

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE - REVIEW OUTLINE I

The midterm exam will consist of both subjective and objective questions. There will be approximately 15-20 true/false questions, 5-8 brief definitions of key concepts, 8-10 fill-in/short answers and at least one essay question. Required Material Covered: Bolin and Whelahan, (B&W) Ch. 1-11; LaFont, Pts I-V (pp. 1-161); articles by Davenport and Jackson. Note key points of videos shown in class.

I. Introduction

A. The Nature of Sexuality

1. Definition - an expression of creative energy - the balance of M/F components within us all, importance of communication between human beings; biologically based, culturally variable.
2. Fundamental questions re: the nature of sexuality
 - a. Why we behave so - biological, psychological, and socio-cultural determinants - differing emphasis given by different researchers to each set of determinants especially biological vs socio-cultural determinants. Note comments by Harding re: essentialism vs constructionism debate & Fausto-Sterling, developmental systems approach. Be able to discuss links between sexualities, gender & culture.
 - b. How we actually behave - problems with conducting research on sexual behavior re: source materials, research methods, etc.; importance of the cultural context in defining "appropriate" behavior (note Herdt's comments discussed in class - re: "sexing anthropology", rethinking sexual culture, subjectivity and methods of anthro. participant observation - see below also).
 - c. How we should behave - matter of sexual ethics - be familiar with major points of Sexual Bill of Rights and Responsibilities discussed in class; note variability of sexual values both historically and across cultures

B. Anthropological Perspectives on Studying Sexual Behavior

1. Reasons for studying sexual behavior - little known about it, means of learning more about ourselves especially by comparing our own perceptions and evaluations re: sex with those in other cultures
2. Problems in studying sexuality - collecting valid & reliable data; problems in publishing info (use of highly technical terminology, new re-evaluation of making subjective stance of investigators known); significance of underlying assumptions about the nature of sexuality (e.g., w/in Judeo-Christian tradition - focus on reproduction vs pleasure, control of "natural beastly urges"); significance of the definition & implications of normality vs deviance; role of religion in controlling sexual expression; various barriers to an integrated interdisciplinary approach discussed in class.
3. Primary focus in the anthropological study of sexual behavior:
 - a. **Definition of sexual behavior/"sex"** (activities related to sexual pleasure, arousal, and intercourse whether recreational or for reproduction); importance of context - e.g., factors such as age, social group, marital status, immediate environment/situation, degree of acceptability of specified activities (values & norms) that affect evaluation of sex. behavior.
 - b. **Six major types of sexual behavior** -- masturbation (self exploration), orgasm during sleep, petting and foreplay, heterosexual coitus, homosexual activity, bestiality (w/ animals)
 - c. Frayser's explanatory model w/ 3 components - biological system relating to sexuality & reproductive anatomy; social system pertinent to phases of sexual & reproductive cycles; cultural system including beliefs & rules about sexuality w/ key integration of 3 systems in the sexual system; is similar to B&W concept of open **biogram** and culture as architecture - house metaphor

- Note major points of B&W re: theoretical approaches to sexuality within anthro. historically -- goal to make the "other" & their construction of sex more meaningful while seeking to find the commonalities in the adaptive characteristics of sexual expression within diverse cultures

C. Major Research Methods Used in Studying Sexuality - Note significant points in B&W. (Ch 2). Importance of thinking critically about "sex", avoiding the egocentric fallacy, ethnocentrism, significance of cultural relativism etc. Note focus of biological, psychological, sociological approaches historically in contrast to anthropology which incorporates a broad integrated holistic (interdisciplinary) approach.

