

Landmark Studies in Behavioral Sciences

Often-Cited Studies in Anthropology

Anthropology is a wide-reaching, holistic discipline focused on society and how humans adapt to their social and physical environments, emphasizing culture and evolution. Along with archaeology, subareas of study include the following descriptors for anthropology: cultural, linguistic, biological, medical, political, forensic, and sociocultural. *Applied anthropology* refers to the use of anthropological knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems. Just as the study of anthropology is wide-reaching, so are its applications, be it to business, human rights, education, environmental issues, health and medicine, and so on. Thus, it can be difficult to reduce the history and current state of humanity down to a smaller list of *landmark* studies per se. So instead, this page dips a toe into this vast field, highlighting some of the recent most-cited studies from major anthropology journals.

Economics & Human Biology (primarily open access with a few abstract-only files)

- Jutta Viinikainen, et al, [Does better education mitigate risky health behavior?](#), Aug 2022.
- Arianda Garcia-Prado, [Lockdown strictness and mental health effects among older populations in Europe](#), Apr 2022.
- Lucia Mangiavacchi, [Fathers matter](#), Aug 2021.
- Kien Le and My Nguyen, [The psychological burden of the COVID-19 pandemic severity](#), May 2021.
- Lauren Hoehn-Velasco, et al, [The great crime recovery](#), May 2021.
- David Blanchflower and Alex Bryson, [Unemployment and sleep](#), Dec 2021.
- Lisa Cameron, et al, [Childhood stunting and cognitive effects of water and sanitation in Indonesia](#), Jan 2021.
- Nina Boberg-Fazlic, et al, [Disease and fertility](#), Dec 2021.

Journal of Human Evolution (primarily abstract-only files with one full access file)

- Meir Orbach and Reuven Yeshurun, [The hunters or the hunted](#), Nov 2021.
- Eleanor Scerri and Manuel Will, [The revolution that still isn't](#), June 2023.
- Amos Frumkin and Orr Comay, [The last glacial cycle of the southern Levant](#), Nov 2021.
- Kathleen Human, et al, [A new absolute date from Swartkrans Cave for the oldest occurrences of *Paranthropus robustus* and Oldowan stone tools in South Africa](#), July 2021.
- Kelsey Pugh, [Phylogenetic analysis of Middle-Late Miocene apes](#), Apr 2022.
- Reuven Yeshurun, et al, [Early Upper Paleolithic subsistence in the Levant](#), Nov 2021.
- Rachel Lupien et al, [Eastern African environmental variation and its role in the evolution and cultural change of *Homo* over the last 1 million years](#), Aug 2021.
- Nick Ashton and Rob Davis, [Cultural mosaics, social structure, and identity](#), July 2021.

American Journal of Human Biology (not open access, requiring pay after first page or log in through your institution)

- Clarence Gravlee, [Systemic racism, chronic health inequities, and COVID-19](#), Aug 2020.
- Reynaldo Martorell, [Improved nutrition in the first 1000 days and adult human capital and health](#), Jan 2017.
- Johan Eriksson, Eero Kajantie, et al, [Boys live dangerously in the womb](#), Apr 2010.
- Christopher Kuzawa and Elizabeth Sweet, [Epigenetics and the embodiment of race](#), Oct 2008.
- Peter Gluckman, Mark Hanson, et al, [Early life events and their consequences for later disease](#), Dec 2006.

Often-Cited Studies in Criminology

Whereas criminal justice focuses on the systems that investigate, prosecute, punish, and rehabilitate criminals, criminology is the study of crime and criminal behavior, including how society reacts to crime. Closely related to psychology and sociology, criminology is an area of scientific research examining crime as a social phenomenon. Research can occur from many standpoints, including legal, political, biological, and forensic. The following list shares major studies published by [most-cited scholars in criminology journals](#).

1. **Robert Sampson and John Laub:** RJ Sampson and JH Laub, [Crime in the making](#), Crime & Delinquency, 1993.
RJ Sampson, et al, [Neighborhoods and violent crime](#), Science, 1997.

