An Intellectual History of Women Anthropologists: Background, Methods, Ethnography

---

A SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECT
Presented to
The Department of Anthropology

By
Kendra Wuerth
December 2017

Honor Pledge

On my honor, I have neither given, nor received, any unauthorized aid on this project.

Honor Code Upheld: Kendra Wuerth

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 4

Introduction 5

A History of Cultural Theory 11

Women in Anthropology 20

- **Matilda Coxe Stevenson (1849-1915)** 21
- **Elsie Clews Parsons (1874-1941)** 24
- **Ruth Benedict (1887-1948)** 27
- **Ella Cara Deloria (1888-1971)** 30
- **Margaret Mead (1901-1978)** 33
- **Marianne Stoller (1929-2015)** 36
- **Ruth Behar (1956-)** 37

Discussion 40

Conclusion 49

References Cited 53

Acknowledgements

This research paper was made possible with the help of Professor Mario Montaño, Ph.D. Professor Montaño, Ph.D., was the first professor to introduce me to anthropology and, without his guidance and insight in numerous cultural anthropology classes, this paper would have never come to fruition. Additionally, I would like to honor the life and work of Professor Marianne Stoller, Ph.D. Professor Stoller, Ph.D., passed away in 2015, and it was through conducting research archiving her life work that I first became curious about women's contributions to the field of cultural anthropology. Finally, I would like to thank my parents for their unconditional love and support. Without them I would have never attended Colorado College, the school that has taught me more than I thought possible and that shaped me into the anthropologist that I am today.

Introduction

From as early as 1884, anthropological scholars, such as Edward B. Tylor of Oxford University, recognized that anthropological studies could not be completed without acknowledging the value of the role of women. In an address to the Anthropological Society of Washington, Tylor (1884) discussed his work with the Zuni people while arguing, "so much is to be learned through the women of the tribe, which the men will not readily disclose" (550). Tylor argued for the necessity of women anthropologists to better understand the roles of women and children in society. However, despite early acknowledgement within anthropology of the necessity of women to the discipline, women anthropologists faced obstacles from both societal and workplace discrimination. There was a sense that anthropology "needed women to gain access to women's spheres" (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 3). This limited the importance of women's scholarly contributions to topics deemed suitable for women's study, and these topics were often undervalued in terms of their worth to cultural anthropology when compared to other topics of study, such as social structure and culture. Women anthropologists then faced the challenge of proving the worth of their scholarly contributions in comparison to their male colleagues'. This leads to the questions of why women's spheres of study were commonly viewed as less valuable contributions than others, and in what ways did women anthropologists end up shaping the field of cultural anthropology through challenging this notion? Through an analysis of seven women anthropologists – Matilda Coxe Stevenson, Elsie Clews Parsons, Ruth Benedict, Ella Cara Deloria, Margaret Mead, Marianne Stoller, and Ruth Behar – this paper traces how the growth of women in anthropology coincides with the growing acceptance of humanization, subjectivity, and emotion in the field of cultural anthropology.

Functionalism and positivism were the methods that dominated anthropology from the late eighteenth century to the mid 1960's. Positivism, a method originally developed by Auguste Comte as an "attempt to explain the workings of the society according to general laws that could be identified through observation" (Moberg 2013, 39), supported the study of the "Other" from a more quantitative lens. Comte (1865) outlined the idea of positivism by further clarifying his work on Positive Philosophy in, *A General View of Positivism*. In this work, Comte (1865) states that positivism maintains two key assertions, "to generalize our scientific conceptions, and to systematize the art of social life" (3). The second assertion explains how positivism serves as an objective, scientific lens through which to study society, a method which was highly valued in early anthropology. Karl Popper then further developed the idea of logical positivism, which involved testing theories with empirical evidence (Moberg 2013, 13). In a 2005 translation of Popper's (1959), *The Logic of Scientific Discovery,* Popper equates experience to "the method of scientific analysis" (30), arguing that experience must be empirically studied. As a result of both these scholars, for the first half of the twentieth century, objectivism was commonly strived for in anthropology and little room was left for the anthropologist's personal contributions and reflections on the anthropological process or its findings. Objective observations were among the most valued methods of data collection, as empiricism, "the doctrine that all valid scientific knowledge must originate in experience and observation" (Moberg 2013, 7), and objectivity were believed to be the foundation of scientific findings.

Women's spheres of study, such as "sexual divisions of labor, gender roles, and secrecy rules" (Parezo 1993, 4), were often perceived as contradictory to these methods, as they were conceptualized as those that were difficult for male scholars to study and to understand. Additionally, women's spheres of study often included kinship and rituals. The reason that these

subjects were considered within women's spheres of study and outside of men's corresponds with the stereotypes of women within society, which supposed women were more apt to studying topics relating to gender and family.

According to Parezo (1993), women are stereotyped as "soft, delicate, emotional, noncompetitive, and nurturing" (5). These characteristics were in direct contrast with the values of science, as science is often stereotyped as "tough, rigorous, impersonal, competitive, rational, and unemotional" (Parezo 1993, 5). These scientific stereotypes directly derive from the values of positivism, objectivism, and empiricism, the methods that were prized in anthropology for the greater part of the twentieth century. Determining what was valued as scientific knowledge, scientific stereotypes were used in anthropological studies to demonstrate the need for objectivity and empiricism when conducting ethnographic studies. Those studies that deviated from the characteristics commonly associated with science were deemed less valuable. Because women's spheres of study were frequently associated with stereotypes of women that were in contradiction to the values of positivism and its objective nature, their work was viewed as less scientific and less valuable to the field.

However, women did find ways to overcome these stereotypes and contribute to anthropology in ways that were valued by male scholars in the field. These women then led the way for others to follow. Both Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead have become some of the most well-known scholars in anthropology despite the many obstacles they faced as women in a male-dominated workplace. Their success may in part be attributed to the objective nature of their studies. This success then opened doors for many other women to enter the discipline and begin carving out their own scholarly niches, slowly instigating paradigmatic shifts to the commonly accepted ideologies and methodologies of the field despite struggling to have their work

acknowledged within the scholarly community. In this study, I will trace the ways in which the emergence of women anthropologists into the field of cultural anthropology created a shift away from the belief in objectivity as the only valid means of scientific data collection and towards a broader understanding of the value of subjectivity within the field.

Leckie and Parezo discuss the ways in which women anthropologists contributed to anthropology in, *Their Own Frontier: Women Intellectuals Re-visioning the American West*:

> One of the hallmarks of women's anthropological endeavors is that, while advancing the anthropological perspective, their work must benefit the people they study was well as their own society…Over time, however, women anthropologists became more involved in studying Native peoples for the sheer delight of discovering not only the variation within individual societies but also how different – and in their view, how constructive – their approaches could be to addressing the common problems of being human (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 12).

The authors underscore how women began to challenge the ways in which the "Other" was viewed and portrayed, challenging the question of 'why do we study who we study?' By viewing anthropological studies as a tool for the betterment of all people, not just for those in academia, women anthropologists realized the necessity of bringing emotion and empathy into a scientific field for the betterment of the science itself. Additionally, these women understood the power of their platform as women in academia. Therefore, I will also analyze the motives of the women anthropologists for political undertones that speak to the social and political times in which these women worked.

Some of the primary methods that are analyzed in this study for their validity as encouraged by women anthropologists are: vulnerable observation, humanistic anthropology, auto-ethnography, and reflexive anthropology. While "vulnerable observation," a method developed by Ruth Behar (1996), was utilized specifically by Behar, many of these methods were, and are, widely used by past and current anthropologists. According to Behar (1996)

vulnerable observation is a type of ethnographic methodology that involves reflection on one's own experiences and using those experiences to create various lenses through which to interpret a subject of study. With this approach, Behar found that the experiences of the researcher could prove useful in the interpretation of observations.

Vulnerable observation is a type of humanistic anthropology. According to Gleach (2013), humanistic anthropology derived from "feelings that the larger disciplinary organizations were sacrificing their humanist components on the altar of a scientism seen as overly narrowing" (1). A movement dating to the 1970s, humanistic anthropology did not seek to move entirely away from objectivity in anthropological methodology, but rather looked to broaden the scope of research methodologies. Connecting with the discussion of women anthropologists' desires to conduct anthropology for the betterment of all people, humanistic anthropology is concerned with "the relevance of the discipline for the broader human world" (Gleach 2013, 1).

Similarly to humanistic anthropology, during the 1990's auto-ethnography diverged away from the objective positivist approach to anthropology and brought the researcher into the ethnography. Reed-Danahay (2017) states that autoethnography can have two different definitions; "it can refer to ethnography of one's own group but also to the use of personal narrative in ethnographic writing" (1). Neither of these meanings are mutually exclusive, as an autoethnographer studying their own culture may also choose to use personal narrative in their ethnographic writing. By studying one's own culture and by writing about that culture by using the form of a personal narrative, objectivity is replaced by personal interpretation.

The emergence of autoethnography stemmed from a reflexive movement in anthropology during the 1970's. Davies (2008) defines reflexivity in the context of social research as "the ways in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and process of doing the

research" (4). Therefore, the ethnographer conducts their observations and then reflects on these observations from their own personal perspective to gain further insight to the topic being studied. Each of these methods will be analyzed for their frequency of use by women anthropologists to determine the role that women anthropologists played in bringing these methods to the discipline and in encouraging their growth in popularity in the discipline.