II. Overview of Our Human Heritage/Biological Basis of Human Sexuality

A. Principles of Evolutionary Theory

- Darwinian theory - natural selection and sexual selection; modern synthesis - contributions of Mendelian genetics
- Significance of mammalian contribution - reproductive efficiency - viviparity & postnatal care (parenting) - "effectance motivation" (play)
- Significance of primate contribution - characteristics of primates (social groups, including emphasis on vision & touch, grasping, longer infant dependency, increased brain size, emphasis on learning); increase in nonreproductive mating; **note difference between Symons & Hrdy/Sherfey's analysis of female sexual activity (sociobiological vs feminist approaches)**. Significant patterns of primate social organization: dominance (not all--definition is variable); bonding F/M, F/F, M/M, import of mother/female kin & offspring bond -- matrescence vs patrescence; rank based on age; distinction between juveniles/adults etc. Be familiar with Hrdy's arguments re: female sexuality and adaptive value of female orgasm (B&W) de Waal on Bonobo chimps, & video "What Do Women Really Want", Jolly's article.
- Char. of Hominidae (human family) - significance of bipedal locomotion, inc. brain size; be familiar w/ **different views of transition to humans** discussed in class (male oriented view - Washburn, Fox etc. "man the hunter"/"territorial apes" vs female oriented view - Tanner, focus on cooperative food sharing); note distinctive elements. of human sexuality due to bipedalism (changes in pelvis, concealed ovulation, foci of sexual attraction, emphasis on social, behavioral cues, etc.)

B. Hormonal Basis of Modern Human Sexuality and Differences Between Males & Females

- Note major terms distinguishing female and male anatomy, distinctions and overlap between sexual and reproductive cycles; homologous and analogous structures; androgens/estrogen, gonadotropins, CC + H-P-G Axis, tonicity vs cyclicity.
- Note major features of male anatomy and physiology -- relation testosterone and libido, effects of drugs on testosterone levels, features of male sexual response
- Note major features of female anatomy and physiology - features of menstrual cycle and biobehavioral dimensions--menstrual synchrony; PMS; effect of eating disorders - anorexia nervosa; genital surgery--circumcision, clitoridectomy and infibulation and rationales used; follicular vs luteal phase and consequences for behavior (also LaFont, Part IV)

III. Overview - Perspectives on Sexuality - Biology and Behavior - Sex and the Life Cycle

A. Gender Identity and Biology

- Difference between biological/morphological sex (identification as male/female based on biology - anatomical/genetic sex), "sex" as defined in terms of behavior, and gender (culturally based definition of biological femaleness/maleness); assigned gender - ascribed by others usually at birth; importance of **gender schema** - note handout from Devor, video, "Gender, the Enduring Paradox".

- a. **core gender identity** = secure sense of maleness or femaleness, affected by cultural interpretations, being comfortable w/ one's body; usually well established by age 3 (18-36 months; requires internalization of cultural rules defining gender)
- b. distinct from **gender role** = learned behavior patterns defined by society and subject to change over time and space (characterized by masculinity and femininity--the public expression of gender identity) and **gender role identity** (identification with those behavioral expectations considered appropriate for a given gender). Note significance of gender stereotypes associating males with "instrumentality" and females with "expressiveness". See below also.
2. Note stages in development of gender identity - prenatal sexuality - chromosomes, fetal gonads, fetal hormones etc. and postnatal genital dimorphism - significance of cultural influence in division of labor & child training (learning gender roles).
3. Note various errors of development discussed in class - Turner & Klinefelter's syndrome - chromosomal errors, hermaphroditism, fetal hormone errors (androgenized females, feminized males), **guevodoces** (identity shift at puberty, F to M); distinction between transsexuals and transvestites – transgenderist approach, continuum of gender variant identities.
4. **Areas of biological influence** (matter of degree not kind, tendencies not dichotomies) on gender
 - a. **physiology** - M: physically stronger; F: greater endurance, resistance to disease & stress etc.
 - b. **emotional** - M: emphasis on physical aggressiveness; F: emphasis on nurturant capabilities
 - c. **mental** (spacial perception) - M: field independence, can abstract elements from context, greater lateralization in brain; F: field dependence, relational emphasis, elements perceived in context, use both sides of brain more
5. Feedback between biological processes and the environment is extremely complex, is a moot question as to where biology leaves off and culture begins; emphasis is on significance of socio-cultural factors. Note two opposing views that have been taken by social scientists:
 - a. **Biological oriented view** - innate biological and psychological differences between the sexes are the product of evolution and are the necessary & effective causes for the rights and duties assigned to M & F in all societies. Because gender roles are "natural" they should not be changed - cost too high. Approach emphasizes cultural universals - similarities in activities of F vs M. Fox, Symons, E.Wilson, Barash, and Gilder as discussed in class all take this view; see below also.
 - b. **Gender role/socialization view** - gender roles are a function of socio-cultural conditions, not biological heritage. Inherent physical and emotive characteristics of M & F permit a wide degree of flexibility and variability. Emphasis is on cross-cultural differences and variation in the roles of F & M -- we need to explore the range of possibilities open to both sexes. Mead's study re: cultural determinants of masculinity and femininity -- Arapesh (both "feminine"), Mundugumor (both "masculine"), Tchambuli (reversed characteristics - aggressive F, passive M); Bem's study of gender roles takes this stand - see below

