Gender & Sexuality

Professor Janaki Natalie Parikh
jnparikh@verizon.net
Gender

- Diffc. Btwn biolog. Sex & gender
- biolog. Sex: determined by combinatn of chromosomes “XX’ or “XY”
- Gender: culturally constructed meaning assigned to biolog. sex
- Gender roles: (sexual divisn of labor) set of expectatns & tasks expected of a gender
- Sexual dimorphism: meaning?
- Diffcs btwn ... of a species, unrelated to their genitalia
Gender cont’d

- Levels of dimorphism amongst humans?
- Low levels: suggesting what about tasks?
- Swing activities:
- Tasks assigned to either gender
- Gender stratification: inequalities in status between & (“glass ceiling”)
- Income inequality: studies show it ↑ over our lifetimes
- Domestic vs. public dichotomy: as this develops the degree of gender stratification increases (stats on next slide)
Gender stratification

- Facts to consider: In the U.S.:
  - Mothers earn 73¢ to every $1 an equally qualified man makes
  - Single mothers earn 60¢ to every $1 an equally qualified man makes
  - Over a lifetime, mothers are paid between $400k & 2 million less for doing the same work, a major “mommy tax”!
  - ¼ of U.S. families with children 6 or younger live in poverty!
Sexuality

- Sexual orientatn:
  - Heterosexuality: sexual attractn towards &/or relatns w/ memb. of opposite sex
  - Homosexuality: sexual attractn towards &/or relatns w/ memb. of same sex
  - Bisexuality: sexual attractn towards &/or relatns w/ both sexes
  - Asexuality: absence of sexual attractn &/or relatns
Sexuality & gender identity

- Though we may act heterocentric, this may not reflect our actual practices
- 37% of reported having had a same sex sexual experience during their lifetime
- 26% of unmarried reported the same
- Same sex marriage is not universally shunned by religion: Quakers, Unitarians & some Jewish synagogues have recognized s. sex marriage
Sexuality

- Kinsey:
  Males do not represent two discrete populations, heterosexual and homosexual. The world is not to be divided into sheep and goats. It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories... The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects.
Sexuality cont’d

- Transvestism: root of the word: vestir
- Individ. who dresses in the clothing of the other gender
- Transsexualism: individ. who believes that he/she is of the wrong biolog. sex
- (gender dysphoria) psych term, not preferred in anthro
- Transvestism ≠ transsexualism ≠ homosexuality
Transgendering

- Gender reassignmt surgery
- NGC clip: sexual identity or gender change
  
  http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/channel/videos/player.html?channel=1805
- Not universally regarded as problematic
- Native American berdaches: not ostracized, served as shamans
- Thailand: katooeys
- Samoa: fa’afafines
- NGC clip: sexual identity
  
  http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/channel/videos/player.html?channel=1805
Transgendering

- Hijras: India
- Transvestite males, priestly group, presiding over the temple of mother goddess (Yellama, incarnate of Kali)
Gender & Subsistence (foraging)

- Traditional foraging dynamics relatively egalitarian, & overlapping spheres of influence
- Draper’s fieldwork: Ju’hoansi San
- Intro of & greater reliance upon wage labor sharpening domestic vs. public dichotomy
- Has contributed to more rigidly defined gender roles amongst the mod. Day Ju’hoansi San, also more sedentary (role of sendentarization in social dynamics)
Gender & horticulture

- Gen. pattern:
- ↑ pop. Pressure & ↑ threat of warfare: patrilieage & patrilocality
- ↓ pop. Press. & ↓ prev. of warfare: matrilineage & matrilocality
- Why this pattern?
- Iroquois: aborig. N.Y.: had ctrl of the local economy, owned land & had ctrl of horticult. food production
- Communal longhouses
- Matrilineal & matrilocal
Gend. & horticulture

- Matrons: sr. who decided which could join the longhouse commy, had authority to evict also
- Council of Chiefs: typically all, had ctrl of military operations & war declaratns
- Matrons could impeach chiefs, veto war declaratns & initiate peace efforts
- Sound familiar?
- System of checks & balances
- Etoro:
- Highland Papua New Guinea:
Gend. & horticulture

- Highlands: densely pop. & oft. ↑ degree of conflict due to ltd resources (not true for all of P.N.G.)
- What pattern should be expected?
- ↑ patrilineal & patrilocal
- Patrilineal societies oft. have ↑ level of gend. stratificatn
- Seen as dangerous & ritually polluting
- Segregate themselves in s houses, delay marriage & oft. don’t marry, male/female avoidance practiced: heterosex. relatns regarded as dangerous while homosex. relatns are acceptable (norm)
- Function?
Gender cont’d

