

## ***How can anthropology contribute to everyday life?***

Anthropology provides the possibility to study every aspect of human existence. It looks at the past, present and possible futures of ourselves and all others who share this planet. With increased knowledge of other societies, we can understand, mingle, and communicate more fluently, clearly and diplomatically to ensure good relations with others; this also requires awareness of our ethnocentricities and the embedded bias and prejudice we may have been enculturated with.

Within the subject of Anthropology, there are four main sub-disciplines: Socio-cultural (Cultural) anthropology; Anthropological anthropology; Biological anthropology; and Linguistic anthropology. In everyday life for every person, it is more likely that Cultural anthropology is the most often reflected in what we see and do or be influenced by.

Cultural anthropologists study human societies and cultures and, in doing so, engage in two kinds of research, ethnography and ethnology. Ethnography is where anthropologists immerse themselves into a community and collect written and visual data of that communities cultures, customs and everyday habits and chores. Ethnology interprets and analyses the results of the data so collected. From this, we can gain knowledge of many different societies and cultures to understand better the perspectives from which others may be seeing things. For instance, if a westerner were to spit on someone, it would be considered almost the height of insult; to a Maasai bride, it is regarded as a congratulation and blessing, don't be offended when going to a Chinese

restaurant and listening to slurping, conversations midway between chomps is not a lack of etiquette, it's ordinary in their culture.

Etiquette is a broad topic that most people should be cognisant of what other cultures consider acceptable or not, good, bad or ugly, and then there is less chance of offence and more respect and honour. It also reflects that you have gone some way to understand another person's culture, which is considered honourable and makes for much more accessible and productive communication.