



FREE EVENT:

Anthropology in Schools: Teaching About Culture and Difference in Uncertain Times

Friday July 7th 2017, 10am-4pm, Headington Campus, Oxford Brookes University

You are warmly invited to attend a free workshop at Oxford Brookes University, bringing together secondary school teachers and university academics to discuss how we teach and learn about cultural difference in the current moment of global uncertainty. This is the first of two workshops to be held in 2017 on this topic. We hope during the day to engage in thoughtful discussion around the following questions:

- How do we teach about social identities and cultural difference?
- What tools and resources do we draw on to make sense of our own identities and our attitudes to others?
- How do we, as teachers, address questions of race, gender, religion and politics?

In an era of anti-immigrant populism and the politics of Brexit, anthropological ideas and debates offer empathetic understandings of very different ways of thinking, knowing and living. This workshop will bring together teachers and academics to talk about pedagogies of addressing difficult and sensitive topics within the curriculum.

The workshop will take the form of a series of discussions led by participants, with lunch and refreshments provided. This is an open discussion and no previous direct engagement with anthropology is necessary to take part. A report of the workshops will serve as an initial 'toolkit' for this activity and will act as a starting point for future collaboration.

This workshop is open to all secondary school teachers, and may be of particular relevance to those teaching a range of humanities and social sciences subjects.

To register your interest in taking part, please contact Patrick Alexander (palexander@brookes.ac.uk). Places are limited and we have some limited funding available for teacher cover and travel and subsistence. Please indicate in your email if you would like to be considered for this funding.

Please see overleaf for a more detailed outline of the workshop theme.

This initiative is sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), in collaboration with Oxford Brookes University, Oxford University and the Royal Anthropological Institute (www.teachinganthropology.org)

Extended Outline

Anthropology in Schools: Teaching About Culture and Difference in Uncertain Times

Anthropology is a discipline that has much to offer young people in terms of critical thinking and learning more about societies and cultures of the world – both familiar and strange, both distant and on-the-doorstep. However, social anthropology remains significantly under-represented in schools. Professional and academic social anthropologists have for decades debated the extent and scope for introducing anthropological themes of study for secondary school students and undergraduates. The Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) has championed the development and introduction of an A-Level in Anthropology, along with the examination board AQA. However, the shrinking A-Level curriculum in state secondary education and a return to a more ‘traditional’ selection of subjects post-16 has led to the shelving of A-Level Anthropology, with final exams for the subject taking place in 2018. While socio-cultural anthropology remains an important field of inquiry as part of the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, it is only taught in a relatively small number of schools in the UK. There remains significant interest and demand from both teachers and students to find ways of incorporating social anthropology into secondary education. More broadly speaking, in an era of anti-immigrant populism and the politics of Brexit, anthropological ideas and debates offer empathetic understandings of very different ways of thinking, knowing and living. This raises a number of questions:

- How do we teach, and how do our students learn about, social identities and cultural difference?
- What tools and resources do we draw on to make sense of our own identities and our attitudes to others?
- How do we, as teachers, address questions of race, gender, religion and politics?

These workshops will bring together teachers and researchers to talk about pedagogies of addressing difficult and sensitive topics within the curriculum. The proposed project will consist of two one-day workshops exploring how secondary school curricula can be enriched and enlivened through critical, sensitive approaches to teaching about culture and difference. Professional anthropologists (including representatives of the Royal Anthropological Institute), undergraduate students, and secondary school teachers will come together to discuss best practice in teaching about culture and difference in uncertain times. A report of the workshops will serve as an initial ‘toolkit’ for this activity and will act as a starting point for future collaboration.