To contextualize the information in this study and to form a foundation for its arguments, I will first outline the history of cultural theory. This section develops a sense of what cultural anthropology looked like before women began working in the field and what it looked like as women became more emergent to the field. To chronologically analyze the major paradigms and paradigm shifts within cultural theory, I will examine the contributing role and gender of the key scholars: Franz Boas, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Bronislaw Malinowski, Claude Levi-Strauss, Pierre Bourdieu, Margaret Mead, and Ruth Benedict. The history of cultural theory will lead to a discussion on the history of women anthropologists. I will outline the contributions of women anthropologists in a chronological manner, moving from the more structural women anthropologists to the more humanistic. Matilda Coxe Stevenson, Elsie Clews Parsons, Ruth Benedict, Ella Cara Deloria, Margaret Mead, Marianne Stoller, and Ruth Behar are analyzed for their major contributions to the field, the ways in which they challenged what it means to be a woman in the field, and how their contributions may have altered anthropological methods. Following this biographical section is a detailed discussion of how these women anthropologists contributed to, and were inspired to create, a cultural shift within anthropology. The study is summarized in the concluding section.

The entirety of this study aims to analyze to what extent, and in what ways, the emerging presence of women into the field of cultural anthropology shaped the way that anthropological

studies are conducted and written about/shared. As many authors argue, the contributions of women anthropologists to the field have often been minimized, hidden, and/or forgotten (Babcock and Parezo 1988; Cattell and Marjorie 2006; Gacs, Khan, McIntyre, and Weinberg 1998; Leckie and Parezo 2008; Parezo 1993). Throughout this study, the contributions of women anthropologists will not only be highlighted but also underscored for their importance in contributing to the evolution of the methods of cultural anthropology through bringing emotion, humanism, and subjectivity to these methodologies. Due to the constraint of space, only a handful of women anthropologists can be analyzed here. These women were selected not because their achievements are necessarily greater than others, but due to their location within the timeline of anthropological development as well as for their relevance to this study. It is important to note that not all women anthropologists work with subjectivity and emotion, but all have unique experiences as women that have contributed to the development of the field.

A History of Cultural Theory

Franz Boas, also known as the father of American Anthropology, lived from 1858 to 1942 (Moberg 2013, 1). During the turn of the twentieth century, he developed the concepts of cultural relativism and historical particularism, which contributed to the movement of anthropological historicism. The concept of cultural relativism was anticipated by Michel de Montaigne who claimed, “the cultural diversity of the world argued for a relativistic viewpoint on morals,” and who “doubted whether absolute standards could be applied to local traditions, insisting that such traditions, rather than universal standards, determine what is moral” (Moberg 2013, 55). This notion challenged the idea of universal truths for human behavior, an idea which enabled certain cultures to be deemed superior to others, acknowledging the need for cultures to be studied within their own cultural contexts rather than in comparison to one another. Therefore,

cultural relativists make two primary assumptions while analyzing cultures. The first assumption is that all cultural values can only be understood within their own cultural context. In this way, a cultural trait from one culture may not hold the same meaning if taken out of context and analyzed in relation to the workings of another culture. The second assumption is that, due to the fact that all cultures must be understood within their own cultural contexts, all cultural values are equally respectable (Moberg 2013, 152). Essentially all cultures are equal, and no culture is superior to another.

In addition to developing the concept of cultural relativism, Franz Boas (1920) developed the concept of historical particularism.[1] Historical particularism created a paradigm shift in American anthropology away from the cultural evolutionary model that had previously worked on the idea of parallel evolutionism. Boas (1920) found that there was no proof that culture change "follows definite laws which are applicable everywhere…[and] is the same among all races and peoples" (311). Rather than accepting the notion that all societies develop along the same path, Boas found that societies were capable of reaching similar points of development in different ways. He argued, "the method which we try to develop is based on a study of the dynamic changes in society that must be observed at the present time" (Boas 1920, 316). Therefore, each culture has a dynamic history that must be looked at as a result of its individual changes and situations, not as compared by its development in relation to other cultures.

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown lived around the same time as Franz Boas, from 1881 to 1955 (Moberg 2013, 178). Like Boas, Radcliffe-Brown's studies focused on attempting to explain the ways in structures develop. However, unlike Boas who studied culture, Radcliffe-Brown studied

---

[1] Boas did not name the notion he developed, 'historical particularism'. Rather, Boas' concept was later given its name by Marvin Harris in 1968 in, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of Theories of Culture*.

society. Radcliffe-Brown developed the idea of structural functionalism, which was largely influenced by Durkheim's notion of the organismic analogy (Moberg 2013). Durkheim felt that the cause and function of social phenomena must be looked at separately. According to the organismic analogy, "the institutions that contribute to the maintenance of society were seen as analogous to the organs of a living thing," enabling Radcliffe-Brown to build on the idea that "the study of society should be directed toward what he called 'social structure,' and emphatically not culture" (Moberg 2013, 180). From this theoretical perspective where society is based on a social structure, subjects of study such as corporate groups and social rules are analyzed as a framework for what society is built upon.

Working almost simultaneously to A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Bronislaw Malinowski, who lived from 1884 to 1942, developed the idea of functionalism, which shared similarities as well as developed differences from structural functionalism. Functionalism was centered around the idea that "when explaining… 'social facts,' or those cultural rules and practices that have a binding or coercive effect on the individual, social scientists should look for the functions they provide" (Moberg 2013, 92). In other words, all social facts maintain some function to society. Functionalism itself is centered on three main rules, which were later developed into Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Need. Through the analysis of these three rules, cultures can be categorically studied to understand the patterns in various ways of life. The first of these rules is that basic biological needs have to be met. For example, people need to eat, so part of a culture will be to hunt for food. The second rule is that of instrumental needs, where a cultural practice is derived from those basic biological needs. An example of an instrumental need is the cooking of food to make it more palatable, or digestible in some cases. The final of the three rules is that of integrated needs, which means to integrate the cultural practice within a society, or culture. An

example of integrated needs is learning the different methods of cooking specific foods that will benefit the different activities of a culture. Through the understanding of these different levels of needs, ethnographers can understand the patterns of cultures. Similarly to cultural relativism, historical particularism, and structural functionalism, functionalists strove for objectivity while practicing this form of methodology. A critique of functionalism is that the constants of universal laws or needs cannot explain the variables within society.

In addition to developing the concept of functionalism, in the early 1900's Malinowski was the first ethnographer to complete his research by living among the societies that he was studying, developing the concept of the "participant observer," or an ethnographer who participates in the culture they are observing. With participant observation, Malinowski (1922) felt that the best way for an ethnographer to get reliable research was to remain objective to what was being witnessed. The rationale behind this approach was that if a researcher allowed his or her own emotions or personal experiences to interfere with the ethnographic process, the research would be tainted by the bias of the researcher, proving the results to be inconclusive. When Malinowski (1922) practiced participant observation, objectivity and a positivist approach to research were at the forefront of scientific inquiry. Researchers most commonly practiced participant observation and its ultimate goal of objectivity up until the late twentieth century. This method is exemplified by anthropologists whose ethnographies primarily focused on the peoples of the Southwest during the early to mid-twentieth century such as: John Gregory Bourke, J. Frank Dobie, Jovita Gonzalez, Elsie Clews Parsons, and Ruth Benedict. One of the critiques of such objectivity during participant observation is that a sense of hierarchy is created between the anthropologist and the other, with the anthropologist coming from a superior culture to study inferior peoples with little acknowledgement of emotion or equality.

Following the trends of structural functionalism and functionalism, Claude Levi-Strauss, who lived from 1908 to 2009 (Moberg 2013, 95), developed the notion of structuralism. Structuralism is based on the fundamental assumption "that the human mind imposes constraints on culture" (Moberg 2013, 269). Therefore, culture does not exist without the mind. Levi-Strauss argued that patterns could be found in cultures around the world because "culture arises from the structures of the human mind, which…operates and is organized in a similar fashion in all places" (Moberg 2013, 267). Under this theory, he argued that there is an inherent cultural structure that all human minds are born with, and culture is therefore patterned and semi-predictable. Structuralism then formed the basis for finding similarities between cultures, underscoring the notion that cultures are equitable to one another. This idea connects with Boas' concept of cultural relativism, in that it identifies that no culture is superior to another. Levi-Strauss was also similar to his predecessors in that he advocated for the necessity of objectivity when studying other cultures. To better understand why these early anthropologists were so invested in the notion of objectivity as an essential component of conducting ethnographies, Pierre Bourdieu sought to explain the notions of objectivity and subjectivity to a greater extent.

Bourdieu, who lived from 1930 to 2002 (Moberg 2013, 222), was one of the primary figures to illustrate the line between subjectivity and objectivity and to emphasize that objectivity is the ultimate epistemological goal of the ethnographer. Bourdieu, a sociologist who's interests extended to philosophy, was influenced by Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. As a sociologist, Bourdieu "attempt[ed] to overcome the 'absurd opposition between individual and society,' the opposition between *subjectivism* and *objectivism*" (Jenkins 1992, 18). For Bourdieu, the line between these two terms was especially important when understanding the role of the participant observer. Participant observation "involves a substantial epistemological break with the

characteristic detachment of research" (Jenkins 1992, 52). Essentially, this entails that the researcher must become aware of their own biases to free themselves from subjectivity and strive towards complete objectivity. Self-reflection was key for Bourdieu, not as a means of analysis, but rather as a way to rid oneself of any personal baggage that might hinder the research process. Therefore, Bourdieu felt that to be successfully objective one has to first understand what it means to be subjective.

