



# Engaging Anthropological Theory: A Social and Political History

By Mark Moberg

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This lively book offers a fresh look at the history of anthropological theory. Covering key concepts and theorists, Mark Moberg examines the historical context of anthropological ideas and the contested nature of anthropology itself. Anthropological ideas regarding human diversity have always been rooted in the socio-political conditions in which they arose and exploring them in context helps students understand how and why they evolved, and how theory relates to life and society. Illustrated throughout, this engaging text moves away from the dry recitation of past viewpoints in anthropology and brings the subject matter to life.

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## Engaging Anthropological Theory: A Social and Political History By Mark Moberg Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #260944 in Books
- Brand: Routledge
- Published on: 2012-09-30
- Released on: 2012-08-07
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.21" h x .85" w x 6.14" l, 1.25 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 376 pages



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#### Review

**"Moberg does a masterful job of weaving together historical context, anthropological theory, and present-day issues and sensibilities. Rather than standing at a critical distance and taking potshots at our disciplinary ancestors, Moberg shows students clearly how anthropology's ideas and theoretical stances have arisen out of, and made sense within, their historical and geographical contexts. His style is engaging, readable, and often laugh-out-loud funny. How often can one say that about a theory textbook?"** - Julie Adkins, *University of Texas at Arlington, USA*

"While other textbooks on anthropological theory give token accounts of the socio-political influences and historical contexts that produced 'ruling ideas' on the nature of society and the origins of cultural diversity, these processes are the central focus of Moberg's unique analysis. Moving beyond biographical sketches and historical vignettes, the book is a lively exploration of how 'paradigms and politics' of the past and present inform anthropological thought." - William L. Alexander, *University of North Carolina Wilmington, USA*

**"From the beginning of *Engaging Anthropological Theory*, Moberg directly addresses an audience of freshman students in a motivating way, conveying a strong sense of identification with the discipline...The whole book brings the history of anthropological thought to life. It becomes clear from the very first page that this is not a typical theory textbook, as each chapter is peppered with the author's personal anecdotes and experiences."** - David Parduhn, *University of Hamburg, Germany*

#### About the Author

**Mark Moberg** is Professor of Anthropology at the University of South Alabama, USA, and has many years' experience of teaching anthropological theory. His books include *Slipping Away: Banana Politics and Fair Trade in the Eastern Caribbean* (Berghahn 2008).

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