2. **David Farrington and Alex Piquero:** AR Piquero, DP Farrington, et al, [The Criminal Career Paradigm](#), Crime and Justice, 2003.
AR Piquero and SA Tibbetts, [Specifying the direct and indirect effects of low self-control and situational factors in decision-making](#), Justice Quarterly, 1996.
DP Farrington, [Developmental and life-course criminology](#), Criminology, 2003.
3. **Terrie Moffitt:** TE Moffitt, [Adolescence-limited and life-course-persistent antisocial behaviour](#), Psychological Review, 1993.
TE Moffitt, et al, [Sex differences in antisocial behaviour](#), Cambridge University Press, 2001.
4. **Francis Cullen and TC Pratt:** TC Pratt and FT Cullen, [the empirical status of Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime](#), Criminology, 2000.
TC Pratt and FT Cullen, [Assessing macro-level predictors and theories of crime](#), Crime and Justice, 2005.
5. **Daniel Nagin:** DS Nagin and KC Land, [Age, criminal careers, and population heterogeneity](#), Criminology, 1993.
DS Nagin and R Paternoster, [Enduring individual differences and rational choice theories of crime](#), Law and Society Review, 1993.

Landmark Studies in Economics

Research in the Last Decade from Nobel Laureates

Economics sciences is one of the six categories recognized by the Nobel Foundation, recognizing remarkable contributions made by specific researchers, sometimes over the course of decades. The links below summarize this research, explaining key concepts for general audiences and providing links to more advanced information and researchers' original publications.

- 2023 for [advancing our understanding of women's labour market outcomes](#)
- 2022 for [research on banks and financial crises](#)
- 2021 for [empirical contributions to labour economics](#) and [methodical contributions to the analysis of causal relationships](#)
- 2020 for [improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats](#)
- 2019 for [an experimental approach to alleviating global poverty](#)
- 2018 for [integrating climate change into long-run macroeconomic analysis](#) and [integrating technological innovations into long-run macroeconomic analysis](#)
- 2017 for [contributions to behavioural economics](#)
- 2016 for [contributions to contract theory](#)
- 2015 for [analysis of consumption, poverty, and welfare](#)
- 2014 for [analysis of market power and regulation](#)

For earlier winners, visit: <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/lists/all-prizes-in-economic-sciences/>.

Milestone Papers in Economics

The following papers, reflecting conventional economic theory established in the 1900s, were pulled from research featured in the collection [Landmarks of Finance and Economics](#), with links included below where reports are open access.

- Frank Ramsey, "[A mathematical theory of saving](#)," Economic Journal, Dec 1928. Ramsey's "optimal growth" model—which has since become known as the "Ramsey model"—is one of the earliest applications of the calculus of variations to economics.
- Emile Grunberg and Franco Modigliani, "[The predictability of social events](#)," Journal of Political Economy, Dec 1954. "Rational expectations" is the economic theory describing how predictions of events influence behavior.
- Franco Modigliani and Merton Miller, "[Dividend policy, growth, and the valuation of shares](#)," The Journal of Business, Oct 1961. Franco Modigliani, "[The Modigliani-Miller propositions after thirty years](#)," Journal of Economic Perspectives, 1989. The "Modigliani-Miller Theorem" demonstrates that a firm's market value is independent of its capital structure and dividend policy.
- William Vickrey, "[Counterspeculation, auctions, and competitive sealed tenders](#)," Journal of Finance, March 1961. Paul Milgrom and Robert Weber, "[A theory of auctions and competitive bidding](#)," Econometrica, Sept 1982. Vickrey's paper was the first to use game theory to explain the dynamics of auctions and derive auction equilibria. Milgrom

and Weber's paper further advances auction theory by describing a "general symmetric model" of auctions that does not assume that the values of the bidders are symmetrical.