While Bourdieu advocated for the necessity of objectivity and ridding oneself of one's biases, he also explored the idea of "enculturation." Enculturation is the process of becoming an acceptable member of society within a particular culture, which connects with Bourdieu's ideas on the "habitus." Bourdieu's notion of the habitus is described as "the set of socially learned dispositions, skills, and ways of acting that are often taken for granted, and which are acquired through the activities and experiences of everyday life" (Moberg 2013, 223). Bourdieu's exploration of enculturation created a model for analyzing what shapes individuals into cultural beings, providing an explanation for not just how, but why, humans behave as cultural beings.

Up to this point in this analysis of the history of cultural theory, only male scholars have been presented and analyzed for their key contributions to the field. It is important to note that, despite causing paradigm shifts and evolutionary changes in thought, these male scholars all advocated for the necessity of objectivity as a component of valid scientific studies. To contrast the contributions of these male theorists, the influences to cultural theory made by Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead will now be discussed. Benedict and Mead were among the first women anthropologists to contribute to paradigm shifts in the field. Similar to their male predecessors, their work was based around objectivism, as many of the first great female anthropologists followed in the footsteps of their male mentors. This may at first seem counterintuitive to the

argument that women brought emotion to the study of anthropology, however, as will be analyzed in the following section, many of these women may have felt suppression and judgment from their male counterparts while still trying to prove themselves in a field that was heavily dominated by patriarchal ideals. The result of this pressure was the contribution of subtle changes to the field that, combined with the work of other women anthropologists, instigated greater paradigmatic shifts that led to the acceptance of emotion and subjectivity within the field of cultural anthropology. It was not until women became more prevalent in academia that women's contributions to emotional and humanistic anthropology were perceived as valid. Nonetheless, Benedict and Mead's works challenged the idea of who the audience of anthropological works should be while advocating for greater accessibility of their research to the public. They developed changes to the writing style of ethnographies that led to larger anthropological shifts.

Ruth Benedict lived from 1887 to 1948, and was a student of Franz Boas (Gacs et al. 1998). She studied the idea that cultures have personality traits during her work with native peoples of the Southwest as well as with Japanese culture. Benedict practiced participant observation, remaining the objective outside researcher rather than attempting to relate to the inside members of the culture, and she is known for her advocacy for "antifascist and antiracist activities" (Janiewski and Banner 2004, viii). Whereas ethnographic studies prior to her work painted pictures of native peoples that were "mean-spirited, paranoiac…self-aggrandizing, [and] megalomaniacal," Benedict's work "argued a case for tolerance of nonconformity and for the power of human societies deliberately to change their existing arrangements" (Gacs et al. 1998, 3-4). Benedict used her work as a platform to advocate for the use of anthropology as a tool for the betterment of all people, as both a "personal and a political endeavor" (Gacs et al. 1998, 5).

Margaret Mead lived from 1901 to 1978 and, like Benedict, was a student of Franz Boas (Gacs et al. 1998). Her primary research interests included "child development; individual character formation, including culturally assigned gender roles; national character studies; cultural change; evolution; and such applied interests as nutrition, education, law, mental health, and ekistics[2]" (Gacs et al. 1998). As one of the first women to enter the field, Mead studied many of the topics that were associated with women's spheres, as governed by the stereotype of women being nurturing. However, Mead utilized her access to these spheres to aid her in the development of the field of psychological anthropology, which was a progression from Boas' initial ideas of cultural relativism. Psychological anthropology took "a perspective in American anthropology that rejected this idea of culture as a hodgepodge of unrelated traits" (Moberg 2013, 155). Mead specifically studied the culture and personality orientation, which serves as the theory that explores "how culture shapes the personality of the individual" (Moberg 2013, 156). Mead was at the forefront of the development of the methods within psychological anthropology as well as to those within visual anthropology, and Gacs et al. (1998) asserts, "as a research anthropologist, she is best remembered for her field research on gender and sex roles" (253).

Another important aspect of Mead's scholarly contributions was the purposefully accessible way in which she wrote. For this, Mead received criticism "for her continual efforts to communicate with a 'general and educated audience'" (Janiewski and Banner 2004, viii). Like Benedict, Mead believed in using anthropology as a tool to be used for the benefit of all people, not just those in academia. She was "determined to communicate with American housewives" and those people, especially women, who did not have equal access to education (Janiewski and

---

[2] Ekistics refers to the study of human settlements (Tyrwhitt, Oikistikes, and Doxiadis Associates 1993).

Banner 2004, viii). Both Mead and Benedict used their work in this way to connect the public with the world of academics, using their platforms as scholars for social and political advocacy.

Both Benedict and Mead were conducting their studies in the midst of the postmodern era, which may speak to the activist undertones within their works. Postmodernism, "a broad cultural shift in the assumptions by which we seek to understand the world, comparable to the cultural shift that took place in the Enlightenment after 1600" (Moberg 2013, 300), also involved rejecting many of the qualities of the Enlightenment-modernist project. Such qualities included valuing rationality, objectivity, and progress as pinnacles of valid scientific studies. While neither Benedict nor Mead rejected the use of rationality and objectivity within their works, they did seek to make anthropological studies more widely accessible and beneficial for varied audiences, foreshadowing what later became known as humanistic anthropology. This was the result of the postmodern era and the initiation of questions such as 'Who decides what valid science is?' and, 'What should this science be used for?'

The responses of early women in the field, such as Benedict and Mead, to postmodernism gave feminist anthropologists new meanings to the critique of the patriarchal discourse because they argued that there *is* truth, but this truth should be used for the betterment of society, not just for scholarly intent. Feminist anthropologists argued that cultures must be listened to, emotions must be understood and accounted for, and self-reflexivity can be an important element of better understanding subjects of study. The following section will explore to a greater extent the contributions of female anthropologists from the early to the late twentieth century. These biographies will serve to demonstrate how women had to gain their voice in academia by overcoming the commonly accepted patriarchal methods already practiced in anthropology.

Women in Anthropology

This section includes biographical information on seven women anthropologists. These women are: Matilda Coxe Stevenson, Elsie Clews Parsons, Ruth Benedict, Ella Cara Deloria, Margaret Mead, Marianne Stoller, and Ruth Behar. While there have been many women in anthropology who have contributed to the field by confronting the gender based obstacles that were placed before them, these women have been chosen for a multitude of reasons. The first is for their location in the timeline of the history of anthropology. Women such as Matilda Coxe Stevenson, Elsie Clews Parsons, Ruth Benedict, Ella Cara Deloria, and Margaret Mead were all at the forefront of the period of time, predominantly the turn of the twentieth century, when women were beginning to enter the field. For this reason, their contributions as women were revolutionary to the field in that women had not made such scholarly contributions in the past. The second reason that these women were chosen was for their topics of study. Many of these women wrote on topics, such as women and family, which had previously been lesser explored by male anthropologists. The final reason for choosing these women was due to the accessible ways in which they wrote about these topics, writing in tones which helped to bridge the gap between scholars and the general public. They also desired to make their writing accessible to women from a variety of backgrounds, so as to serve as role models to show that all women can find a place for themselves in the academic world if they so choose. Many of these women worked political messages into either their anthropological writings or their other endeavors, working tirelessly as advocates both inside and outside of the field. The lives and works of these women are presented in a chronological manner to better contextualize the place of these women within the history of cultural theory provided above.

Matilda Coxe Stevenson (1849-1915)

One of the first female anthropologists to make significant contributions to the field of anthropology in the late nineteenth century was Matilda Coxe Stevenson. In, *Women Anthropologists: A Biographical Dictionary,* Gacs et al. (1998) outlined Stevenson's early life. Born on May 12, 1849, Stevenson was born just prior to the start of the second half of the nineteenth century. Due to societal pressures on women to stay at home and to not receive a formal education, Stevenson never earned a college or advanced degree. Nevertheless, her passions about geology, research, and later anthropology led her to a scholarly career. Her prolific contributions to anthropology are greatly valued by cultural anthropologists.

Matilda Coxe Stevenson, photo credit:
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ec/Matilda_Coxe_Stevenson_circa_1870.jpg

Stevenson first began her research by working with her husband, Colonel James Stevenson, on geological surveys in Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming as part of the U.S. Geological Survey (Babcock and Parezo 1988, 9). It was on these trips that she learned basic ethnographic skills. It was also on these trips that she was introduced to anthropology in the Southwest. According to *Daughters of the Desert: Women Anthropologists and the Native American Southwest 1880-1980* (Babcock and Parezo 1988), Stevenson was "the first woman

ethnographer to work in the Southwest" (9). She traveled with her husband to study the Zuni people in 1879 "as a member of the first collecting and research expedition of the newly formed Bureau of Ethnology under the direction of John Wesley Powell" (Babcock and Parezo 1988, 9). However, it was not until her husband's death that she was paid for her contributions. Powell noticed the utility of Stevenson to the team, as she was able to add a female perspective to the study of women and children. In fact, what is perhaps most notable about Stevenson, for the purpose of this paper, is that Stevenson was one of the first American ethnologists who felt that women and children were an important area of study. Prior to the entry of women into the anthropological field, the primary subjects of study were by and large men and their practices. Children and women were often considered of lesser importance to studies, being noted as part of the periphery, or as there to serve the men (a perspective largely derived from the observations of male anthropologists). When Stevenson entered the field, she felt it necessary to include the study of women and children so as to gain a more comprehensive view of the Zuni people (Babcock and Parezo 1988, 9).

