# Part 1: Thinking Anthropologically & Doing Fieldwork

## Key Terms and Definitions

**Agency**: The capacity of individuals to make free choices leading to independent action.

**Colonial Feminism**: Practices that reinforce colonial dominance using the language of feminism and women’s rights.

**Cultural relativism**: understanding another culture in its own terms, according to their worldview, ethics and values.

**Emic perspective**: an insider’s perspective; using the concepts and categories of the culture under study to describe cultural phenomena.

**Essentialize**: Assigning a characteristic or set of traits that is supposedly inherent or fundamental to a group.

**Etic perspective**: an outsider’s perspective; using the concepts and categories of the researcher’s culture to describe another culture.

**Ethics**: Ideas about what is morally right and wrong and standards and codes of conduct for appropriate behavior.

**Ethnographic method**: Long-term and intensive participant observation in the life of a community or culture.

**Ethnography**: the anthropological description of a culture through fieldwork.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**: female circumcision; the removal of all or part of the clitoris and/or labia.

**Fieldwork**: immersion in the daily life of a culture for the purpose of collecting data about that culture.

**Native ethnography**: ethnographic work where there is a close cultural and linguistic familiarity between the anthropologist and the community they are studying.

**Othering**: Treating other people as inherently different from oneself.

**Participant observation**: a research method in which anthropologists live with the people under study and observe and participate in their everyday activities.

**Positionality**: the conditions of a given social situation, and the ways in which gender, race, class, sexuality and other aspects of identity are markers of relational positions rather than essential qualities.

**Subjectivity**: the way in which a person experiences things in his or her own mind; based on personal feelings, beliefs, and opinions.

**Universal human rights**: the rights to which one is entitled by virtue of being human.