B. Development of Gender Role Identity - Cross-cultural Similarities in Socialization & Personality Development of Females vs Males (based on article by Chodorow in Rosaldo & Lamphere, Woman, Culture and Society)

1. F: activity and manners acquired in natural continuity; M: taught to be men, discontinuous role, separation from domestic sphere necessary in order to learn role
2. F: integrated w/ female kin vertically (mo-da); M: integrated horizontally, importance of peer relationships in childhood activities
3. F: membership in groups not questioned - age determines status (ascribed); M: membership in groups achieved and open to question, based on personal characteristics
4. F: growing up, experience others as individuals, emphasis is on informal roles (have flexible ego boundaries) - roles defined in relation to domestic sphere; M: learn manhood as an abstract set of rights and duties, status brings formal authority, emphasis is on formal institutional roles (public roles)

5. Similarities in socialization of F vs M reflected in puberty rites - note three stages in all rites of passage - separation, transition, incorporation; rites are usually more marked, more severe and more important for M than for F.

C. Learning Gender Roles and Their Significance: Gender Stereotypes & Androgyny, Significance of Incest Taboo, Early Childhood Sexuality

1. Note significant features of pregnancy and childbirth as a bio-cultural experience--create kinship bonds; role of **couvade**; reasons for & characteristics of postpartum depression.
2. Developmental sequence of learning gender stereotypes - patterns of learning differentiation reflected in sexual division of labor (masculine vs feminine advantage); childcare/training - emphasis on obedience, responsibility for females; independence & achievement in males; note significance of different marriage (endogamy/exogamy, monogamy/polygamy--polygyny vs fraternal and associated polyandry) and kinship (unilineal-patrilineal/matrilineal vs bilateral/cognatic) patterns. Note theories of socialization - social learning (modeling); role played by parents, peers, media etc in learning; significance of cultural relativism re: early childhood sexuality--**erotocentricity** (B&W,p203)-allow our cultural attitudes & mores bias our understanding of sex cross-culturally.
3. Significance of **androgyny** as a concept - Bem defines 3 components of sexual identity: sexual preference/orientation (heterosexual, homosexual, defines acts not people); gender role identity (masculine/feminine - depends on cultural interpretation of gender, includes role expectations for gays and lesbians); and gender identity (secure sense of maleness or femaleness - being comfortable w/ one's body; be familiar w/ consequences of rigid adherence to gender stereotypes - traditional male vs female scripts as well as limitations of an "androgynous script).
4. Significance of **INCEST TABOO** - powerful influence on subsequent sexual behavior; problems w/ Freud's hypothesis (result of guilt over incest in distant past) - definition: sexual relations w/ "close kin" (variably defined) - major significance is because they are earliest experience w/ systematic social structuring of sexual partnerships
 - a. Note variation in evaluation, punishment and "horror" associated with incest - **relative presence of incest taboo and how it is defined** (what relatives it includes) **depends on**: structure of the family and larger kin groups, role relations within the family, and the nature of the larger socio-economic-political sphere (most extensive in hunting & gathering & tribal societies, least extensive - nuclear family - in post industrial society); also need to distinguish between "**core incest taboo**" (relations between consanguinal related members, nuclear family) vs "**extended incest taboo**" (other kin outside core)
 - b. No single universal explanation for taboo - variety of reasons including adaptive value. Frayser (*Varieties of Sexual Experience*) reviews the major approaches in Ch. 3 including arguments by Malinowski (distribution of authority among males within family - brother/sister taboo strong in matrilineal societies mother/son in patrilineal societies) & Fox's (equilibration - balance alternatives - cope w/ sexual access to females & competition between males) theses. Note points in B&W pp.185-196) Cohen's argument also is important re: "core incest taboo" vs extended incest taboo: need for privacy w/in boundary maintenance groups (networks in which people establish socio-emotional identity); sex. relations w/in boundary maintenance group threaten psychological well being of individual & survival of group.; requirements of socialization process for individuals is to form bond w/ caretakers & then separate from them; extensions of taboo also important means of establishing alliances outside group through kinship

