



70 (or so) Essential Books in Anthropology - Allegra's Readers' Choices

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April, 2017



Which books did you, our dear readers, consider as *really* essential reading in anthropology? Here's the list of books that you suggested - all 70 + of them! The end features also suggestions for biological anthropology. Should we add a separate list for linguistic anthropology, queer studies - something else? We look forward to continuing the debate!



This version does not include the books included in our original [TOP 30 list](#). Thus it looks like we'll have to create yet another list to synthesise these two. Of course the task in itself is impossible, namely to arrive at any exhaustive list on which we'd all agree. Yet this exercise is useful also for another reason: to get a sense of how our field sees the 'core' of our collective endeavour. If we don't like what we see here - namely the predominance of the 'white Anglo-American Male Panel' - at least we know where to start initiating change!

Allegra's readers suggested list:

1. Anderson, B. R. (2016). *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.
2. Bataille, G. (1993). *The accursed share, volumes II and III*(Vol. 2). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
3. Behar, R., & Gordon, D. A. (1996). *Women writing culture*. California: University of California Press.
4. Benedict, R. (1989). *The chrysanthemum and the sword: patterns of Japanese culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
5. Bohannan, L. (1954). *Return to laughter*. London: V.Gollancz.
6. Bourdieu, P. (2002). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
7. Bourgois, P. (2010). *In search of respect: selling crack in El Barrio*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
8. **Briggs, J. L. (2001). *Never in anger: portrait of an Eskimo family*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.**
9. **Carsten, J. (2007). *After kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**
10. Cerwonka, A., & Malkki, L. H. (2007). *Improvising theory process and temporality in ethnographic fieldwork*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
11. Clastres, P., Hurley, R., & Stein, A. (2007). *Society against the state: essays in political anthropology*. New York: Zone Books.
12. Daniel, E. V., & Ortner, S. B. (1997). *Charred lullabies: Chapters in an*



- anthropography of violence*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
13. Dave, N. N. (2012). *Queer activism in India: a story in the anthropology of ethics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
 14. **Descola, P., Lloyd, J., & Sahlins, M. D. (2013). *Beyond nature and culture*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.**
 15. Escobar, A. (2012). *Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
 16. Farquhar, J. (1996). *Knowing practice: the clinical encounter of chinese medicine*. Boulder: Westview.
 17. Favret-Saada, J. (2015). *The anti-witch*. Chicago, IL: Hau Books.
 18. Fei, X. (2001). *From the soil: the foundations of Chinese society*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California press.
 19. Feldman, I. (2008). *Governing Gaza bureaucracy, authority, and the work of rule, 1917-1967*. Durham: Duke University Press.
 20. Ferguson, J. (2009). *The anti-politics machine: "development," depoliticization, and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
 21. Ferguson, J. (2012). *Expectations of modernity: myths and meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
 22. Foucault, M. (2010). *The birth of the clinic: an archaeology of medical perception*. London: Routledge.
 23. Gennep, A. V., Vizedom, M. B., & Caffee, G. L. (2010). *The rites of passage*. London: Routledge.
 24. Handelman, D. (1998). *Models and mirrors: towards an anthropology of public events*. New York: Berghahn Books.
 25. Harris, M. (1989). *Cows, pigs, wars, & witches the riddles of culture*. New York: Vintage.
 26. Harrison, F. V. (2008). *Outsider within: reworking anthropology in the global age*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
 27. Harrison, F. V. (2010). *Decolonizing anthropology: moving further toward an anthropology of liberation*. Arlington, VA: Association of Black