Despite advocating for the importance of the study of women and children in addition to other cultural aspects, Stevenson desired to study areas outside of the gendered niche that Powell had constructed for her. Stevenson was fascinated by the concept of religion and greatly desired to understand how religion differed among various Pueblo peoples. One of Stevenson's most famous quotes reads as follows from a letter from Stevenson to Powell:

> I want to do a comparatively complete and connected history of an aboriginal people whose thoughts are not our thoughts, weaving all the threads into an intelligent and satisfactory whole for the civilized students…It is my wish to erect a foundation upon which students may build. I feel I can do the most for science in this way (Stevenson 1900).

Stevenson desired to study more than women and children, and she pushed beyond the gendered areas of study that were expected of her because of her sex, quickly "becoming known for her skill in collecting all kinds of ethnographic data" (Tylor 1884 quoted in Gacs et al 1998, 339).

With Stevenson's value as an anthropologist being recognized, she and her husband became the first wife and husband anthropological team and began work on ethnographies at the pueblos of Acoma, Hopi, Sia, and with the Navajos. When Stevenson's husband died in 1888 as a result of the Rocky Mountain fever while they were working on an ethnography of Sia, Powell did not want to lose the important work that had already been completed by the Stevensons. He made an "unprecedented move" to hire Matilda Coxe Stevenson to complete the study that she and her husband had been working on prior to her husband's death (Gacs et al. 1998, 339). This made Stevenson the first woman to be paid as a government anthropologist. Unfortunately, her salary never equaled that of her male colleagues. According to the *Congressional Serial Set*, printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office (1902) to detail the expenditures of the Smithsonian Institution, Stevenson was listed as only a skilled laborer and paid a monthly salary of $62.50 while working for Powell (7). The same source also provides information regarding Powell's salary as the director of the study as well as the salaries for Powell's other employees. Powell was paid $375 per month, while the lowest paid male assistant ethnologist was paid $75.00 per month (U.S. Government Printing Office 1902, 4). Therefore, Stevenson was not only underpaid in comparison to her colleagues, but was also not even recognized as an ethnologist.

Stevenson's ethnographic contributions to the field were prolific and of great value to the discipline. In addition to her studies on women, she was an advocate for women in the sciences. As the founder and president of the Women's Anthropological Society of America in 1885, Stevenson's goal was "to open to women new fields for systematic investigation…and to invite

their cooperation in the development of the science of anthropology" (Anonymous quoted in Gacs et al. 1998, 341). She pushed the gendered boundaries that had initially been set for her as the topics of women and family and followed her personal interests of religion and the comparative studies of the pueblos.

By following her own interests, Stevenson became one of the greatest role models for women entering the field, and yet she always faced obstacles that were placed in front of her as a result of her gender. As Gacs et al. (1998) asserts, "Being a woman helped her with fieldwork and provided her with insights necessary for understanding other peoples, whereas it hindered her in her quest for recognition by the scientific community in Washington" (Gacs et al. 1998, 341). Many women following in her footsteps continued to push back against the stereotypes and discrimination that women faced within the field, as did Elsie Clews Parsons who was a feminist advocate for women in society. Each of these advocates were following in the footsteps of Stevenson, who did what no women prior to her had done in the Southwest; she entered the anthropological realm and worked tirelessly to gain recognition for her scholarly contributions in areas beyond those that were designated for her by her male colleagues.

Elsie Clews Parsons (1874-1941)

Gacs et al. (1998) provide the following information on Elsie Clews Parsons path to scholarship. Parsons was born roughly just over twenty years after Stevenson and lived from 1874 to 1941. She came from a well-off family in New York City, with a father who was a banker and a mother who was a descendent of President James Madison. Coming from such a wealthy and prominent family, Parsons was able to attend Barnard College in 1896 to receive her bachelor's degree. She then continued on to receive both her master's and her doctorate from Columbia University in 1897 and 1899 respectively. Coming from wealth and a prominent

family name was a privilege for Parsons that many women at the time did not have. This provided her with educational opportunities as well as with the ability to voice her controversial opinions on feminism and pacifism. Rather than choosing to use her privilege for personal interests, Parsons chose to advocate for those who were constrained by the conventions of society, her primary focus being women.

Elsie Clews Parsons, photo credit: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7d/Elsie2.gif

"Best known during her lifetime as a sociologist, a feminist, and a pacifist rather than as an anthropologist" (Parezo 1993, 63), Parsons devoted her life to advocating for women within society. This is not to say that Parsons was not a prolific anthropologist. Parsons entered the field of anthropology later in life, when she was 42 years of age. From that point in 1916 to 1941 Parsons published 95 works centered around the Southwest. According to Parezo (1993) "in only three years between 1916 and 1941 did she fail to have at least one article in the *American Anthropologist* regarding this area" (63). Due to the prolific nature of her work, Parsons is often known as one of the founding mothers of American anthropology and folklore, and she worked closely with, and was most influenced by, Franz Boas, who was also conducting his research on the Southwest from Columbia University at this time.

Parsons was a key role model for women anthropologists because “she established a place for women in the field of anthropology” (Babcock and Parezo 1988, 15). Parsons desired to study society so that she could resist her own societal constraints as a woman. For this reason, Parsons is one of the first women anthropologists who contested the restraints of a patriarchal society. As James C. Scott (1990) would argue, her escapes to conduct ethnography in the Southwest, “returning looking perfectly dreadful,” were part of her hidden transcript, resisting the patriarchal rules of society while in a space that could not be observed by men. This societal resistance stemmed from Parsons feminist advocacy, which she drew upon in all that she did. Using tools such as journalism, comparative sociology, and cultural anthropology, Parsons desired to challenge the societal norms that were so restricting to women and their roles in the workplace, academia, and generally outside of the home.

One of Parsons most controversial works, *The Family*, was written in 1906. The book emerged from numerous lectures that Parsons gave on the subject of the family, but it received enormous backlash from the public for its ‘scandalous’ suggestions. Perhaps most contradictory to common conventions of the time was Parsons suggestion “that couples should first live together in trial marriages before they made lifelong commitments and had children” (Gacs et al. 1998, 284). Another controversial suggestion in the book was that “if women were to be capable wives and mothers, they needed to have the same opportunities as men” (Gacs et al. 1998, 285). These notions were unheard of in the early 1900’s and inspired a great deal of criticism by both the scholarly community and the public, and yet Parsons’ continued to work to resist convention and stereotypes, challenging the ways in which women were perceived and the lack of opportunity they had access to within society. Boas, who worked with Parsons and was familiar with her work remarked that her early work was “a strenuous revolt against convention…a

purely intellectual criticism of fundamental forms of our modern ways of life'" (Boas 1942 quoted in Parezo 1993, 65). Parsons used her platform as a scholar and an activist to challenge institutionalized oppression of women.

Parsons' focus on feminist topics influenced her ethnographic work in the Southwest. Often traveling away from her four children and husband, Parsons would leave home to conduct ethnographies among the pueblos. Her topics of study frequently focused on "the process of culture change, the question of Spanish influence, [and] the role of women in society" (Parezo 1993, 63). She also worked to study the topics of mothers and children in the pueblo villages. While writing about these topics, her feminist perspectives on modern society frequently influenced the ways in which she wrote about the roles of women, and she strived to make her work accessible to the general public so that less educated women could read and connect with her messages.

Like Stevenson, Parsons' contributions to the field are greatly valued, and her colleagues recognized these contributions by electing her as the president of numerous anthropological associations. From 1919 to 1920 she was the president of the American Folklore Society, from 1923 to 1925 she was the president of the American Ethnological Association, and from 1940 to 1941 she was the president of the American Anthropological Association (Babcock and Parezo 1988, 15). Parsons' election to these esteemed positions demonstrates that her and Stevenson's work to help women become recognized within the scientific community was gaining strength.

Ruth Benedict (1887-1948)

Born in 1887, Ruth Benedict is best known for her "theory of culture-and-personality, for her studies of Pueblo culture and Japanese culture, and her concern with 'enlightened change' in all societies" (Gacs et al. 1998, 1). Gacs et al. (1998) then further outlined Benedict's early life.

The daughter of Frederick Fulton, who began a medical career prior to dying suddenly when Benedict was only two years old, and Bertrice Shattuck Fulton, a Vassar college graduate, Benedict was raised primarily by her mother. The death of Benedict's father greatly influenced her childhood and later her studies, as she became intrigued by the nature of contrasts, which stemmed from the memory of her father's calm face in his casket in contrast to her mother's intense bouts of grief. Benedict was also diagnosed as being partially deaf as a result of a case of the measles when she was a child. However, despite growing up surrounded by her mother's grief over her father's death and with the challenge of being partially deaf, Benedict persevered and received a scholarship to Vassar college to study English literature.

