

Sex and Gender: Studyguide and Review Notes #6

NOTE: This studyguide does not include the Hrdy readings (4 articles), but these will be covered on the quiz. I will add a separate studyguide for that material if I have time.

Sex roles in hunter-gatherers

- There are hardly any hunter-gatherers in the world. Why are they important to understand anyway?
- Sex roles among hunter-gatherers are usually more egalitarian than among most other societies. Why? (from lecture).
- Describe the division of labor typical of foraging societies. Do the Tiwi fit?
- Discuss two important reasons why men and women differ in their foraging activities: (1) compatibility of work with childcare, and (2) male showing-off. Understand the arguments.
- Why do men hunt, when large game is widely shared and the hunter does not keep more of the meat? People disagree about how much male hunting is parental effort and how much it is mating effort. However, it appears that good Ache hunters have more extra-marital affairs and their kids survive better, even though they don't get to keep more of the meat than anyone else. So they are getting rewarded indirectly.

One idea is that men target big game because it comes in large, unpredictable packages and sharing it allows them to show off. Another is that hunting is essential because of the importance of protein in the diet, but large game is shared when it is too difficult to keep it from others (and/or because sharing reduces the risk to any one hunter). Hadza hunters don't keep more large game for their families, but they do direct some resources, especially honey, to their families, and their foraging appears to compensate for reduced gathering by their wives when they are carrying infants. (These views are not incompatible).

- Why is bilateral kinship more prevalent among foragers than food producers?
- How does marriage among the Tiwi differ from that of Americans? List a few ways. (note that the extreme age discrepancy at marriage is not typical of hunter-gatherers, or human societies generally)
- Do Tiwi women lose or gain power as they get older?

Sex roles in horticulturalists

- How does horticulture differ from agriculture?
- Why are unilineal systems more common among horticulturalists than among foragers?
- Two reasons why marriages are more stable in patrilineal than matrilineal systems are: (a) bridewealth (b) children belong to Dad's lineage. (these are just hints; explain)
- How is life different for women who live matrilocally than patrilocally?
- Describe the division of labor in horticultural societies. How does it change as dependence on domesticated foods increases? (MV 215).
- Matrilineal societies are almost all horticultural. Are most horticultural societies matrilineal?

- How does matrilineality put Asante women at risk? How does it help them?
- Does economic independence confer marital power for Asante women?
- How do Asante men and women view polygyny? What do Asante men like about it? What two reasons do M/V give for why men in horticultural societies like polygyny?
- Many matrilineal societies are associated with relatively high status for women. Do the Iroquois fit this generalization? explain.
- What made the Iroquois women so powerful?
- Which descent system (matrilineality or patrilineality) is more associated with movable wealth? feuding between villages? bridewealth? concern over chastity?
- Describe the division of labor among the Hagen
- How do Hagen women acquire the land they cultivate?
- Contrast the relationship between women and pigs with men and pigs among Hagen. Who takes care of them? How do men use them?
- What do Hagen men value in prospective mates? M/V mention 3 things (note that “beauty” is conspicuously absent from the list! Hagen men appreciate beauty, but marriage is too important to be left to things like that)
- Describe briefly the relationship of a Hagen woman with her husband (is it intimate?) and other family members.
- How do Hagen men view women? What are they so afraid of?

Sex roles among agriculturalists

- How does the division of labor among agriculturalists differ from that among horticulturalists? What are women in agriculture doing, if they are not in the fields? (see El Shabana women, 311–312)
 - What are the implications of this economic change for women’s role in public life? For male concern about female chastity? How do the restrictions on women differ among upper and lower classes?
 - Cultivation among agriculturalists is more intensive than among horticulturalists. Along with this we see increased population density, individual land tenure, and economic stratification.
 - What are the implications of these changes for marriage, i.e., how does polygyny among agriculturalists differ from polygyny among horticulturalists?
 - Describe the impact of colonialism on the economic roles of men and women in traditionally horticultural societies (M/V 298–9 and lecture)
 - Describe the main features of purdah in El Shabana.
 - What kind of property do El Shabana women have?
 - In middle-class Western societies, relations between spouses are typically close, and spouses view each other as friends and companions as well as lovers. How do marital relations differ in El Shabana?
- We will finish the film “Dadi’s Family” next time. Here are some things to think about when viewing it:

- What are some of the ways that Dadi's family (film) is typical of patrilineal agricultural extended families? (some things to think about: relations between women and men, and between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, division of labor, inheritance, son preference, hierarchy, arrangements of marriage)
- How does the family system represented by Rajinder and Kantla (in Dadi's Family) differ? (things to think about: nuclear vs. extended families, companionate marriages, free socialization between women and men, women's freedom in the public sphere, marriage arrangements)

The following is not on the quiz, but we will discuss it this week:

Ch. 12: Sexual Politics

- Briefly characterize (and note changes in) gender and parenting roles during the 17th century, the 18-19th centuries, and the early 20th century (from lecture).
- Women were encouraged (how?) to take over formerly male jobs during WWII, and after the war were encouraged (how?) to leave them and stay home. How did the women in Rosie the Riveter react to each of these changes?
- How did gender roles and sexual behavior change during and after the 1960s?
- How do working women, non-working women, and working men of today compare with respect to (a) working hours and (b) time spent in direct interaction with children? (if discussed in lecture)
- Kenrick showed men photos of beautiful women (and vice versa) and then asked them about their own relationships. How did viewing the photos affect their judgments? p. 335.
- Mealey argues that spouse abuse is an extreme form of mate-guarding. What evidence does she give for this?
- What circumstances promote monogamy? Desertion? (p. 339) Why is desertion more common among men?
- Violent assaults on women go up when the home team wins (box 12.1). What is Mealey's explanation for this?
- Why are men and women unequally represented in different jobs? Do the arguments we gave for division of labor (see above) also apply to the modern workplace?
- Men are more likely than women to interpret a friendly gesture as sexual (355). Why has mother nature made men and women perceive things so differently?
- Sex-selective abortion in China (Mealey 374) is going to result in a lot more men of marriageable age than women. What are the likely consequences, in terms of the theoretical arguments discussed earlier in the class?
- According to Mealey, what would the world be like if it were run by women rather than men? Why? p. 375