



Political Anthropology: Power And Paradigms

By Donald V Kurtz



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Politics is all about power, and power--its composition, creation, and use-- pervades this unique and clearly written assessment of the paradigms by which anthropologists explain and understand political phenomena. In *Political Anthropology*, Donald V. Kurtz examines how anthropologists think about politics, political organizations, and problems fundamental to political anthropology. He explores the ideas by which they address universal political concerns, the paradigms that direct political research by anthropologists, and political topics of special interest. The universal political concerns include ideas related to political power, leadership, the legitimation of authority, and rules that regulate succession to political statuses and offices. Kurtz relates these concerns to the paradigms that provide the research strategies anthropologists use to examine political phenomena; he investigates structural functionalism, processualism, political economy, and political evolution. Postmodernism provides a fifth research strategy characterized by an eclectic approach to politics that suggests its paradigmatic status is still unformulated. The analysis concludes with a consideration of ideas related to state formations.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Donald V. Kurtz is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee and has current affiliations with departments of Anthropology at the University of Texas – San Antonio and Southwest Texas State University. He is the author of *The Politics of a Poverty Habitat*, *Contradictions and Conflict: A Dialectical Political Anthropology of a University in Western India*, and *Hegemony and Anthropology: Gramsci, Exegetes, Transformations*.

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