D. Summary of Prepubescent Psychosocial Development - Sex Thru the Life Span

1. Sexual development result of interaction of biological and cultural factors - relationships w/in family, w/ peers & religious beliefs and taboos (cultural rules) are important.
2. Two types of theories of sexual development - discontinuity theories (social scripting - Gagnon & Simon - importance of learned gender roles); and continuity theories (Freud - first 5 years critical

especially re: relation between mother & child; intuitive theory w/out evidence); (see above III.C.2 also)

3. Maturation is a social process - key term - potentiation -- emphasis on socio-sexual development (complex factors leading to sexual expression in adults). Be familiar w/ major stages of sexual development - e.g., ages 2-5, interest in genitals, beginning of sexual play (we are born w/ orgasmic ability); problems in labeling of activity by adults; importance of contact comfort and nurturance by caretakers w/ balance re: need for privacy as indicated by Cohen.

E. Sexual Behavior - Puberty and Adolescence

1. Note major physiological changes that occur during puberty: F - start earlier (9-12), lasts about 3 yrs (end about 15); M - starts 10-11, lasts 5+ yrs (may go into 20's); similar hormonal processes, different results - F, cyclical; M, tonic/continuous (note adolescent sterility).
4. Adolescence - time when people learn new sexual acts (puberty thru early twenties); establish full adult gender identity and learn appropriate gender roles - note difference between puberty (onset of physiological changes) and broader period defined as adolescence which is recognized in some but not all societies. Note key points of article by Malinowski on Trobrianders (in LaFont)- **bukumatula** - bachelor houses used for sexual relations of single adolescents, contrasts w/ Azande, B&W's discussion of Herdt's work on Sambia in contrast to Western practices/attitudes toward adolescence.
3. Note variable significance of puberty rites of passage in different societies in terms of attainment of adult gender role, reinforce differentiation between F & M. Three stages - separation, transition (marginal/liminal phase - communitas), incorporation /aggregation. Puberty rites are more significant & elaborate (& often more painful) for males as a rule than for females but more common (but more low key, individualistic) for females (significance of 1st menstruation variable, key is in definition of adulthood & eligibility to marry). Difference focuses on different roles played by F (caretakers, nurturance) & M (responsibility to group, same sex bonding). Note relationship to pattern of genital mutilation noted in articles in LaFont.
4. Patterns of adolescence sleeping patterns reinforce different roles for F & M - females w/ parents (mother); M, separate from parents, men's house
5. Postpubertal differentiation reinforced thru physical appearance (clothing, jewelry, body deformation & mutilation); eating arrangements

F. . Patterns of Sexual Interaction & Arousal - Note overall focus by B&W on the heterogeneity of sexuality; contrasts between Dani w/ long postpartum taboo, Inis Beag, w/ repressive attitudes vs. Mangaian & other permissive societies; societies w/ considerable tension between genders, Mehinaku.

1. Sex. interest begins w/ "proceptive stage" - solicitation, attraction & courtship of partners (physical attraction important), vision, touch, & symbols of invitation. Is always set within cultural context
2. Sexual stimulation in terms of variety & intensity is extremely variable - key aspects - touch and vision, in that order; difference between W & M (men more responsive to sexual visual stimuli somewhat questionable); probably significantly affected by cultural expectations - bias in studies; note difference in learning to be sexual - developmental sequence F & M; be familiar w/ gender differences in attitudes toward stimulation;
3. Variation in patterns of stimulation - genital manipulation (foreplay), fondling breasts, kissing, painful stimulation - cultural evaluation critical
4. Sexual Response Cycle -- Differences in M vs F, in general are the same - response for both F & M include same phases: desire, excitement, plateau, orgasm, resolution, satisfaction. Difference is in range of possible variation; M - single sequence, have a refractory period; F - capable of multiple orgasms, variation in pattern of orgasmic contractions; note modification of Masters and Johnson by Kaplan and Singer & Singer. Controversy re: "G-Spot; discussion of sexual dysfunctions (B&W, discussion of tira among Mangaian, pp. 250-51, also in Marshall & Suggs).