Ruth Benedict, photo credit: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/93/Ruth_Benedict.jpg

With her college degree in English literature, Benedict graduated and began her work as an advocate in the feminist movement. "Believing that 'the feminist movement needs heroines," Benedict began writing a series of three essays titled, 'New Women of Three Centuries' (Parezo 1993, 108). These essays focused on Mary Wollstonecraft, Margaret Fuller, and Olive Schreiner, three women from three different times and places. However, after experiencing the pressures of publishing, Benedict only finished the Wollstonecraft essay, which she submitted to be published

and was rejected. This caused Benedict to lose confidence in her writing, and she put aside her feminist essays to enter the New School for Social Research at 32 years of age. It was at the New School for Social Research where Benedict studied under Alexander Goldenweiser and Elsie Clews Parsons, who gave voice to the contrasts that Benedict had been fascinated by for her entire life, validating "the male-female dichotomy through which Benedict drew her own life" (Gacs et al. 1998, 2). Parsons took note of Benedict's anthropological skills and encouraged her to be an anthropologist, so much so that she took Benedict to Columbia University to be introduced to Franz Boas. Boas accepted Benedict into the anthropology Ph.D. program at Columbia University, and it was through this program that she began her journey as a renowned anthropologist, working with scholars such as Boas, Parsons, Edward Sapir, and later Margaret Mead.

Benedict conducted her own studies on the pueblo natives. Her observations "led [her] to a characterization of the 'placid and harmonious,' cooperative Pueblos Indians" (Gacs, Khan, McIntyre, and Weinberg 1989, 3), a different image than the aggressive, antagonistic natives than her male predecessors painted. Like Stevenson and Parsons, Benedict traveled to the Southwest as an outsider looking in on a society. She studied concrete objects and ceremonies like marriages and hair washing ceremonies, all the while attempting to remain objective in her ethnographic writings. While Benedict was a highly significant contributor to the field of women in anthropology and to challenging conceptions of the "Other," she was working under a patriarchal society, in which women were likely to follow the rules and constraints that had been placed for them by men. For example, she wrote under the pseudonym of Anne Singleton when she wrote sonnets, so that her academic name would not be associated with a more creative, or less serious means of writing. However, despite striving to remain as objective and scientific as

possible, Benedict desired to make her studies accessible to the public, as did Parsons, to challenge how the "Other" was often portrayed and stereotyped.

In 1934, Benedict published *Patterns of Culture*, which "brought together anthropological, poetic, and personal insights of the past ten years and became an American classic" (Gacs et al. 1998, 3). One of Benedict's main goals with works, such as *Patterns of Culture*, was to challenge the perceptions of those beyond other researchers and scholars – she desired to challenge the perceptions of the American public. While many of the ethnographic accounts of native peoples written by scholars who came before her portrayed indigenous peoples with negative descriptors such as uncivilized and barbaric, Benedict's "work as an anthropologist was pedagogical: she taught…the necessity of tolerating individual differences if a society is to survive, the power of culture over nature" (Gacs et al. 1998, 4). To enable her work to contain lessons for the public, Benedict needed it to be accessible to all, not just scholars. In this way, similarly to Parsons, Benedict challenged the scientific nature of anthropological discourse, incorporating lyricism and irony to better convey her messages (Parezo 1993, 108). Through utilizing her skills as a writer to challenge the structure of the anthropological narrative, Benedict followed in the footsteps of her female predecessors, carving out a space for women in the field of anthropology. She created a space where women could pursue both "political and personal endeavors" (Gacs et al. 1998, 5) to challenge the societal constraints that created obstacles to women desiring to gain recognition within the sciences.

Ella Cara Deloria (1888-1971)

Ella Cara Deloria was born in January 1888, two years prior to the Massacre at Wounded Knee during the winter of 1890 (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 246). This event had great influence on Deloria and her work. Leckie and Parezo (2008) discuss how Deloria desired to document the

Dakota culture both before and after the massacre, seeking to understand the emotions and culture of her own people. For this reason, Deloria is an important contribution to this study, as she was one of the first women anthropologists to practice auto-ethnography, meaning she studied her own people and her own culture. More recently, in 2003, Louise Lamphere discussed her personal reassessment of the 'official history' of American Anthropology at the one hundredth meeting of the American Anthropological Association, citing four key innovations that transformed the discipline:

> First, the rise of 'Native ethnography' and the transformation of fieldwork, in particular the objectivist norms at the heart of participant observation; second, the development of 'ethnographic writing' from the 'standard ethnographic present to more dialogical forms'; third the interest in anthropology as a site of cultural critique; and fourth, the emergence of anthropologists as 'public intellectuals' who artfully combine activism with their scholarly work (Lamphere 2003 quoted in Leckie and Parezo 2008, 245-246).

Deloria exhibited all four of these key innovations in her work well before such notions of 'Native ethnography' and 'more dialogical forms of writing' became popularized within the discipline. Deloria was a creative innovator within the field, and she was one of the first anthropologists to recognize the necessity of certain methodological changes, such as the need for reflexivity, in the discipline.

Ella Cara Deloria, photo credit: http://aktalakota.stjo.org/images/content/pagebuilder/Ella_C_Deloria.jpg

Deloria first attended boarding school at the school connected to her father's mission and then continued on to All Saint's Episcopal School in Sioux Falls. From there she entered Oberlin College and then eventually attended Columbia University's Teacher's College. Deloria first met Boas in 1915 at Columbia University. During 1915 Boas was working on translating Lakota stories collected by George Bushotter, and he needed someone who could translate all three dialects of Dakota (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 246). Boas reached out to Deloria for her help with his work, and she worked with him during the spring and summer of 1915 and then again in 1927. Deloria's initial work for Boas was of great importance to her, as "the money she received for her help was her first 'real paycheck'" (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 248).

Deloria then worked with Boas again in 1927 as a result of Boas reaching out to her for her help in collecting more material on the Dakota. This time, her work with Boas launched her career as an anthropologist and with her work on the Dakota. During this period, Deloria received guidance from both Boas and Benedict, yet neither pushed her to pursue her doctorate in anthropology, and she continuously "found it difficult to secure sources of funding to support her independent research" (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 249) despite her connections in the discipline. As will be further discussed, this may have been a result of her questionable objectivity in the field. Despite these setbacks for recognition, Deloria continued her work with the Dakota and "quickly realized that to be an effective recorder of tribal history and culture she had to abandon the objectivist norms guiding participant observation and devise a model of fieldwork that was more culturally appropriate to the social conventions of her community" (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 252). Rather than approaching her research as an outsider looking in, Deloria capitalized on her personal knowledge and insights of her own community, and she used

these insights to develop methodology that she felt would more effectively capture the tribal history and culture.

This form of reflexive methodology was problematic for Deloria's career. While Deloria recognized the value to methodologies such as reflexive anthropology, autoethnography, and to challenging the validity of the need to always remain objective, this approach was not as accepted by Boas and Benedict. Deloria considered her research approach to be known as a "family affair" (Godfrey 1999 quoted in Leckie and Parezo 2008, 252), and she conducted kinship ethnography as an outsider within. While Deloria considered her identity as a Dakota to be an asset, Boas and Benedict questioned the validity of her scientific research, as Deloria rejected the use of impersonal narratives to tell the story of her culture. Utilizing more dialogical forms of writing enabled Deloria to write about the people in her own culture in a way that she felt better captured their histories and identities. For this reason, Deloria proved herself a strong woman anthropologist in that she continued to challenge anthropological conventions, despite receiving disapproval from her two greatest mentors, Boas and Benedict. She desired to portray her culture in a way that she felt best showed the truth, and she chose to sacrifice her own personal progression and recognition within the scientific community to do so.

Margaret Mead (1901-1978)

Margaret Mead was born in 1901 to Edward Sherwood and Emily Fogg Mead. Both parents were intellectuals. Sherwood was an economist at the University of Pennsylvania, and he "believed that intellect was a feminine attribute, and reinforced his daughter's confidence in the practical value of scientific knowledge" (Gacs et al. 1998, 253). Fogg Mead was a political activist, a feminist, and a suffragist who would take young Mead on expeditions for her doctoral dissertation in psychology to study the Italian immigrants of Hammonton, New Jersey. This was

when Mead gained her first insights to the inner workings of fieldwork. Similarly to Parsons, Mead had a privileged upbringing in that she was surrounded by those who encouraged her to pursue an education. This led Mead to receive her bachelor's in psychology from Barnard College in 1923 and then both her master's in psychology in 1924 and her doctorate in anthropology in 1929 from Columbia University. Her path at Columbia University enabled her to meet great anthropological scholars such as Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. Franz Boas' work with cultural relativism greatly influenced her studies, as did Radcliffe-Brown's work with structural functionalism, and Benedict's work with popularizing anthropology for a wider audience. From these mentors, Mead learned to navigate the field of anthropology, developing her topics of interest and starting her own research projects. Some of Mead's primary interests included child development, culture change, and gender roles, as she "was the first anthropologist to study child rearing and women in cross-cultural perspective" (Gacs et al. 1998, 253). Mead was also at the forefront of developing visual and psychological anthropology.