- Anthropologists, American Anthropological Association.
28. Herzfeld, M. (1991). *A place in history: social and monumental time in a Cretan town*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
 29. Ho, K. (2009). *Liquidated: an ethnography of Wall Street*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
 30. Hull, M. S. (2012). *Government of paper: the materiality of bureaucracy in urban Pakistan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
 31. Latour, B. (2005). *Science in action: how to follow scientists and engineers through society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
 32. **Leach, E. R. (1993). *Political systems of Highland Burma: a study of Kachin social structure*. London: Athlone Press.**
 33. Lévi-Strauss, C. (2010). *The savage mind*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
 34. Livingston, J. (2012). *Improvising medicine: an African oncology ward in an emerging cancer epidemic*. Durham: Duke University Press.
 35. Lock, M. (2011). *Twice dead organ transplants and the reinvention of death*. Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press.
 36. Lutz, C. A., & Collins, J. L. (1998). *Reading National geographic*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
 37. Maanen, J. V. (2011). *Tales of the field: on writing ethnography*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
 38. Mafeje, A., & Mafeje, A. (1991). *The theory and ethnography of African social formations: the case of the Interlacustrine Kingdoms*. Dakar: Codesria.
 39. Martino, E. D. (2005). *The land of remorse: a study of southern Italian tarantism*. London: Free Association Books.
 40. Mintz, S. W. (1985). *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Penguin.
 41. Mudimbe, V. Y. (1995). *The idea of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
 42. Mueggler, E. (2001). *The age of wild ghosts: memory, violence, and place in Southwest China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.



43. Munn, N. D. (2007). *The Fame of Gawa: a symbolic study of value transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
44. Muñoz, J. E. (2009). *Cruising utopia: the then and there of queer futurity*. New York: New York University Press.
45. Newton, E. (1979). *Mother camp: female impersonators in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
46. Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2006). *Insiders and outsiders: citizenship and xenophobia in contemporary Southern Africa*. Dakar: Codesria books.
47. Ong, A. (2006). *Flexible citizenship: the cultural logics of transnationality*. Durham: Duke University Press.
48. **Powdermaker, H. (2000). *Stranger and friend: the way of an anthropologist*. New York: Norton & Company.**
49. Power, C., Finnegan, M., & Callan, H. (2017). *Human origins: contributions from social anthropology*. New York: Berghahn.
50. Ramphele, M. (1997). *A bed called home: life in the migrant labour hostels of Cape Town*. Cape Town: D. Philip.
51. Riles, A. (2010). *The network inside out*. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press.
52. **Rosaldo, R. (1989). *Culture and truth: renewing the anthropologist's search for meaning*. Boston: Beacon Press.**
53. **Rosaldo, M. Z., & Lamphere, L. (2002). *Woman, culture, and society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.**
54. **Said, E. W. (2004). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.**
55. Savard, R., & Proulx, J. (1982). *Canada: derrière l'épopée, les autochtones*. Montréal: Hexagone.
56. Scott, J. C. (2008). *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
57. Scott, J. C. (2011). *The art of not being governed: an anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven, CT
58. Scott, J. C. (2008). *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. Yale University Press.: Yale University Press.



59. **Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed.**
60. Spivak, G. C. (1988). *Can the subaltern speak?* Basingstoke: Macmillan.
61. Stewart, K. (1996). *A space on the side of the road: cultural poetics in an "other" America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
62. Stoller, P. (2010). *The Taste of Ethnographic Things The Senses in Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
63. Taussig, M. T. (2003). *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: The Univ. of North Carolina Press.
64. Trinh, T. M. (2009). *Woman, native, other: writing postcoloniality and feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
65. Trinh, T. M. (2011). *Elsewhere, within here: immigration, refugeeism and the boundary event*. New York: Routledge.
66. **Tsing, A. L. (2015). *Friction: an ethnography of global connection*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.**
67. **Turner, V. W. (2011). *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure*. New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction.**
68. **Wagner, R. (2016). *The invention of culture*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.**
69. Werbner, P. (2001). *Charisma and living sainthood: the anthropology of a global Sufi cult*. London: C. Hurst
70. Weston, K. (1991). *Families we choose: lesbians, gays, kinship*. New York: Columbia Univ. Pr.

Biological anthropology book suggestions

Mitani, J. C., Call, J., Kappeler, P. M., Palombit, R. A., & Silk, J. B. (Eds.). (2012). *The evolution of primate societies*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Diamond, J. M. (2017). *Guns, germs, and steel: the fates of human societies*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.



Campbell, A. (1996). *Men, women and aggression*. London: British Association Promoting Science and Technology.

Boehm, C. (2001). *Hierarchy in the forest: the evolution of egalitarian behavior*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press.

Richerson, P. J., & Boyd, R. (2008). *Not by genes alone: how culture transformed human evolution*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press.

Hrdy, S. B. (2011). *Mothers and others: the evolutionary origins of mutual understanding*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Stringer, C. (2013). *Lone survivors: how we came to be the only humans on earth*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin.