

London Anthropology Day Workshops 2007

WORKSHOP SESSION 1

11.00 to 11.45am

Stevenson Theatre
Durham, **Is warfare in our genes?**
Bob Layton

Humans are fundamentally social animals, yet there have been many wars in Europe, Africa and Asia in the recent past. Some scientists argue that humans are genetically disposed to violence, even that chimpanzee violence preceded and paved the way for human war. It has also been claimed that among the Yanomamö of South America men who have killed other men have more children. In my talk I shall give you a chance to look at and discuss some of this evidence, and also give counter-evidence that peace-making has been as important in human social evolution.

Moser
Bristol/Kent, **Evolutionary Anthropology and Human Mate Choice**
Mhairi Gibson and Sarah Johns

Can evolutionary theory help us understand human behaviour today? Evolutionary anthropologists are interested in exploring the origins of human behaviour, and one of the topics that we are interested in is human mate choice - why do we choose the partners we do. In this evolutionary anthropology workshop students will explore issues relating to the evolution of human mate preferences by analysing personal advertisements. Personal ads provide useful information on our partner preferences, since they provide information not on the qualities people look for a mate but also how they advertise themselves and attempt to attract mates.

Studio
University of East London, **Anthropology of Fairytales**
Chris Knight

This workshop explores some familiar European fairy tales, showing how they open a window into pre-Christian conceptions of death and resurrection. Across much of Aboriginal Australia, Africa and Native America, initiation rituals were traditionally conceptualised in terms of temporary death followed by a return to new life. Stories such as the Sleeping Beauty, Little Red Riding Hood and Jack-and-the-Beanstalk emanate from now almost-forgotten European traditions in which girls and boys were initiated into the secrets and mysteries of adult sexual life. Drawing on techniques first developed by the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, Professor Knight will demonstrate an intriguingly close kinship between European tales of enchantment and myths collected by anthropologists from distant parts of the globe.

Sackler 1

School of Oriental and African Studies, **Thinking sex (and gender, sexuality, biology)**

Caroline Osella

This workshop will give you an idea of what social and cultural anthropologists have to say about 'science' – specifically in this case, what scientists know (or claim to know) about sex. Learning about this will introduce you to some very contemporary debates. It will push you to take a critical stand on both your own common-sense knowledge and on what is presented in society as 'scientific fact'. In today's workshop, we will be thinking about interesting questions, such as: whether human gender is two, three or actually many; what is the relationship of biological sex to gender; how do sexual desire and sexuality fit into sex and gender; what are the hidden agendas and unspoken 'taken for granted's' of 'biological' (and, more generally, 'scientific') research?

Sackler 2

Oxford Brookes, **Human Evolution - 7 million years in the making!**

Simon Underdown

The breath-taking story of human evolution in just 45 minutes! Answering such questions as; Where did we come from? Why do we walk on two legs? Why are we so clever? And of course; If we evolved from monkeys, why are there still monkeys?

IT Room

London School of Economics, **Exploring the City**

Henrike Donner

In this workshop we will explore the city of Calcutta, India which is a bustling metropolis of over 12 million people. Using an interactive digital tool called the 'Kolkata Explorer' we will address questions of religion, education, gender, marriage and kinship that anthropologists are interested in by following a set of 'characters' through the city. This workshop is as much about India and urban anthropology, as it is about fieldwork and the range of material anthropologists use to write their ethnography. Last but not least the workshop will demonstrate how we employ digital technologies for teaching in the social sciences today.

Gallery tours

British Museum staff will be offering tours of the galleries with talks on the Pacific Islands, Native North America and Africa.

AnthropologyLibrary (starts at 11.45)

Teachers' workshop: Anthropology in the classroom

A special workshop for teachers (and other staff) where you will find out about the latest plans for an Anthropology A-Level, give feedback on resources and have the chance to take part in practical session in the galleries with the British Museum's Education Officer.

WORKSHOP SESSION 2

12.00pm to 1.00 p.m.

Stevenson Theatre
Goldsmiths, **Anthropology and Film**
Stephen Nugent

In this workshop students will look at the way anthropology and film combine to give insight into other peoples and cultures as well as being used to examine the way features of our own familiar landscapes can become anthropological texts. Students will have brief exposure to the steps involved in researching a film, shooting it and editing it. The session will include viewing of recent projects undertaken by anthropology students shooting in the UK, Europe and further afield.

Moser
Bristol, **Mortuary Practices**
Joshua Pollard, Alistair Pike

The remains of the human dead represent one of the most abundant and useful sources of archaeological evidence. The interpretation of past mortuary practices requires an understanding of the formation of the archaeological record and of the complexity of rites and belief systems. Anthropology provides a tool for understanding how people approach death (socially and practically) across cultures. Archaeology gives us considerable time depth and the presence of mortuary practices that are without parallel today. Thus, by combining archaeological and anthropological studies of death we gain a broader comprehension of the diversity of human culture.

Students in small groups will be presented with archaeological case studies (through the media of plans, photographs, artefacts), and will explore mortuary practices in the past and issues relating to the survival of the archaeological evidence and its interpretation. They will be asked to present a synopsis of their discussion to the other groups. We will then compare their conclusions with anthropological case studies and current archaeological interpretations.