Margaret Mead, photo credit:
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/99/Margaret_Mead_%281901-1978%29.jpg

Throughout the duration of her lengthy anthropological career (1928-1978) Mead refused to let her gender hinder her work and recognition as a researcher. Instead, she "turned her gender to her professional advantage" (Gacs et al. 1998, 253). Like with the women anthropologists who came before her, she desired to make her work accessible to an audience beyond the educated elite. Her goals to alter the anthropological narrative reflect similar motives to those of Parsons. Mead was a feminist and a political activist. She sought to challenge notions of biological determinism and racism that permeated the scientific community. As Janiewski and Banner (2004) assert in, *Reading Benedict, Reading Mead: Feminism, Race, and Imperial Visions*, "Mead's work helped overthrow" the notion that Anglo American's were a superior race, which was a concept that formed the foundation for evolutionary racism (53). Mead also used her studies as commentaries on the ways women were treated within American society. Through research that sought to identify that the differences between males and females were societally constructed rather than biologically determined, she worked to inspire critiques of the woman's place within society. She desired to "foster a liberal feminist critique of American society which attacked patriarchy for placing restrictions on women's expression of sexuality and conceptualized a free society as permitting women's choice in how they lived their sexual lives" (Janiewski and Banner 2004, 57-58).

As did Parsons and Benedict, Mead utilized the anthropological narrative for both her political and personal endeavors, seeking to inspire societal change within America. She took influence from great anthropologists such as Boas, Radcliffe-Brown, and Benedict to develop an anthropological discourse that was unique to her interests and overall goals. As a woman anthropologist, Mead used her work to inspire thought and discourse surrounding the current workings, and the future, of society.

Marianne Stoller (1929-2015)

Marianne Stoller was a more contemporary anthropologist than the women previously discussed. Based on information from the Marianne Stoller Collection in Colorado College's Special Collections, Stoller was born in 1929. She lived into the twenty-first century, conducting the majority of her anthropological work during the 1980's and 1990's. During this time she worked as a professor at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and she also directed Colorado College's Southwest Studies summer institutes. At the start of her journey in the world of academia Stoller initially obtained her bachelor's degree in art from Adams State College. She then continued on to receive her master's degree in anthropology from Denver University. As a Fulbright scholar, Stoller studied in New Zealand, the Fiji Islands, and Tahiti. During these studies, she developed her interests in ethnography. This interest ultimately led her to obtaining her doctorate in ethnohistory from the University of Pennsylvania in 1979. Stoller spent most of her career as an anthropologist in Colorado, with her primary region of study being the Southwest.

Marianne Stoller, photo credit: https://www.coloradocollege.edu/contentAsset/image/42db3983-2df8-4534-b4d8-a9a2530abb42/fileAsset/filter/Resize/resize_w/700&filetype=.jpg

As an anthropologist in the 1980's and 1990's Stoller, while similar to Parsons and Benedict in that she practiced participant observation, also developed research on the practice of

cross-cultural anthropology.[3] Stoller studied various cultures from the Southwest region in comparison to one another in an attempt to understand how diffusion may have occurred between cultures. Diffusion, a term also developed by Franz Boas (1937), is a form of culture change that accounts for the borrowing of cultural traits from other cultures. Stoller was more contemporary than Parsons and Benedict in that she used this cross-cultural anthropological approach to account for much of the cultural borrowing that has occurred in the Southwest. She conducted an ethnohistory of the Southwest to analyze the ethnographic history of the region and utilized cross cultural analysis to analyze how cultures impacted one another. Therefore, Stoller also shared similarities with Parsons and Benedict in that she utilized historical particularism to look at each culture's history individually before analyzing the cultures in comparison to one another.[4]

Stoller demonstrates a leap in women's progress in the anthropological field in that she became distinguished for work that differed from previously accepted anthropological conventions. She married a love of history and anthropology to conduct ethnographies on the history of the Southwest, and she developed a cross-cultural anthropological approach that differed from that of her anthropological predecessors. Stoller was a woman anthropologist who became distinguished in the discipline, while also bringing her own unique contributions to field.

Ruth Behar (1956-)

Ruth Behar demonstrates herself to be the culmination of female innovation to the field of anthropology in that she builds upon the work of her female predecessors by incorporating her own emotions and experiences as lenses through which to better aid her analysis. Behar

---

[3] This information was determined from research on the Marianne Stoller Collection, Colorado College Special Collections.
[4] Marianne Stoller Collection, Colorado College Special Collections.

exemplifies the creativity of what women anthropologists have brought to the field of anthropology. When she was four years old her family left Cuba for the United States of America. This was following Fidel Castro's rise to power in 1959, and Behar's family, like many other families fleeing to the U.S. from Cuba, came to Cuba to escape the communist regime in hopes of finding better lives and futures for their children. Her family history resulted in what Behar calls, her search for home and for her identity, as she came to America as a young Jewish Cuban American. Much of Behar's work is about trying to understand her own identity in a place (the U.S.) that she has never truly felt is hers. She has always been torn between her Jewish heritage and her American upbringing, struggling to understand where she comes from and who she is.

Ruth Behar, photo credit: http://www.bechollashon.org/speakers/images/Ruth-Behar-2012.jpg

Because of her interest in her own culture and heritage, Behar is drawn to the role that culture plays in shaping one's identity. She is also interested in what one's culture says about one's home. This intense curiosity led her to her passion for cultural anthropology, in which Behar has become highly distinguished. Behar is "known for her humanistic approach to understanding identity, immigration, and the search for home in our global era" (Behar 2015). One of her most notable accomplishments is that she has received the MacArthur "Genius"

Award for her originality and creativity in her research approaches, which is exemplified in the way that she conducts her ethnographic studies. Demonstrated through the books that she has written over the course of her career, Behar has become a prolific contributor to the field of humanistic anthropology. Behar has conducted numerous ethnographic studies, all of which demonstrate her emphasis on incorporating emotions and subjectivity into her field of study. *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart* (Behar 1996) will be further explored to contextualize Behar's contributions to anthropology.

The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart (Behar 1996) demonstrates Behar's belief in the importance of utilizing one's personal emotions and experiences as a means of contextualizing her subject of research. In the book, Behar (1996) discusses the process of relating herself and her own personal experiences to her research. For example, in the second chapter, "Death and Memory," Behar (1996) discusses the time when she was returning to Santa María to conduct a follow-up study on death and to see the residents of the village, as many of them had grown elderly and were passing away. This was occurring at the same time that her grandfather was ill, and he ended up passing away while she was in Spain. She discusses the emotional toll that this took on her and her work, and relates it to the losses of the villagers to better enable her to empathize with her subjects. This technique is part of her method of vulnerable observation, or enabling herself to be subjective to her study rather than objective.

Vulnerable observation as a method of study demonstrates Behar's view that human agency is the result of emotional experiences and that to understand oneself and others, one must first understand how the past has contributed to one's present. In the fourth chapter, *The Girl in the Cast*, Behar (1996) discusses how she never fully understood the impact that a childhood

accident had on her until she began to experience anxiety and physical depression in her mid-thirties. She had to stop her life and try to make sense of her past before she could begin the healing process and understand her own true identity.

For Behar, subjectivity is fundamental to her research. She believes that one must be a *vulnerable* observer rather than merely a *participant* observer. One must let themselves be moved by a culture, must let themselves connect emotionally, and relate one's own experiences to what they are witnessing if they are going to gain a comprehensive understanding of that culture. This methodology is drastically different from the previously accepted paradigm of the need for objectivity when researching and, in this way, Behar is similar to her predecessor, Deloria. Both women pushed the boundaries of conventional anthropology to explore other ways to tell the truth when studying one's own culture.

Discussion

Having analyzed both the history of cultural theory and the biographies of select women anthropologists in the field, certain patterns emerge demonstrating consistent ways in which women have contributed to shaping the field of cultural anthropology. Challenging the parameters of the qualifications for scientific development, women anthropologists learned from their male predecessors and then developed their learnings into new perspectives on doing anthropology. This required innovation, creativity, dedication and, most importantly, courage to challenge what is classified as scientific truth. While Stevenson, Parsons, Benedict, Deloria, Mead, Stoller, and Behar all vary greatly in exactly how they 'do anthropology', they share the similarity of being contributors to the field of cultural anthropology who changed the discipline in some form or another.

After conducting a study on the history of cultural theory in conjunction with analyzing these women's contributions to the field of cultural anthropology there are four patterns that reflect the contributions that many of these women have shared. The first is that the emergence of these women into the field instigated increasingly numerous and vast studies on women and children, while also working to expand the subjects that women were able to study. Prior to women becoming anthropologists, women and children were considered of lesser importance to anthropological studies and were less studied by male anthropological researchers. Women, such as Stevenson, worked to validate the study of women and children, using her studies as gateways to obtain access to studying other subjects. As a result of such efforts, women like Stoller were able to study beyond the subjects of women and children, successfully conducting cross-cultural studies on personal topics of interest. The second way that many of these women have contributed to cultural anthropology is that they have sought to rework the anthropological narrative. Many women, especially Parsons, Benedict, and Mead, desired to make their scientific reports readable to a more general audience, not just other scholars. In this way, they demonstrated the success that women found for themselves in the sciences, serving as an inspiration to other women to obtain an education.

