**Human Relations Area Files (HRAF)**

**Human Relations Area Files (HRAF)** is internationally recognized in the field of cultural anthropology. Founded in 1949 at Yale University, HRAF is a membership-supported non-profit organization comprised of universities, colleges, and research institutions. Its mission is to promote understanding of cultural diversity and commonality in the past and present. To accomplish this mission, HRAF produces scholarly resources and infrastructure for research, teaching and learning, and supports and conducts original research on cross-cultural variation.

In the 1930s, behavioural scientists at Yale’s Institute of Human Relations started to develop a collection of cultural materials classified by subject at the paragraph-level enabling quick access to research materials. HRAF grew out of these efforts. Today, HRAF is committed to developing dynamic, expertly indexed databases. The flagship products of HRAF are the [eHRAF World Cultures](https://hraf.yale.edu/products/ehraf-world-cultures/) and [eHRAF Archaeology](https://hraf.yale.edu/products/ehraf-archaeology/) databases. The organization also provides open-access resources including [Explaining Human Culture](http://hraf.yale.edu/ehc), [Teaching eHRAF](https://hraf.yale.edu/teaching-ehraf/), and various [resources for Cross-Cultural Research](https://hraf.yale.edu/cross-cultural-research/).

HRAF publishes encyclopaedias in association with major reference publishers. Although HRAF Press no longer publishes current titles, back copies are available. HRAF also distributes monographs on demand.

**Cross-Cultural Research**

The Human Relations Area Files, Inc. (HRAF) has been engaged in cross-cultural research since 1949 and encourages comparative studies of human cultures and societies throughout the world. The eHRAF World Cultures and eHRAF Archaeology databases facilitate these types of studies by indexing and coding vast stores of ethnographic knowledge across over 400 cultures. HRAF also sponsors the peer-reviewed journal [*Cross-Cultural Research*](http://hraf.yale.edu/cross-cultural-research/journal-cross-cultural-research/)*.*

**Products of HRAF**

The Human Relations Area Files’ mission is to promote understanding of cultural diversity and commonality in the past and present. To accomplish this mission, the Human Relations Area Files produce scholarly resources and infrastructure for research, teaching and learning, and supports and conducts original research on cross-cultural variation. HRAF products are:

1. The award-winning, membership-based **eHRAF World Cultures** database contains information on present and past aspects of cultural and social life for a worldwide sample of societies. The contents are organized by cultures and indexed at the paragraph level by HRAF anthropologists with unique subject identifier codes from the Outline of Cultural Materials (OCM), making it ideal for both exploratory, in-depth cultural research, and cross-cultural comparisons.

**2. eHRAF Archaeology** is also an award-winning online database covering the prehistory of a sample of archaeological traditions around the world. Designed to facilitate comparative archaeological studies, this database is organized into archaeological traditions by region. Like eHRAF World Cultures, each document within the collection has been subject-indexed by HRAF anthropologists using HRAF's Outline of Cultural Materials (OCM).

**3. Teaching eHRAF** is an innovative, interdisciplinary teaching resource for universities, colleges, and high schools aimed at providing faculty with ideas about how to use the eHRAF World Cultures and eHRAF Archaeology online databases in their curricula. Most of the exercises have been written by faculty and HRAF staff, focusing on general anthropology, general archaeology, medical anthropology, and research methods ranging from easy (Level I) to difficult (Level IV).

Teaching eHRAF is a free, open access resource available to HRAF members and non-members alike. Some exercises may contain links into the membership databases, and most are best used in conjunction with a full eHRAF membership, but all are free to use and modify for your classroom needs.

4. Edited and compiled by Carol R. Ember, **Explaining Human Culture** is a searchable database summarizing cross-cultural research findings from over 1000 studies. This unique service provides an interactive way for researchers to explore what previous cross-cultural research has uncovered about cultural universals and differences. In addition to searching past anthropological findings, HRAFs have also provided a [series of topical summary modules](http://hraf.yale.edu/ehc/summaries) authored by cross-cultural experts which offer a deeper look into selected cross-cultural topics of interest.

5. Introducing Cross-Cultural Research, HRAF cross-cultural course, makes an ideal companion to all of the products. In conjunction with the Basic Guide to Cross-Cultural Research, it offers colorful and engaging PDFs covering all aspects of cross-cultural research, from design to statistical analysis. These resources can be used to brush up on the knowledge of cross-cultural research methodology from start to finish.