Studio
Manchester, **Knowing through doing**
Soumhya Venkatesan, Gillian Evans

What does it mean to learn how to tie an Indian Sari or to come to know how to be Fijian through understanding the subtle distinctions associated with bodily posture? What is the difference between knowledge that you learn in school or at university and what you come to know informally as a result of living life among others in your family, among friends or in the neighbourhood and community?

Observing social and cultural differences through participating in the lives of others, anthropologists learn by living among those they study. In other words a large part of anthropological knowledge comes about through learning by doing. By trying out practical and interactive tasks students attending this workshop will have the

opportunity to think about different kinds of learning, various forms of knowledge and why anthropology - as the study of what it means to be human - is an exciting subject.

Sackler 1 and 2

Brunel/London School of Economics **Life in another culture: what's it feel like?**

Peggy Froerer, James Staples and Evan Killick

A chance to do anthropological research - in one hour! The 'Life in another culture' experience is not a lecture or a talk, but a workshop of practical activity. By doing field research in 'invented' cultures, participants get first-hand experience of the practical difficulties of understanding an alien culture and the intellectual challenge of making sense of their findings. The workshop is based on the methodology of participant observation, which is central to anthropology. It is easy-going, fun and thought-provoking.

IT Room

Roehampton, **Let's talk about sex (and other things): studying communication among our primate relatives**

Caroline Ross

In this workshop, I will show you how anthropologists listen in on the 'conversations' of our non-human primate relatives and explain how we can start to unravel the meanings of their various calls and how they may use other means of communication such as visual and olfactory signals. You will be able to listen to, and try to interpret signals and calls from a range of primate species. I will also explain how this approach has shown that - just like for humans - much of non-human primate communication is based around the topics of sex, friends and food!

Gallery tours

British Museum staff will be offering tours of the galleries with talks on the Pacific Islands, Native North America and Africa.

WORKSHOP SESSION 3

2.00pm to 3.00 p.m.

Stevenson Theatre

Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI), **Making an Ethnographic Film**

Rebecca Savage, Susanne Hammacher

Rebecca Savage, who did her master degree in Visual Anthropology will screen her film **Tiempo de Vals** (2006, 22 mins) which she shot during her fieldwork in a rapidly urbanising agricultural town in Central Mexico.

The film is about the 15th birthday celebration, which is a day-dream shared not just by the whole community living in Tetlanohcan, but even by those living as migrants in the USA. After the film we'll have a Q&A with Rebecca and she will share her experience of making the film, living in Mexico, studying anthropology, her current work experience at the BBC and her plans to enroll for a PhD programme - an excellent opportunity to get an idea of what it is like to be an anthropology and film student.

Moser

Liverpool John Moores, **Forensic Anthropology**

Laura Bishop

Beauty may be only skin deep, but identity goes down to the bone. This workshop will look at how forensic anthropologists identify the sex and age of individuals from their skeletons. We will focus on the two areas of the human skeleton which are most useful for determining its sex, the skull and the bony pelvis. We will also look at the various ways of telling how old an individual was at death - teeth and the growth and deterioration of the skeleton. This workshop will help you understand how anthropologists go about the first stages of identifying individuals from their bones.

Studio

UCL, **Intelligent Objects – a hands-on workshop examining ‘thinking’ beer cans and other objects**

Graeme Were

What do objects do and what do they demand from us? Why do they provoke such powerful responses and how do they influence us? This hands-on workshop aims to explore these questions and the emerging realisation that objects are not just lifeless things that convey meaning, but act as animated beings with desires, needs, appetites, demands and drives of their own. We will begin with a demonstration of ‘thinking’ beer cans before an interactive session with students handling a range of ethnographic objects.

Sackler 1
Sussex, **Bodies and Performances**
Paul Basu and Anne-Meike Fechter

In the West, the perfect body is a thin body. It may be surprising to learn, then, that in some other cultures obesity is regarded as beautiful. Bodies and bodily performances are important across all cultures and have been throughout history. Quite often, however, the very same objects or practices carry entirely different meanings depending on the respective culture. In this workshop we will explore some anthropological approaches to the body, considering such practices as tattooing, piercing, scarring, masking, and wearing clothes, and find out how they express differences in individual, ethnic, religious or gendered identities. Students will be able to venture into the collections of the British Museum to gather examples, which we will discuss together.

Sackler 2
Southampton, **“I’m dying of AIDS; am I cursed by witchcraft?”**
Nick Rayner

Imagine a friend has been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. That friend’s family migrated from a country in Africa. When you visit her you learn that she and her family believe that this is a result of witchcraft. How would you react? Offering a fascinating insight into cross-cultural differences, this workshop will explore how different cultures make sense of and react to HIV/AIDS. You will be assisted by current anthropology students from Southampton University in an interactive multimedia discussion session that will engage your imagination and allow you to see the world around you through anthropological eyes.

IT Room
Kent, **Watching Wild Chimpanzees**
Nicholas Newton-Fisher

Of all living species, chimpanzees are evolutionarily the closest to humans, differing only by a handful of genes. What then, can we learn about ourselves by studying these creatures in the wild? In the workshop, I will explain why anthropologists study chimpanzees and other primates, talk about some of the experiences I have had watching chimpanzees in Africa, and use photographs and video to get you to practice the skills needed to accomplish the first task for anyone interested in studying behaviour – learning to identify individuals!

Gallery tours

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