The third, and perhaps most drastic, change that women have brought about in cultural anthropology is the idea that it is valid and necessary at times to challenge the notion of objectivity when seeking out the truth. Women such as Deloria and Behar demonstrated this concept, challenging the ways in which anthropological knowledge is created and advocating for the validity and utility of allowing subjectivity to influence one's studies. Finally, the fourth contribution that these women anthropologists have made to cultural anthropology follows in the footsteps of the third. This is the idea of incorporating emotion within cultural anthropology

studies. Women anthropologists, such as Behar, have realized that to thoroughly study the emotions and cultures of human subjects, a great deal of emotion is also needed on the part of the researcher to better enable one to understand their subjects of study. Each of these contributions have been groundbreaking in that they have challenged the foundation of cultural anthropology that was laid by their male predecessors, as each woman has successfully paved her own pathway by navigating the obstacles of gender discrimination in the workplace and in society to create change. This discussion will now further analyze each of these contributions to anthropology, identifying the different ways that these women contributed to these changes.

While some of the first women to enter the field, such as Stevenson, gained recognition for their studies on women and children, women anthropologists often had little choice over their subjects of study. Men in the field, such as John Wesley Powell and Edward B. Tylor, felt that women were necessary assets to fieldwork in anthropology because they studied women and children from a perspective that men never could. While this sentiment is accurate in the sense that women can lend alternative perspectives to fieldwork in these topics to those of men, this also meant that men held jurisdiction over what women could and could not study while conducting fieldwork. For this reason, the fact that women anthropologists studied women and children is not the most notable part of their contributions to anthropology, but rather it is most notable how they used these studies to create pathways for future women to broaden their topics of study.

Women, such as Stevenson, used their studies on women and children to develop their skills in ethnography and gain their footing in the scientific discipline of anthropology. This also led to the exploration of other interests within anthropology and the study of culture. While conducting fieldwork at the Zuni Pueblo, Stevenson developed an interest in religion and desired

to utilize her subjects of women and children to aid her in further enhancing her studies in this area. According to Gacs et al. (1998), Stevenson's monograph "on Zuñi children (1887) is primarily a work on the ceremonies that accompany childhood" (339). Stevenson would therefore implement creativity with the confining subjects of study that were prescribed to her due to her role as a woman, and she would utilize women and children as a lens through which to study what interested her most – religion. Other women, such as Benedict and Mead studied women and children as lenses through which to look at culture and personality, which Mead later developed into the subfield of psychological anthropology. This innovation within anthropology served to benefit the women in that they were studying subjects they could relate to, they were gaining recognition in the field, and they were developing means through which they, as well as future women in anthropology, could expand their scopes of study to encompass their greater interests.

In this way women in anthropology took an initially male directed obstacle that could have potentially limited their areas of study, and they used their gender to their advantage to create insightful means of utilizing the roles of women and children to gain access to other areas of interest. Parsons utilized her feminist interests to influence her work as a sociologist and anthropologist and Deloria analyzed the roles of women and children in her own culture to conduct autoethnography. Due to such work, more recent women anthropologists have been able to expand beyond the confining notion that women anthropologists must study women and children and have conducted studies in countless topics of interest. Stoller studied cross-cultural anthropology, maintaining interests ranging from diffusion to water rights. As an anthropologist working in the Southwest region, Stoller used her ethnographic skills to aid her in court cases

over water rights between indigenous peoples and farmers.[5] During these cases she helped indigenous peoples win back their rights to the water that was rightfully theirs. Stoller exemplifies how women anthropologists have used their work in a multitude of subjects to conduct anthropology with the goal of helping others, demonstrating how women pushed beyond the confines that were set for them by their male predecessors and colleagues. Through working their way into the anthropological field by studying subjects who had previously been less studied, women in anthropology shed light on those who had previously been kept in the dark. They then used their recognition and growing credibility to build a future for the women following in their footsteps, expanding the horizon of what women's subjects of study, opening doors that had never been opened to women in the scientific community before.

Building on the momentum that women in academia were creating for women who followed in their footsteps, women in anthropology also utilized their roles as scholars and researchers to rework the notion of what the cultural anthropological narrative must look like. Prior to women entering the field, the audience for scientific writing was solely other researchers and scholars. Women anthropologists, such as Parsons, Benedict, and Mead, desired to challenge the image of the anthropological audience.

This desire was instigated by reflection on the role of women within greater society. Many women in anthropology desired to expand the audience that their work reached, aiming to target other women both in and outside of the academic realm. Through changing the language of anthropology, women anthropologists realized that they could use their scientific studies to model to other women the importance of receiving an education. In a way, women in anthropology were saying, 'If I can do it, then you can do it too,' to all the women who never

[5] Marianne Stoller Collection, Colorado College Special Collections.

expected their place in life to leave the confines of the household. This is when women in anthropology realized the power of the language they chose to convey their studies, and women recognized that a hidden political platform could be integrated within their scientific work, through which they could convey commentaries on women's places within society.

Not only did women in anthropology feel a responsibility to contribute to the scientific community, but they also felt a responsibility to other women in society. Women, such as Mead, "recognized instantly that her audience extended far beyond the elite worlds of the university and museum, and she cultivated her public by publishing hundreds of articles on domestic issues and international politics" (Janiewski and Banner 2004, 51). Through discovering an outlet for this political commentary, women in anthropology recognized that their work as scholars provided them a means of participating in society on a larger scale. This was groundbreaking for women, in that women were finding ways to voice their political commentary through published works that were being written in a way that was accessible for all audiences. Anthropology gave women voices, voices that they had never previously had. Not only were they given voices, but their voices were respected and heard due to the quality of their contributions to the scientific community on subjects of study that had been lesser studied in the past.

As with expanding their subjects of study beyond women and children, women in anthropology were expanding their voices beyond the academic world. Through making their writing more personal and relatable, these women were finding ways to be heard by audiences who had never previously found the work of academics to be accessible. This more personal means of connecting with audiences then enabled for the challenging of objectivity within cultural anthropology as well as for the challenging of the absence of emotion within the discipline.

Through working to make cultural anthropology studies more personal and more accessible, women in anthropology began to challenge the premise that objectivity was a necessary part of finding scientific truth. Deloria was one of the first women to question this notion, as Boas had tasked her with conducting an autoethnography of her own people and culture, the Dakota. Rather than choosing to detach herself from her identity as a Dakota woman to conduct her studies, Deloria decided to utilize her identity, both as a woman and as a Dakota, as a tool through which to better understand the cultural identity of her own people. This was a decision that was questioned by both Boas and Benedict, and it likely played a role in hindering her from obtaining her doctorate degree (Leckie and Parezo 2008). However, despite receiving backlash over her lack of objectivity within her work, Deloria insisted that it better enabled her to tell the truth of her people "by adopting a stance as a Native 'insider'" (Leckie and Parezo 2008, 381). Not only did Deloria feel that she could better study the Dakota by utilizing her own identity as an asset, but she also used her identity to enable her to perceive her subjects of study as her equals rather than as less educated people who she, the educated anthropologist, observed.

Behar, like Deloria, also advocates for the necessity of leaning into subjectivity when conducting ethnographies rather than of striving for objectivity. As Behar feels that she has a responsibility to herself to understand how each part of her life contributes to who she is as a person, she has incorporated various elements, such as her Jewish Cuban American upbringing into her work as an anthropologist (Behar 2017). Because Behar reflects on how her own personal experiences have contributed to making her the woman that she is today, it feels natural that Behar would use such self-reflection in her work as an anthropologist. By reflecting on her life experiences and how they have altered how she acts on a daily basis, Behar is able to create a wealth of lenses through which to analyze her research. Her subjectivity while in the research

field is the key to Behar's ability to find insights into a culture that may previously have been difficult to uncover as an objective observer. Objectivity disables the ethnographer from relating to their research, which inhibits personal insight from being drawn from the ethnography. Behar, on the other hand, purposefully relates to her research so as to draw conclusions about her reactions and what these reactions mean in regard to her observations. These personal conclusions that she draws enable her to have a better personal understanding of a culture and the emotions that coincide with it.

Women, such as Deloria and Behar, demonstrate that objectivity is not the only valid means of finding anthropological truth. In many ways, subjectivity can be an asset to an area of study, particularly when conducting autoethnographies or reflexive anthropology. This then leads to the final way these women shaped the field of cultural anthropology. Women, such as Deloria and Behar, shared the similarity of advocating for the allowance for emotion within a scientific field of study.

Each of the previous three contributions have culminated in this final element. The study of women and children by women in the discipline, the use of more narrative writing styles to reach wider audiences, and the challenging of the utility of objectivity in all studies have contributed to the emergence of emotion as a valid part of ethnographic research in cultural anthropology. Allowing for the emotions of the researcher to be present in an anthropological study was a leap within anthropology that could only take places after the necessity of objectivity had been questioned. Today, many anthropologists utilize their own emotions as lenses through which to analyze their observations, acknowledging their own personal biases and using their biases as assets rather than hindrances to the research process.

