History of Cultural Anthropology

Western Science
- 1500 Europe in isolation
- Supernatural explanations explained everything
- Exploration of world caused questions
- Museums
- Interest in biology and earth sciences

19th Century Figures
- Charles Darwin
  - Natural Selection
- Charles Lyell
  - Uniformitarianism
Lewis Henry Morgan 1818-1881

- A 19th century scholar who developed the evolutionary approach
- Pioneered the comparative study of culture

Sir Edward B. Tylor 1832-1917

- Provided a classic definition of culture that is still valid
- Key theorist in the anthropology of religion

Unilinear Evolution
Herbert Spencer 1820-1903
- Survival of the fittest
- Social Darwinism

Franz Boas 1848-1952
- Set high standard for excellence in fieldwork
- Developed the idea of cultural relativity
- Discredited then-dominant theories of racial superiority

A.R. Radcliff-Brown 1881-1955
Developed the structural-functional approach to look at how each aspect of society contributes to the maintenance of the whole
Bronislaw Malinowski 1884-1942

- Outlined the biological and psychological needs of people fulfilled by culture
- Pioneered the participant observation method

Ruth Fulton Benedict 1887-1948

- Wrote “Patterns of Culture”
- Viewed cultures as coherent patterns
Margaret Mead 1901-1978

• A “founding mother” of anthropology
• Pioneered the cross-cultural study of personality

Ralph Linton, 1893–1953

• Insights into process of acculturation
• Influenced development of the culture-and-personality school of anthropology
• Introduced terms “status” and “role”
• The Tree of Culture (1955)

Claude Levi-Strauss 1908-

Established structuralism, which considers the underlying mental structures that culture represents
Julian H. Steward 1902-1972

Founder of the cultural ecology approach that focuses on the interactions of cultures with their environments.

Leslie White 1900-1975

Developed the cultural materialist approach with focus on how the techno-economic aspects of culture determine the social and ideological spheres.

George Murdoch 1897-1985

- Empiricist
- Came up 70 or so "cultural universals"