

ANTHROPOLOGY 210:A1

SEX, SOCIETY, AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Course Outline

Dr. P. McCormack

Instructor: Patricia McCormack
Tory 15-5
432-5914

Classes: MWF 1300-1350

This course examines how sexual or gender differences are crucial aspects of social organization and the structure of daily life in human societies. We will examine the evidence for biological bases of male and female roles and how some societies handle the "problem" of sexual ambiguity. We will consider the roles of men and women in several tribal societies and how colonization has led to changes in these roles. Finally, we will look at a contemporary North American subculture to discover how men and women actively define their distinctive gender roles in conservative fashion.

Office Hours MWF 1500-1600
TR 1330-1530

If these times are not convenient for you, please feel free to arrange a meeting at another time.

Evaluation Term work is worth 65% of the final grade. It consists of a mid-term exam and a research project (attached), each worth 50% of the term grade.

The final exam is worth 35% of the final grade.

Please note: all papers must be handed in on time. Marks are deducted for late papers.

Reading

The books by Fernea and Martin and Voorhies should be available in the bookstore. Other books which were ordered were out of print, and a package of xeroxed readings has been prepared instead. This package may be purchased in class; one copy will be placed on reserve in the library.

Boddy, Janice

1982 Womb as oasis: the symbolic context of Pharaonic circumcision in rural Northern Sudan. *American Ethnologist*. 9(4):682-698.

Bullough, Vern L.

1974 Sex is not enough: women in Islam. In *The Subordinate Sex; A History of Attitudes toward Women*. New York: Penguin Books Inc.

Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock

1969 *Guests of the Sheik: An Ethnography of an Iraqi Village*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books.

Hayes, Rose Oldfield

- 1975 Female genital mutilation, fertility control, women's roles, and the patrilineage in modern Sudan: a functional analysis. *American Ethnologist*. 2(4):617-633.

Leacock, Eleanor

- 1977 Women in egalitarian societies. In Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koony, eds., *Becoming Visible; Women in European History*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

- 1981 Montagnais women and the Jesuit program for colonization. In *Myths of Male Dominance*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Martin, M. Kay, and Barbara Voorhies

- 1975 *Female of the Species*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Nelson, Cynthia

- 1974 Public and private politics: women in the Middle Eastern world. *American Ethnologist*. 1(3):551-563.

Rogers, Susan Carol

- 1975 Female forms of power and the myth of male dominance: a model of female/male interaction in peasant society. *American Ethnologist*. 2(4):727-756.

Rohrlich-Leavitt, Ruby, Barbara Sykes, and Elizabeth Weatherford

- 1975 Aboriginal woman: male and female anthropological perspectives. In Rayna R. Reiter, ed., *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. Pp. 110-126. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Rowbotham, Sheila

- 1974 A woman's work is never done. In *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World*. Pp. 67-80. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Spradley, James P., and Brenda J. Mann

- 1975 *The Cocktail Waitress*. Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Preliminary Class Schedule

1. Sept. 10. Introduction to the course
2. Sept. 12. Unit 1. Biological Bases of Sex and Gender
 - 1.1 Human Sexual Differences

Read: Martin and Voorhies chps. 2,4
3. Sept. 14. Cont.
4. Sept. 17. Cont.
5. Sept. 19. 1.2 Sex-Linked Behaviors

Read: Martin and Voorhies chp. 3

6. Sept. 21. Cont.
7. Sept. 24. Unit 2. Models for Human Society and Gender
Read: Martin and Voorhies chps. 5,6
Leacock 1977
8. Sept. 26. Cont.
9. Sept. 28. Cont.
10. Oct. 1. Cont.
11. Oct. 3. Cont.
12. Oct. 5. Cont.
- Oct. 8 - Thanksgiving - no class
13. Oct. 10. Cont.
14. Oct. 12. Unit 3. Cross-Cultural Variation and Change
3.1 Foraging Societies
Read: Martin and Voorhies chp. 7
Leacock 1977, 1981
Rohrlich-Leavitt et al.
15. Oct. 15. Cont.
16. Oct. 17. Cont.
17. Oct. 19. Cont.
18. Oct. 22. 3.2 Horticultural Societies
Read: Martin and Voorhies chp. 8
19. Oct. 24. Cont.
20. Oct. 26. Mid-term exam
21. Oct. 29. 3.3 Agricultural and Peasant Societies
Read: Martin and Voorhies chp. 9
Bullough
Boddy
Fernea
Nelson
Rogers
Hayes
22. Oct. 31. Cont.