5. Be familiar with major issues regarding birth control practices including controversy surrounding abortion.
6. Be familiar w/ ten sexual myths discussed in class; affects of age & hormonal levels, influence of anaphrodisiacs & aphrodisiacs, different acts

IV. Cross-cultural Perspectives on Sexual Behavior -- Davenport and Jackson Articles

A. General Aspects of Cultural Context Affecting Behavior (Based on Three Significant Components of Culture)

1. Ecosystem - type of ecological adaptation (technology) & associated degree of societal complexity
2. Socio-economic and political organization - differentiation & relative importance of public vs domestic sphere; type of family & kinship system, type of status groups present, etc; relative gender role differentiation present and importance
3. Role of ideology (values & norms) - evaluation of sexuality is based on cultural perception - herein lies the importance of attitudes which are instilled via socialization

B. Key Factors in Understanding Sexual Behavior (More Specific Aspects Related to General Aspects Above)

1. Individual gender role identity - perception of what it means to be male or female in a society and how that perception is reflected in behavior - degree to which gender roles constrain individual behavior
2. Nature of the relationship between the sexes - interpretation of attributes of gender roles, activities carried out by each sex, attitudes toward males by females & vice versa
3. Socio-cultural context (includes general components of culture noted above as well as socio-historical forces affecting norms etc.) - how interpretation of sexual identity and the relations between sexes are expressed in different arenas of life and in terms of norms of society; importance of kinship, separation of public and domestic spheres etc.

C. Sexual Behavior Among Adults - Sexual Intercourse - Primary Factors to Consider

1. Note three key factors important in understanding sexual behavior above - sexual identity, relationship between sexes, socio-cultural context
2. Definition of sexual intercourse - union of two people acting in a social context in accordance w/ physiological and psychological needs (importance of mental/emotional component)
3. Two foci to consider in sexual intercourse:
 - a. Behavior - what people do (in various contexts)
 - b. Social position of participants - status - types to consider: marital; non-marital - premarital, extra-marital, post-marital intercourse

D. Sexual Arousal - Foreplay

1. Importance of psychological state (emotions), importance of honesty and openness in relations, form of adult "play"; need for tension -- expressed via attributes of partners (status, etc.), behavior, definition of situation, degree of social acceptance.
2. Techniques (see also above) - kissing; oral-genital stimulation (cunnilingus, fellatio, mutual oral-genital "69"); tactile stimulation; other means - significance of timing, pain, effective communication - extremely variable cross-culturally. Gregorson (Ch. 5) notes two terms relevant here: to **forate** (insert penis in non-vaginal opening or body fold) and **gantize** (insert nonpenile extremity -part of arm, leg - into anus, less commonly vagina)

E. Heterosexual Intercourse - "the moves are many, the end is the same"

1. Heterosexual coitus is the most common form practiced in all societies but rarely, if ever, the only form of sexual activity
2. Variations in approaches. Gregerson defines different positions cross-culturally based on 3 dimensions - general posture (lying, sitting etc.), position vis a vis partner (face to face, rear entry), and dominance (man on top, woman on top, side by side); classifies 7 major types plus a summary of other techniques noted above (B2)
 - a. Face to face - variations and frequency - most common form found; behavior of M & F related to degree of male dominance in society, form of kinship organization, relationship between sexes etc. Variation in preferred forms include: Missionary position (both lying, M on top); Ur position (M lying, F squatting, F on top); African position (both lying, side by side); Oceanic position (F lying, M squatting); M sitting, F squatting & on top (preferred in few Pacific societies); standing.
 - b. Rear vaginal entry - dominant among animals, variable cultural evaluation & frequency; most common for illicit short encounters, man standing, woman bending over, or lying, around campfire (modesty)
 - c. Other variations - related to other activities - e.g., bathing, use of devices, drugs, etc.
3. Frequencies of heterosexual coitus - U.S. less frequent than most (related to cultural evaluation - semi-restrictiveness, 2-3X/wk). Other societies range up to several times a night on the average. Variable w/ respect to age and marital status as well as evaluation of sexuality by culture and definition of relationship between partners

