

What makes anthropologists' study of a culture different to that in other fields or disciplines?

Anthropology offers knowledge and perspectives on many cultures. The four subfields of Anthropology are sociocultural anthropology, archaeological anthropology, biological anthropology, and linguistic anthropology. Cultural anthropology focuses on studying human society and culture through ethnography and ethnology. This is distinct from other fields, such as historical or psychological research; anthropology is an all-encompassing study of how societies are glued together; and, in turn, ourselves with others.

Because of globalisation with access to advanced technologies such as those required for more accessible travel opportunities and advanced communication systems, the migration of humanity has also complicated behavioural studies considerably. This phenomenon accounts for recognising social boundaries merging with other cultures rapidly and requiring more information on how these cultures have developed and how to harmoniously understand and interact with them. For instance, this can be seen in the suburban sprawl of major cities that may hold specific populations of immigrants to their new nation—for example, the Nigerian population living in Liverpool, New South Wales. Questions arise regarding how they integrated into Australian society and how they were received and accepted. These questions could be better answered and positive action taken if we knew more about their background and cultures than our own. This is where anthropology's study methods of ethnography and ethnology

stand out from other disciplines as unique in assisting in answering these questions.

Ethnographic studies gain rigour from fieldwork that observes and records in real-time how internal and external events impact the communities in which they live. From this, data can be generated by studying local behaviour, customs, and economic and political activity. One of the ethnographer's challenges is to develop self-awareness of possibly enculturated ethnocentricities to avoid bias or prejudice toward the under study. This, too, is one that we must be aware of even when we begin to review the reflections of others. Ethnological examination of these results, combined with other anthropological sub-fields such as archaeology, can propose relevant hypotheses on how these peoples can integrate and be integrated with different cultures when or if migration should occur.

Anthropological studies interact with many other disciplines but stand out for their intimate real-time integration with communities and are not purely academic pursuits. Cultural anthropology studies integrate both qualitative and quantitative research, and for us who wish to understand others, it makes it clear that to do so, we must first understand ourselves.