Gender Norms

Social Agents
Matrilineal vs. Patrilineal Societies

• In Patrilineal societies the decent and lineage is marked through the male line
  • Vice Versa in Matrilineal
  • Often power structure associated with lineage

![Matrilineal descent group diagram]

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Matriarchy vs. Patriarchy

• In a Matriarchy the power structure revolves around women
  • Ex. Decisions such as leaders
  • Often associated with lineage
    • Leaders descendants of female

• Matriarchal societies primarily rural folk cultures
Case Study: Mosuo

- Clustered around lake Lugu in Southern China
- Matrilineal Society
  - Women responsible for lineage
    - Men live with mothers, not with children
- Walking Marriages
  - No official ceremony
  - Men visit at night and then go home
  - Easily broken off
Case Study: Tuareg

• Matrilineal but not matriarchal
• Nomadic Berber peoples of Western Sahara
• Muslim society
  • Men wear veils, not women
  • Believed that women were created before men
Popular Culture and Gender Norms

• Contemporary culture still based off of patriarchal model of society
  • Generally shifting towards a more equal balance of power socially, economically, and politically

• Children still expected to conform to cultural norms
The Push for Gender Equality in the United States

• Women’s rights movement originated in 19th Century has been shifting society since
  • Slowly but eventually
    • 1848 - Seneca Falls Convention
    • 1919 - 19th Amendment passed allowing women the right to vote
    • 1963 - Commission on the Status of Women Established
      • Goal: Fairer hiring practices, paid maternity leave, cheaper child care
    • 1973 - Roe v. Wade decision allows women private and safe access to abortion
    • 2013 – Women allowed in combat roles in US Military
Global Gender Inequality

Gender Inequality Index
- Less than 0.14
- 0.14 – 0.23
- 0.23 – 0.32
- 0.32 – 0.41
- 0.41 – 0.5
- 0.5 – 0.59
- 0.59 – 0.68
- 0.68 – 0.77
- No data

0 indicates women and men fare equally
1 indicates that women fare as poorly as possible
Year: 2011
Growing Power of Women

Women in US Congress
as % of total

Source: Centre for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University
Growth of Women in Management

Percentage of Managers Who Are Women: 1940-2009

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census 1940 to 2000, 2009 American Community
Sexuality Norms

• Homosexuality and bisexual relations often considered taboo by modern society
  • Norms reinforced by religious ideals
  • Slowly being accepted but still highly restricted in some societies
Transgender

• Gender identity, expression, or behavior do not conform with societal gender norms assigned
  • Ex. person born a female but dresses and acts like a man

• Complication of identity
  • Either hide identity or seek gender modification
    • Including gender reassignment
    • High rates of suicide
Case Study: Kathoey of Thailand

• Primarily refers to “cross dressing” men in Thailand
  • Socially accepted as “third gender”
  • Often have surgeries to appear more feminine