

Pro-science vs anti-science debates

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Recent attacks on "grievance" studies have occasioned renewed attention to the politics of knowledge in the academy. In a wide-ranging survey, Mark Horowitz, William Yaworsky and Kenneth Kickham revisit some of anthropology's most sensitive controversies. Taking the field's temperature since the sweltry "science wars" of the nineties, Horowitz and colleagues probe whether anthropology is still a house divided on questions of truth, justice and the American Anthropological Association.

- Is science just one way of knowing, no more valid than other approaches to [knowledge](#)?
- Were prehistoric societies generally more peaceful and promiscuous?
- Is there any validity to ethnic group differences in intelligence?
- Was Margaret Mead duped by her Samoan informants?
- Did Napoleon Chagnon harm the Yanomami?

In the latest issue of *Current Anthropology*, Horowitz and colleagues discover rich patterns in the data. Disciplinary subfield, gender and, notably, [political orientation](#) are all significant predictors of anthropologists' views. That is, knowing an anthropologist's politics tells a lot about where they stand on such matters.

The authors draw tentatively from the psychologist Jonathan Haidt's 'social intuitionism' to interpret the results. They hope that better appreciating the role of shared moral intuitions in knowledge construction may aid scholars in coming to consensus on even their most

contentious controversies.

More information: Mark Horowitz et al, Anthropology's Science Wars, *Current Anthropology* (2019). [DOI: 10.1086/705409](https://doi.org/10.1086/705409)

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