F. Davenport - Cultural Diversity in Sexual Behavior

1. Despite diversity, are 2 bases for commonality - potentialities & limitations of biological inheritance; and the internal logic & consistency of a culture which shapes expression of sexuality in culture via socialization of young
2. Evaluation of sexuality - be familiar w/ different examples; areas in which sexual behavior is manifested (who, when, where, how) & w/ what motives is extremely variable; need for certain degree of tension in sexual interaction (resistance); taboos - define appropriate partners, reflect relation of sex to rest of society; definition of **erotic code**
3. Beliefs related to reproduction - menstration, pregnancy, etc.; signif. of couvade etc.
4. Sociological aspects - types of sex. behavior - heterosexual (relation to kin & marital status, incest taboo); homosexuality, institutionalized bisexuality, transvestism (berdache) etc.
5. Sex in ritual and cultural metaphor (related to gender role differentiation, puberty rites etc.)

G. Jackson - Sexology and Social Construction of Heterosexuality

1. Basic argument: development of sexology in 20th century - model supposed to be objective & scientific, in fact, promotes interests of men in sexually stratified society (means of increasing and legitimating male right of sexual access to women)
2. Be familiar w/ major points re: Ellis - association of male potency (power) & sexual aggression w/ "natural" animal urges; female need for submission (association between pleasure & pain); refusal to consider issues of female sexual autonomy
3. Essential characteristics of model modified by Kinsey, Masters & Johnson remain same (p. 72-73) - male sexuality universalized, serves as model of human sexuality - be able to discuss issues addressed

SELECTED TERMS TO KNOW

institutionalized bisexuality, androgyny, core gender identity, gender role, gender schema, biogram, guevodoces, transsexual, transgendered, transvestism, berdache/two spirit, gender dysphoria CC+H-P-G, gonadotropins, cyclic/tonic, follicular/luteal, circumcision/clitoridectomy/infibulation

"core incest taboo" vs extended taboo; significance of boundary maintenance groups
 3 stages of rites of passage--matrescence/patrescence; bukumatula (Trobriand); tira among
 Manguaians

four phases of sexual response cycle and modifications; Grafenberg or G-Spot
 cross cultural techniques of coitus; gantize; forate; sexual behavior, erotic code; erotocentricity
 couvade, post-partum depression, interventionist/non-interventionist approaches to pregnancy
 Turner vs Klinefelter vs Supermale Syndromes, spermatic economy

Societies

Manus	East Bay (Melanesia)	Trobriand Islands	Dobu	Gusii
Mangaia	Hawaiian (pre-Christian)	!Kung/San of Kalahari	Zapotec	Dani
Inis Beag	Solomon Islands	Guajiro	Yapese	

SAMPLE ESSAY

1. You walk into class one evening to discover that a panel of researchers -- Donald Symons, Lionel Tiger, Anne Fausto-Sterling, Margaret Mead and Sarah Hrdy-- have arrived to discuss the evolution of human sexuality with particular emphasis on the variable role of males and females in the process. They also discuss the impact of changing gender roles today and the degree to which such roles are influenced by "natural", biological forces. Symons and Tiger give a short summary of their point of view followed by that of Fausto-Sterling, Mead and Hrdy. You have been selected as moderator for the discussion that follows. Your task is to summarize the two opposing positions and offer some concluding remarks of your own as to your assessment of the issue. What do you tell the class?
2. Because of your expertise (even though it is only after 5 weeks of class) you have been asked to give a lecture on the variable nature of sexuality to a local community group. They have asked you to discuss several issues: (1) Why is the study of human sexual behavior important? (2) What are the major problems faced by researchers in carrying out research on sexual behavior? and (3) What are the major sexual rights and responsibilities that all individuals within our society should follow? What do you tell them?
3. Again, because of your expertise, you have been invited to participate in a panel discussion of incest and the nature of the incest taboo to be held as part of the Human Sexuality Seminars at CSUB. Yehudi Cohen was invited but could not attend; you have been asked to speak in his place. What do you tell them?
4. According to Davenport, lectures, and related readings, it is the contexts in which sexual behavior occurs that gives meaning to that behavior in a given society. Discuss the various types of contexts that you consider to be important and give an example of each. What is the significance of a "society's internal logic and consistency" in this regard?