- Acts as a form of socially sanctioned pop. Ctrl
- Fairly effective: has kept pop. @ replacement levels
- Gender & agriculture: typically lose their role as main cultivators, accompanied by loss in soc. Standing
- Rise of the dbl. standard: sexuality is particularly closely regulated & supervised
- Today: Gains have been made, but progress is still relatively slow
- Evidenced by: domestic violence, infanticide & feticide rates, dowry murders, rape & sexual abuse, etc.
Divorce

- Increase in divorce rates not limited to the industrialized West, though cross cultural variation in prevalence is found.
- U.S. has one of the ↑ rates in the world, why?
- Economic, cultural & religious factors & life expectancy
  - Economic: ↑ of who are gainfully employed
  - Cult’l: Amer. values of independence & self actualization
  - Religious: Protestantism most common form of relig., less stringent regarding divorce
- Life expectancy: length of a marriage in the 19th c. vs. today
Divorce w/ children

- Legal custody: in CA, default is 50/50
- Custodial parent: primary physical custody
- Non-custodial parent oft. required to pay support
- Economic reality: the custodial parent suffers the most financially from a divorce
- In the U.S., who tends to be the custodial parent?
  - Typically, mom (although this is changing somewhat)
- Last 5 yrs, divorce rate has fallen somewhat, good news right?
  - Actually, ↑ in couples deciding against marriage
Divorce cont’d

- Typical scenario: married couple w/ 2 kids
  - makes $20/hr = 3200/mo. = $38400/yr.
  - makes $15/hr = 2400/mo. = 28800/yr.
- Child care: ~700mo. (split by parents)
- Child support pymt? ~$450
- Let’s do the calculations ourselves…
- Compare/contrast w/ popular perceptions of child & spousal support put forth in a pop song
Gold Digger (Kanye West)

She take my money when i'm in need
Yeah, she's a triflin’ friend indeed
Oh, she's a gold digger way over town
That digs on me

Chorus:
(She did me wrong)
Now I ain't sayin she a gold digger
(When i'm in need)
But she ain't messin wit no broke niggaz
(She did me wrong)
Now I ain't sayin she a gold digger
(When i'm in need)
But she ain't messin wit no broke niggaz

Get down girl gon head get down (I gotta leave)
Get down girl gon head get down (I gotta leave)
Get down girl gon head get down (I gotta leave)
Get down girl gon head
Gold Digger (Kanye West) (cont’d)

Verse 1:
Cutie, da bomb
Met her at a beauty salon
With a baby Louis Vuitton
Under her underarm
She said I can’t tell you rock
I can tell by ya charm
Far as girls, you got a flock
I can tell by ya charm & ya arm
But I’m lookin for the one
Have you seen her?
My psychic told me she’ll have a ass like Serena
Trina, Jenni-fer Lopez, four kids
An I gotta take all they bad ass's to show-biz
Gold Digger (Kanye West) (cont’d)

Ok get ya kids but then thay got their friends
I pulled up in the Benz they all got up in
We all went to din & then I had to pay
If you fuckin with this girl then you betta be payed
You know why?
It take too much to touch her
From what I heard she got a baby by Busta
My best friend said she used to fuck wit Usher
I don't care what none of ya'll say, I still love her!

CHORUS
Verse 2:
Gold Digger (Kanye West) (cont’d)

18 years, 18 years
She got one of yo kids, got you for 18 years
I know somebody payin child support for one of his kids
His baby momma's car & crib is bigger than his
You will see him on the T.V. any given Sunday
Win the Superbowl & drive off in a Hyundai
She was spose to buy yer shorty TYCO wit ya money
She went to the doctor, got lypo wit ya money
She walkin around lookin like Michael wit ya money
Should of got that insure GEICO for ya money (money, money)

If you ain't no punk, holla we want prenup
WE WANT PRENUP! Yeah
It's something that you need to have
Gold Digger (Kanye West) (cont’d)

Cause when she leave yo ass, she gone leave wit half
18 years, 18 years
And on her 18th birthday he found out it wasn't his

CHORUS

Verse 3:
Now I ain't sayin you a gold digger, you got needs
You don't want a dude who smokes but he can't buy weed
You go out to eat & he can't pay, y'all can't leave
There's dishes in the back, ya gotta roll up your sleeves
But why ya'll washing watch him
He gon' make it into a Benz out of that Datson
He got that ambition baby look in his eyes
this week he mopping floors next week it's the fries
So, stick by his side
I know there’s dude's ballin & yeah that's nice
And they gon’ keep calling & trying
But you stay right girl
But when you get on he leave yo ass for a white girl
Get down girl gone head get down (I gotta leave)
Get down girl gone head get down (I gotta leave)
Get down girl gone head get down (I gotta leave)