23. Nov. 2. Cont.

24. Nov. 5. Cont.

25. Nov. 7. Cont.

26. Nov. 8. Cont.

Nov. 12 - Remembrance Day - no class

27. Nov. 14. Cont.

28. Nov. 16. 3.4 Pastoral Societies

Read: Martin and Voorhies chp. 10

29. Nov. 19. 3.5 Industrial Societies

Read: Martin and Voorhies chp. 11
Rowbotham
Spradley and Mann

30. Nov. 21. Cont.

31. Nov. 23. Cont.

32. Nov. 26. Cont.

33. Nov. 28. Cont.

34. Nov. 30. Cont.

35. Dec. 3. Cont.

36. Dec. 5. Cont.

37. Dec. 7. Wrap-up

Later in this course we will be studying the status and roles of females (cocktail waitresses) who work in the male-dominated world of a bar. Spradley and Mann's study rests on three major premises:

1. Masculine and feminine identities are culturally defined, not biologically defined.
2. The interaction between men and women is governed by rules and definitions, which each gender uses to understand and organize its experiences.
3. "...[M]anhood and womanhood are defined in the process of social interaction. People learn the values and attitudes of their sexual identities, not from philosophical statements or even serious formal discussions, but as they interact with members of the opposite sex in routine activities" (Spradley and Mann 1975:145; emphasis deleted).

Spradley and Mann define the rules for male-female interaction at Brady's Bar, and they show how routine tasks are transformed into symbols of sexual identity.

The goal of this assignment is to study male and female behavior and interaction in a routine situation. You may, if you wish, choose an all-male or all-female situation. Your study should be an exercise in personal observations and in discussions and/or interviews with your subjects.

The project has the following parts:

1. Choose a situation for study: You may need to obtain permission to observe people in certain situations (such as day care centers, for example), while other situations are freely accessible to the public. Where practicable, the subjects of your study should be informed about your research. We will discuss the ethics of the field work situation in class.
2. Conduct the research: You will need to devote some time to both observation and interview/discussion with the people you are observing. You should keep a notebook in which you record information about the following topics, as well as others you may formulate:
 - 2.1 Your role as a researcher: how did you initiate your project? How did you explain your presence to the people you were observing? When and how did you conduct your investigations?
 - 2.2 The research situation: what were the physical parameters and other related characteristics of the social situation? What is the formal or "official" description of what people do in that space?

- 2.3 Behavior, especially interaction between males and females, or, if in a homogeneous group, among members of that group: what was the division of labor? Who did which tasks, and what was involved in carrying them out? Which tasks have greater prestige or status? How did men and women cooperate/compete with each other? What social structures can you identify?
3. Analysis and report on the research project: Write a research report which incorporates your data and the conclusions about male/female roles and, if appropriate, interaction between males and females. Your report should include the following information:
 - 3.1 What situation did you choose to study and why? Did you bring any special interests or knowledge to the research situation?
 - 3.2 How did you study the situation? What did you, as the researcher, do to obtain your raw data?
 - 3.3 What is your data? What were the "typical" behaviors, and what was the range of behavior observed? What are your bases for classification of behavior into categories of interaction?
 - 3.4 What conclusions can you draw about "typical" or "atypical" behaviors for men and/or women and the interaction between them or within each group? Can you suggest some explanations for the behavior you observed?
 - 3.5 Are there any ethical problems that you anticipate could occur as you do the research and analysis, and as you write up the report?

Your report should be typed double-spaced, using headings where appropriate to indicate the topics under discussion. You may wish to include charts, graphs, maps, and other illustrative materials to help you present the material in a clear fashion. If you have consulted written sources as part of your project, please include them in a "references" section following your discussion, following the format used in the course outline.

The report is due December 3. Please note that marks are deducted for late papers. It is worth 50% of your term mark.