 103: Archaeology **OR** ***Anthro 104:*** Human Evolution
Anthro 333: Culture and Interpretation
Anthro 339: Economic Anthropology
Anthro 441: History of Anthropological Theory
Anthro 458: Senior Thesis
Anthro s10: Ethnographic Fieldwork **OR** ***Anthro s32:*** Archaeology Fieldwork

There is no strictly defined sequence for these specifically required courses. However, students tend to schedule them in one of the following orders:

	<u>ON CAMPUS JR. YR.</u>	<u>JYA</u>	<u>JSA</u>
First Year:	101 & either 103 or 104	101 & 103 or 104	101 & 103 or 104
Second Year:	either s10 or s32	333 and s10 or s32	either s10 or s32
Junior Year:	333 and 339	study abroad	339 or 333 & abroad
Senior Year:	441, 458	339, 441, 458	333 or 339, 441,458

Majors must also complete at least four other courses in anthropology, not including 360's (those are independent studies). The department offers many electives, many if not all are set at the 200-level. Two of these elective courses may be replaced—*with departmental approval*—by relevant courses from outside the department itself, or even from off-campus study. Each of you should consult with your advisor about any logical connections between your particular area of interest and fields of study other than anthropology.

Given the discipline's emphasis on everyday life in other societies, our students are strongly encouraged to make use of study abroad options. We tend to favor longer (and/or multiple) visits to a single setting, but even shorter exposures (such as those available through off-campus Short Term units) can be helpful. Language study is also highly recommended.

Please note that a secondary concentration in anthropology is available at Bates.

Revised July, 2005