Perhaps one of the most prolific examples of advocating for the role of emotion within anthropology is Behar. Behar's sentimental and humanistic methodology is a novel approach in the field of cultural anthropology. Her work is so original that Behar received the MacArthur "Genius" Award (Behar 2015) for her creative approach to research. The reason that Behar's work is so revolutionary to how anthropologists view research and ethnography is that she is one of the first anthropologists to question the role that emotions play in the understanding of culture. Behar is not intimidated by the previously accepted role of the ethnographer as an outsider attempting to research the world of insiders because she embraces emotions as being shared commonalities that she can find with any subject that she is studying. By finding these shared emotions, most commonly of loss, mourning, and the sense of home, Behar enables herself to make personal connections as an ethnographer (Behar 2015). These connections are what permit her to successfully utilize self-reflection and subjectivity in her research. She allows herself to be relatable and vulnerable to the topic. By permitting herself to be subjective in her research methods, Behar is able to relate to her research in a way that aids her in drawing conclusions about human nature from her personal experiences. This greatly contrasts with previously accepted anthropological methods of requiring the anthropologist to take an objective outsider perspective on other cultures, but rather Behar studies other humans from the perspective that she is also human herself.

Each of these contributions to anthropology were groundbreaking in their own ways, and each provided opportunities for future women in anthropology to make further contributions to the discipline. These women demonstrated resiliency and courage in both their professional and personal lives, carefully balancing pressures from the academic world and the social world, pressures that their male predecessors and colleagues were never burdened with. While having to

overcome obstacles in the professional world in order to become recognized and to gain respect, these women were also advocates for women in society. They are women, anthropologists, scholars, researchers, mothers, daughters, wives, and advocates. They are role models to be remembered.

Conclusion

Anthropology began as a male dominated field. This imbalance of men to women in academia was the result of a patriarchal society and the societal rules set in place for women by men. Over the course of the twentieth century the numbers of women anthropologists began to rise. According to a report conducted by the American Anthropological Association in 2017 titled, "Trends in Anthropology Bachelor's Degrees; A Review of Federal Data," "since 2003, 70% of anthropology graduates have been women" (1), and "anthropology has a higher proportion of women than most other social science fields" (8). Co-occurring with this rise of women anthropologists, a shift in cultural anthropology methodologies occurred as women brought their unique contributions and perspectives as women to a previously male dominated field. Having been governed by notions, such as the need for objectivity, positivist approaches, and a focus on structures and patterns, cultural anthropology was scientific in that it searched for a beginning and an end, attempting to categorize cultures with few accounts of emotions. Additionally, women and children had received less attention in anthropological studies than men, and it was not until 1884 that Tylor was the first to acknowledge the necessity of women to the field.

Women anthropologists, such as Stevenson, Parsons, Benedict, Mead, and Stoller, were strong contributors to the field in that they advocated for the study of women and children, they pushed to expand women anthropologists' areas of study beyond these spheres, and they

identified language as a tool through which to alter the audience of their scientific studies. Then there are women, such as Deloria and Behar, who explored beyond the paradigm of objectivity to find ways to incorporate subjectivity and emotion into their studies, utilizing these tools to better help them tell the truths of their own cultures and peoples. Deloria challenged Boas and Benedict, who both felt that Deloria was not being objective enough in her research, by allowing her identity as a Dakota woman to serve as an asset to her autoethnographical research. This inspired a new kind of ethnography to emerge, one in which the role of the "Other" was questioned with a desire to demystify the authority of the ethnographer. This is where Behar enters the picture, revolutionizing the field of humanistic anthropology, practicing self-reflexivity, and incorporating her own emotional journey into her studies.

These women exemplify how women anthropologists broke the molds set for them, achieving their own forms of ethnographic methodology and utilizing their roles as women scholars to advocate for women within society. By forging their ways through the obstacles set for them due to their gender, these women became role models and advocates for those in society whose voices did not carry as much weight. There is no denying that these women have been innovators in anthropology, demonstrating courage and resiliency throughout their careers.

While this study identifies common patterns and ways in which these women anthropologists shaped the field of cultural anthropology, the limitations of this study should be noted. The first limitation is that many of the sources used to compile the research that formed the foundation of this study were written by women. As such, the contributions of the women anthropologists discussed here may have been viewed from differing perspectives had they been written about by men. While this may prove to be a benefit to this study in that women anthropologists may be more likely to highlight the achievements of their women predecessors, it

also results in a lack of perspective diversity. Additionally, a second limitation is that my personal experiences, as a woman anthropologist, are likely to further contribute to this lack of perspective diversity. A third limitation is that this study is being written many years after the majority of the women analyzed here were conducting their ethnographies. Therefore, many of the sources utilized to conduct this study are dated. To overcome this limitation, more recent analytical and comparative sources, focused on the contributions of these women anthropologists, were used in conjunction with the women's ethnographic works. Finally, a fourth limitation is that this study primarily analyzed women's works for the presence of emotion and subjectivity as they coincided with the emergence of women to the field of cultural anthropology. It is possible that there are male anthropologists who also contributed to such a paradigmatic shift in anthropology. However, because the growing acceptance of emotion and subjectivity within ethnographic methodology coincides with the growth of women in the field, women's works were analyzed to identify a possible explanation for this shift.

The contributions of women anthropologists for their effects on shaping the field of cultural anthropology through encouraging the validity of humanization, subjectivity, and emotion previously presented a gap in anthropological research. Through tracing the history of cultural theory and the ways in which the contributions of Stevenson, Parsons, Benedict, Deloria, Mead, Stoller, and Behar became a part of this history through challenging the paradigms created by their male predecessors, common patterns emerge that identify the ways in which these women shaped the field. Through pushing beyond subscribed subjects of study within women's spheres, reworking the anthropological narrative, challenging the notion of objectivity as a necessary ethnographical component, and advocating for the utility of emotion within cultural

anthropology, these women reworked the paradigms within cultural anthropology to reflect the notions that are valued in the field in present day.

References Cited

American Anthropological Association. 2017. *Trends in anthropology bachelor's degrees; a review of federal data*. American Anthropological Association.
Babcock, Barbara A., and Nancy J. Parezo. 1988. *Daughters of the desert; women anthropologists and the Native American Southwest 1880-1980*. New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press.
Behar, Ruth. 1996. *The vulnerable observer: anthropology that breaks your heart*. Boston: Beacon Press.
Boas, Franz. 1937. The diffusion of cultural traits. *Social Research.* 4(3):286-295.
———. 1920. The methods of ethnology. *American Anthropological Association*. 22(4):311-321, doi: 10.1525/aa.1920.22.4.02a00020.
Cattell, Maria G., and Marjorie M. Schweitzer. 2006. *Women in anthropology: autobiographical narratives and social history.* Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
Coxe Stevenson, Matilda. Letter to John Wesley Powell. May 23, 1900.
Comte, Auguste, and John Henry Bridges. 1865. *A general view of Positivism*. London: Trubner and Co.
Davies, Charlotte A. 2008. *Reflexive ethnography: a guide to researching selves and others*. New York: Routledge.
Gacs, Ute, Aisha Khan, Jerrie McIntyre, and Ruth Weinberg, eds. 1998. *Women anthropologists: a biographical dictionary*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
———. 1989. *Women anthropologists: selected biographies.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
Gleach, Frederic. 2013. Oxford Bibliographies. *Humanistic anthropology*. http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-0101.xml.
Golde, Peggy, ed. 1970. *Women in the field: anthropological experiences*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.
Harris, Marvin. 1968 (Reissued 2001). *The rise of anthropological theory: a history of theories of culture*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company.
Janiewski, Dolores and Lois W. Banner, eds. 2004. *Reading Benedict reading Mead: feminism, race, and imperial visions*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
Jenkins, Richard. 1992. *Key sociologists: Pierre Bourdieu*. Routledge Press: London.
Leckie, Shirley A., and Nancy J. Parezo. 2008. *Their own frontier: women intellectuals re-visioning the American West*. Nebraska. Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska.
Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1922. *Argonauts of the western Pacific; an account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. London: G. Routledge & Sons.
Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4):370-396.
Moberg, Mark. 2013. *Engaging anthropological theory: a social and political history*. New York: Routledge.
Parezo, Nancy J, ed. 1993. *Hidden scholars: women anthropologists and the Native American Southwest*. New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press.
Popper, Karl. 2005 (1959). *The logic of scientific discovery*. Routledge Classics, trans. Routledge.

Reed-Danahay. 2017. Oxford Bibliographies. *Autoethnography.* http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-0162.xml.
Ruth Behar. 2015. About Ruth. http://www.ruthbehar.com/AboutRuth.htm.[6]
———. 2017. About my life and work. http://www.ruthbehar.com/bio/.
Scott, James C. 1990. *Domination and the arts of resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Tyrwhitt, Jaqueline, Athenaiko Kentro Oikistikes, and Doxiadis Associates. 1993. *Ekistics*, vol. 60. Tyrwhitt.
Tylor, Edward B. 1884. How the problems of American anthropology present themselves to the English mind. *Science*. 4:545-551.
United States Government Printing Office. *Congressional Serial Set*. 1902. Boston: United States Government Printing Office.

[6] This reference dates to Behar's personal website from 2015, ruthbehar.com/AboutRuth.htm. The information cited from this source is no longer available, as the website has been updated since the information from this source was retrieved in 2015. The current 2017 version of this page is cited in the following reference from ruthbehar.com/bio/.