- Vernon Smith, "[An experimental study of competitive market behavior](#)," Journal of Political Economy, Apr 1962. This is a pioneering paper on controlled experimentation in economics.
- Albert Ando and Franco Modigliani, "[The 'life-cycle' hypothesis of saving: aggregate implications and tests](#)," American Economic Review, Mar 1963. The Life-cycle Theory of Saving and Consumption predicts that savings rates depend on the age of consumers and hence on the demographic structure of society.
- George Stigler, "[The economics of information](#)," Journal of Political Economy, June 1961, and "[Information in the labor market](#)," Journal of Political Economy, Oct 1962. Challenging the theory of perfect competition, Stigler describes how market equilibrium should be characterized by a distribution of prices whose variance relates to the cost of searching for information.
- Gary Becker, "[Investment in human capital](#)," Journal of Political Economy, Oct 1962. Becker provides a general theory for the household's allocation of time.
- Eugene Fama, "[The behavior of stock market prices](#)," Journal of Business, Jan 1965. The Efficient-Market theory asserts it's impossible to outperform the market by using information the market already knows, except through luck.
- Eugene Fama, "[The adjustment of stock prices to new information](#)," International Economic Review, Feb 1969. This is the first study of the impact of new information on stock prices, introducing event-time analysis.
- Robert Merton, "[Lifetime portfolio selection under uncertainty](#)," Review of Economics, Aug 1969. Merton formulated an investment strategy for deciding how much to consume, how much to invest, and how to allocate the investments between stocks and risk-free assets in order to maximize expected lifetime utility.
- GA Akerlof, "[The market for lemons](#)," Quarterly Journal of Economics, Aug 1970. The most-cited paper on economic theory, this report details the asymmetry that occurs when the seller knows more about a product than the buyer.
- Fischer Black and Myron Scholes, "[The pricing of options and corporate liabilities](#)," Journal of Political Economy, 1973. Robert Merton, "[Theory of rational option pricing](#)," Bell Journal of Economics and Management Science, 1973. Most techniques employed today are rooted in the option pricing model developed by Black, Scholes, and Merton.
- Stephen Ross, "[The arbitrage theory of capital asset pricing](#)," Journal of Economic Theory, Dec 1976. Richard Roll and Stephen Ross, "[An empirical investigation of the arbitrage pricing theory](#)," Journal of Finance, Dec 1980. The arbitrage pricing theory allows for an explanatory model of asset returns.
- Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "[Prospect theory](#)," Econometrica, Mar 1979. This study addresses nonutility-maximizing decisions by noting (and determining the implications of) the fact that people are more sensitive to losses than gains.
- Robert Engle and C Granger, "[Co-integration and error correction](#)," Econometrica, Mar 1987. Co-integration allows analysts to test for a statistically significant connection between apparently related time series such as a stock market index and the price of its associated futures contract.
- Eugene Fama, "[The cross-section of expected stock returns](#)," Journal of Finance, June 1992, and "[Common risk factors in the returns on stocks and bonds](#)," Journal of Financial Economics, Feb 1993. These papers detail the Fama-French three factor model of market behavior, explaining more than 90 percent of diversified portfolios returns.
- Andrei Schleifer and Robert W. Vishny, "[The limits of arbitrage](#)," The Journal of Finance, Mar 1997. Nobuhiro Kiyotaki and John Moore, "[Credit cycles](#)," Journal of Political Economy, Apr 1997. These papers warned of the types of market failure that contributed to the great recession of 2008.

Often-Cited Studies in Neuroscience/Cognitive Science

Neuroscience and cognitive science are overlapping disciplines focused on the brain. Neuroscience research can be regarded as a branch of biology but is also regarded as an arm of the behavioral sciences for its interplay with psychology, such as with mental health interventions. Cognitive science research focuses on how the brain organizes information through learning and thought processes, also with applications that interplay with psychology. The overarching focus here is on how the human mind processes experiences and information. With landmark studies from *Cognitive Science* listed [here](#), the following list shares some of the most-cited recent studies from key journals.

[Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews](#) (partially open access with some abstract-only files)

- Maxime Marvaldi, et al, [Anxiety, depression, trauma-related, and sleep disorders among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), July 2021.
- Lise Eliot, et al, [Dump the “dimorphism,”](#) June 2021.
- Nasrin Abdoli, [The global prevalence of major depressive disorder \(MDD\) among the elderly](#), Jan 2022.
- Lisa Diamond and Jenna Alley, [Rethinking minority stress](#), July 2022.
- Rebecca Alexander, et al, [The neuroscience of positive emotions and effect](#), Feb 2021.

Frontiers in Human Neuroscience (open access)

- Suzana Herculano-Houzel, [The human brain in numbers](#), Nov 2009.
- Harriet Feldman and Karl Friston, [Attention, uncertainty, and free-energy](#), Dec 2010.
- David Vago and Silbersweig David, [Self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence](#), Oct 2012.
- Stephen Fleming and Hakwan Lau, [How to measure metacognition](#), July 2014.
- Robin Lester Carhart-Harris, et al, [The entropic brain](#), Feb 2014.

Brain, Behavior, and Immunity (primarily open access with some abstract-only files)

- Felicia Ceban, et al, [Fatigue and cognitive impairment in Post-COVID-19 Syndrome](#), March 2022.
- Elaine Robertson, et al, [Predictors of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in the UK household longitudinal study](#), May 2021.
- Mario Gennaro Mazza, [Persistent psychopathology and neurocognitive impairment in COVID-19 survivors](#), May 2021.
- Thor Mertz Schou, et al, [Psychiatric and neuropsychiatric sequelae of COVID-19](#), Oct 2021.

Behavioural Brain Research (partially open access with some abstract-only files)

- C. Domingos, et al, [Effects of physical activity on brain function and structure in older adults](#), March 2021.
- Meixiang Cheng, et al, [AMPK: A bridge between diabetes mellitus and Alzheimer’s disease](#), Feb 2021.
- Georg Northoff and Federico Zilion, [Temporo-spatial theory of consciousness](#), April 2022
- Samah Labban, et al, [Effects of melatonin and resveratrol on recognition memory and passive avoidance performance in a mouse model of Alzheimer’s disease](#), April 2022.

Behavioral and Brain Functions (open access)

- Goran Soderlund, et al, [The effects of background white noise on memory performance in inattentive school children](#), Sept 2010.
- Lutz Jancke and Pascale Sandmann, [Music listening while you learn](#), Jan 2010.
- Amy Devine, et al, [Gender differences in mathematics anxiety and the relation to mathematics performance while controlling for test anxiety](#), July 2012.
- Bhoomika Kar, et al, [Cognitive development in children with chronic protein energy malnutrition](#), July 2008.

Landmark Studies and Papers in Psychology

Psychology research can be organized into three major areas: research that describes behavioral phenomena, research that finds correlations or connections between data points, and experiments that test hypotheses about human behavior. Possibly more so than any other part of the behavioral sciences, psychological experiments capture the interests of the public. It is interesting to see not only what insight comes from this research but also how researchers shape studies while accounting for the mess of variables that human subjects can present. The following list includes landmark psychology experiments and studies on behaviorism that have helped shaped conventional theory. (For access to research in others areas of psychology [including developmental theory, intelligence testing, perception, and neuropsychology], there is a open-access collection offered through York University [here](#).)

- John Dewey, [The new psychology](#), Andover Review, 1884.
- Charles Peirce and Joseph Jastrow, [Small differences in sensation](#), Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences, 1884.
- James Cattell, [Attention and reaction](#) (R. S. Woodworth, Trans.), originally published in Philosophische Studien, 1893.
- AB Hill and R Watanabe, ["Sensorial" and "muscular" reactions](#), American Journal of Psychology, 1894.
- James Baldwin and James Mark, [Types of reaction](#), Psychological Review, 1895.

