

Preface

Introductory-level readers in biological anthropology tend to be, as one such volume put it, collections "of the best of the public press." They recognize the contributions of popular magazines, newspapers, and journals in "providing current, first-rate educational information."

While it is absolutely the case that the public press, at its best, provides up-to-the-minute, accurate articles that are informative and stimulating to the general public and the beginning student, it is also the case that other sources of information are important to a scholarly discipline and are relevant to a well-rounded introduction to that discipline. These include older writings, perhaps now outdated but of historical interest; technical articles; sections of important books; and relevant writings from outside the discipline—all of these are part of the canon of an academic field. Students in the process of becoming familiar with a field, even (and maybe especially) at the introductory level, will benefit from exposure to a broad sample of literature that expresses the ideas of that field.

This anthology provides such a sample of the spectrum of writing about biological anthropology. The array of selections includes

- **Articles from the "popular press"** (such as *Discover*, *The New Yorker*, and *Natural History*). These articles, specifically intended to introduce their readers to a subject, at the same time assume some basic background knowledge and degree of literacy. Because college students taking an introductory course may already be formally familiar with the subjects of these articles, reading them not only will serve to enhance and expand their knowledge of the subjects but may well provide a positive sense of recognition and encouragement.
- **Articles from semiprofessional journals** (such as *Scientific American* and *The Sciences*). These selections serve to enhance and encourage students' abilities to acquire and synthesize more technical information within the discipline.
- **Articles from professional journals** (such as *Evolutionary Anthropology*, *Nature*, and *Science*). Students will see what primary research and professional-level reporting look like and that the

scientific method (a major theme of this reader) is not just a nice idea but is put into action by real scientists doing real science.

- **Sections from books** (for example, those by Johanson and Dettwyler). These pieces stand by themselves as readings but may also make some students want to read the books in their entirety and perhaps undertake further reading by those authors or on those subjects.
- **Excerpts from original works.** Although the work of Darwin, Wallace, Lamarck, Mendel, Linnaeus, and others can be summarized perfectly well, it is still instructive to students (and to us) to learn exactly what they said and how they said it. When one goes even a bit beyond the "quotable quotes" and reads the rest of the paragraphs around them, one often is surprised at what else these important figures had to say. We see that Lamarck, for example, clearly understood the scientific method and applied it to his own idea in a very modern manner.
- **Writings—in all the above categories—from outside anthropology.** Of all scholarly disciplines, anthropology is perhaps necessarily the least parochial. Because of our holistic perspective, we rely on—and contribute to—other fields, and we recognize that scholars in other fields may well have something to say about our subject and may do so in a way that is every bit as faithful to the anthropological perspective as is our own work. Stephen Jay Gould and Jared Diamond stand out as examples.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES

- More articles pertaining to modern human populations are included than in any other reader. See, for example, "Differential Mortality and the Donner Party Disaster" by Donald K. Grayson and "Are Humans Still Evolving?" by Michael Balter.
- The anthology begins with a section on the personal experiences of biological anthropologists and ends with seven examples of bioanthropology

"in action"—applied to specific interesting and topical concerns.

- Unique to this collection is a section on the nature of science. The articles in this section provide concrete examples of the scientific method at work. This theme, however, is carried throughout the book.
- Several articles cover current debates in bioanthropology (the meaning and utility of new molecular data and of genetic tracing of ancestry, the presence of culture among nonhuman primates, and intelligent design). Introductions and articles together help students summarize and compare points of view.
- The reading selections are divided into ten thematic parts, each part briefly introduced and with a short statement as to the reason for the inclusion of each contained selection. Individual selections are introduced with a short biography of the author (longer in the case of historical figures so as to better provide the historical context), an introduction to the article itself, and a set of pre-reading questions. Terms that might require definition appear in a glossary at the end of the book. Also included are an annotated table of contents and an index.
- For the benefit of instructors, there is a list of major topics and which selections pertain to each, and a chart showing to which chapter(s) in major bioanthropology texts each selection is relevant. An accompanying Instructor's Manual contains selection rationale, key terms, and multiple-choice and essay questions.

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS EDITION

Ten of the forty-two articles are new to this edition, and the volume features these changes (in sequential order):

- Part 3: The Evolution of Evolution has a new article (13) on the intelligent design controversy.
- Part 5: The Primates and Primate Behavior has a new article (18) on behavioral flexibility as an adaptation among Madagascar lemurs.
- Part 6: Hominid Evolution has three new chapters (22, 24, and 25) on the evolution of bipedalism,

the "Hobbit" fossils from Indonesia, and the controversy over the emergence of the modern human mind.

- Part 7: The Bioanthropology of Modern Human Populations contains an article (28) on disease originally in another section of the previous edition.
- Part 8: Human Biodiversity now has the original article (29) on "The Five Sexes."
- Part 9: Bioanthropology and the Human Genome has two new chapters (34, 35) on the chimpanzee genome and the new services that purport to trace one's genetic ancestry.
- Part 10: Biological Anthropology: Applied and Considered has three new chapters (36, 40, 42) on the controversy of co-sleeping with infants, the ethics of research on great apes, and the question of ongoing human evolution.

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