



FREE EVENT:

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

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

Schedule:

9.30-10.00am: arrival and coffee

10.00-12.00: Teaching about Culture and Difference

Sharing personal narratives of challenges and best practice in a range of educational settings and across the curriculum. Questions for discussion will include (but are not limited to):

- 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?
- What particular challenges are raised by current political issues, including Brexit, the rise of populist political movements, and terrorism?

12.00-1.00pm: Lunch

1.00-3.00pm: Making the Most of Anthropology:

Discussion will include the following topics:

- Building better connections between schools and universities
- Finding 'anthropological moments' in other subject/disciplinary areas
- Developing new inter-disciplinary connections
- A toolkit for teaching anthropologically?

3-4.00pm: Plenary discussion, next steps, and close

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

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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.