- Robert Yerkes, et al, [The relation of strength of stimulus to rapidity of habit-formation](#), Journal of Comparative Neurology and Psychology, 1908.
- Robert Yerkes and Sergius Morgulis, [The method of Pawlow in animal psychology](#), Psychological Bulletin, 1909.
- John Watson and Rosalie Rayner, [Conditioned emotional reactions](#), Journal of Experimental Psychology, 1920.
- Karl Lashley, [The behavioristic interpretation of consciousness](#), Psychological Bulletin, 1923.
- Mary Jones, [A laboratory study of fear: The case of Peter](#), Pedagogical Seminary, 1924.
- Ivan Pavlov, [Conditioned reflexes: An investigation of the physiological activity of the cerebral cortex](#) (G. V. Anrep, Trans.), originally published by Oxford University Press in 1927.
- Karl Lashley, [Basic neural mechanisms in behavior](#), Psychological Review, 1930.
- Clark Hull, [The concept of the habit-family hierarchy and maze learning: Part I](#) and [The concept of the habit-family hierarchy and maze learning: Part II](#), Psychological Review, 1934.
- BF Skinner, [Two types of conditioned reflex and a pseudo type](#), Journal of General Psychology, 1935.
- J Konorski and S Miller, [On two types of conditioned reflex](#), Journal of General Psychology, 1937.
- BF Skinner, ['Superstition' in the pigeon](#), Journal of Experimental Psychology, 1948.
- Edward Tolman, [Cognitive maps in rats and men](#), Psychological Review, 1948.
- DO Hebb, [Drives and the C.N.S. \(conceptual nervous system\)](#), Psychological Review, 1955.
- Harry Harlow, [The nature of love](#), American Psychologist, 1958.
- Keller Breland and Marian Breland, [The misbehavior of organisms](#), American Psychologist, 1961.

Landmark Studies in Sociology

The American Sociological Association defines sociology as the scientific study of society and social interactions. Sociological research can gauge how social structures and phenomena shape and shift worldviews, affecting human behavior. That is, research approaches how to better understand how societies function. The following list highlights studies regarded as landmark research and theory (originally referenced [here](#) and [here](#), with direct links to published work included below).

- Thomas Robert Malthus, ["An essay on the principle of population,"](#) 1798. A seminal essay on sociology and economics examining population growth.
- Max Weber, ["The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism,"](#) 1905. A series of German essays published in English in 1900, this text explores the relationship between religion and economic behavior.
- Emile Durkheim, ["The elementary forms of religious life,"](#) 1912. A book based on a sociological study of an Australian group's religious beliefs and how they inform social cohesion.
- Max Weber, ["Economy and society,"](#) 1922. A series of German essays then published together as a book in English, this text examines social stratification in terms of class, status, and power.
- Robert Merton, ["Social structure and anomie,"](#) The American Sociological Review, 1938. Merton posited that deviance arises when a society encourages specific goals but simultaneously restricts the means to achieve them.
- Louis Wirth, ["Urbanism as a way of life,"](#) American Journal of Sociology, 1938. Wirth articulated key characteristics of urban life affected by population size, density, and diversity.
- Solomon Asch, ["Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgments,"](#) Groups, Leadership and Men: Research in Human Relationships, 1951. Asch's experiments demonstrated how people conform to majority opinion, highlighting the substantial influence of societal norms on individual behaviors.
- James Coleman, ["Equality of educational opportunity,"](#) U.S. Dept of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1966. Coleman revealed the role of family background and social context in student achievement.
- Clifford Geertz, ["Deep play: Notes on the Balinese cockfight,"](#) The Interpretation of Cultures, 1973. Using the cockfight as a cultural text to understand Balinese society, Geertz examined culture's complexity.
- Sandra Lipsitz Bem, ["Gender schema theory,"](#) Psychological Review, 1981. This paper details how societies create frameworks that affect our understanding of what it is to be male or female, shaping our attitudes and behaviors.
- Richard Alba and Victor Nee, ["Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration,"](#) The International Migration Review, 1997. This study examined how ethnic boundaries change by examining the assimilation process of immigrants in the United States, underscoring ethnicity's dynamic nature.

- Robert Sampson, "[Collective efficacy theory](#)," Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory, 1997. This study links crime rates with neighborhood characteristics.

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