

identities across space and time. Combining the subjective, the aesthetic, the symbolic, and the physically material, the current anthropological study of materiality connects rather than divides our understanding of physical and cultural phenomena.

At the level of content or topic, the range of issues raised in contemporary socio-cultural anthropology, and reflected in the chapters of this section, defy easy summary or characterization. But in a sense, this reveals a larger and more important point. In focusing on cultural dynamics and subjective understandings and projections, both individual and collective, contemporary anthropology links our understanding of culture integrally to the political economy of difference and to the social, political, economic, and cultural disparities and inequalities that result. In the process, the issues addressed by sociocultural anthropology have both deepened and expanded dramatically during the past half-century. These now include most, indeed virtually all, aspects and topics of contemporary life, both in Western societies and in a multitude of non-Western contexts, as well as in their hybrid and mutually influencing combination across and between contexts.

If the issues addressed by sociocultural anthropology have proliferated widely in recent decades, often generating their own specific fields of study and literatures, they have also become increasingly overlapping and interconnected. This provides sociocultural anthropology both the breadth and the depth to engagingly address new issues in the future, some of which are as yet unknown or undefined. These will increasingly combine academic scholarship per se with important consideration of practical human challenges and problems across both Western and non-Western societies. In this sense, the issues addressed by sociocultural anthropology are well and excitingly positioned to continue expanding their relevance as well as their intellectual importance in coming decades.

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## Gender and Sexuality

SUSAN BROWNELL AND NIKO BESNIER

The role that anthropologists have accorded to gender, sex, and sexuality has varied considerably in the course of the discipline's development. The themes emerged timidly in the context of the culture-and-personality school of the 1930s and began to take central place in anthropology from the 1970s, on the heels of the major transformations that the world experienced in the 1960s. Originally tied to feminist political concerns and focused on women's lives, the anthropological study of gender and sexuality gradually shifted toward a broad, interdisciplinary engagement with power differences, wherever they may occur.

Because this overview is necessarily selective, it emphasizes developments that are central to the engagement with gender and sexuality in contemporary anthropology. We refer readers in quest of more comprehensive overviews to such works on gender as di Leonardo (1991), Lamphere, Ragoné, and Zavella (1997), Lancaster and di Leonardo (1997), Mascia-Lees and Black (2000), Lewis and Mills (2003), Lewin (2006), and Moore (2007); and for sexuality to Lyons and Lyons (2004, 2011), Robertson (2005), and Donnan and Magowan (2010).

#### FIRST STEPS

Although the term "gender" appears nowhere within it, the first anthropological treatment of gender is commonly considered to be Margaret Mead's (1935) *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, which argued that a person's "temperament" was not biologically determined by his or her sex. Comparing three New Guinea groups, Mead claimed that, in one, both men and women had nurturing, "female" temperaments; in another, both had aggressive "male" temperaments; and in the third, women were aggressive ("male") and men were meek and vain ("female"). Even though later scholars

challenged the adequacy of aspects of her analysis (Gewertz and Errington 1981), Mead was the first anthropologist to argue for the separability of biological givens from learned and variable gendered behavior.

It was not until second-wave feminism, in the heady decade of the 1960s, that "gender" entered anthropologists' lexicon. As social scientists and feminists began using the terms, "sex" referred to the genetically determined reproductive anatomy fixed at birth, defining, in most cases, male and female categories. Alternatively, "gender" referred to the symbols, behaviors, roles, and statuses associated with anatomical sex but that are learned and culturally variable. The distinction provided a framework in which some societies could be argued to have third genders, although as this line of inquiry progressed, the permutations in which sex and gender can be configured called into question the nature of "thirdness." In addition, a small but significant percentage of humans are born with ambiguous sexual physiology and genetic makeup, and these "intersex" people are dealt with in various ways in accordance with the gender ideology of the society in which they grow up (Kessler 1998; Dreger 1999; Karkazis 2008). Ritually castrated males in historical times and, in contemporary times, technological modifications of the body's sexualized attributes, including sex-reassignment surgery, have added yet another twist. While it has become more complicated, a central theme in anthropologically informed gender studies remains the exploration of the relationship between sex and gender across societies and cultures.

The beginning of this trajectory was an "anthropology of women," which aimed to correct the lack of attention to women in the anthropological record. Because it assumed a universal relationship among women, it consisted of women writing about women (Moore 1988). Two ethnographies that gained widespread popularity were the first-person life story of Nisa, a !Kung San woman of the Kalahari Desert (Shostak 1981), and a gripping tale of intrigue and patrilineal kinship in a Taiwanese farm family (Wolf 1960). Both revolved around women's biological function as wives and producers of children, and were much more about the structural constraints that kinship presses upon women due to this biological function than about what it means to be a woman in all its complexity.

#### INVENTING AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY

In the middle of the 1970s, a new synthetic, theoretical approach emerged, intended to critique Western assumptions and focused on universal causes of women's subordination. Two edited collections, *Woman, Culture, and Society* (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974) and *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (Reiter 1975), became the canon for the new theoretical approach. Rosaldo's (1974) introduction to *Woman, Culture, and Society* proposed that women are universally subordinated because, at a crucial period of their lives, the bearing and rearing of children confine them to a devalued domestic sphere, while men in their prime maintain a presence across various domains, especially the public sphere, where, cross-culturally, the most important affairs are managed. Ortner's

(1974) contribution to the same volume makes a congruent proposal, but one based on Lévi-Straussian structuralism: the universal devaluation of women derives from their ubiquitous association with "nature," the givens of natural existence, because of their bodies and functions (menstruation, pregnancy, lactation), social roles, and psyche. Men, in contrast, appropriate "culture," human consciousness and its products, which, as the higher realm, regulates nature, including women. In France, Lévi-Strauss also inspired the work of Françoise Héritier (1996), who made gender the central social fact, where Lévi-Strauss had put exchange. By embedding gender asymmetries so deeply in the cognitive system, this mentalist paradigm left no room for a critical approach (thus, Héritier opposed the legalization of same-sex unions in France late in the 1990s because such unions were "unthinkable"; Fassin 2001: 226). Other scholars of that period provided more convincing materialist accounts of gender inequality, as resulting from the invisibility of the domestic labor that was largely women's responsibility (Sacks 1979).

These theoretical proposals provoked much debate. Some read in Rosaldo's argument a tautology, since domestic and public spheres are partly defined by gender. Others maintained, against Ortner, that the nature-culture dichotomy is a Western artifact, as the (male) conquest of (female) nature has been a key symbol since the age of colonial expansion (MacCormack and Strathern 1980). Marilyn Strathern further argued that the people of Mount Hagen, in Papua New Guinea, do not have the same concept of nature as Westerners. Later works continued to challenge aspects of male-female dualism as culture-bound (e.g., Du 2003).

Even so, Rosaldo's and Ortner's contributions provided powerful rejoinders to arguments that women are not as oppressed as feminists maintain, because they wield power informally. In their least delicate form, such arguments are often advanced by opponents of feminism. At the time, they were also articulated in works that presented ethnographic evidence of women's agency and gender equality: in the most gender-oppressive societies women could still terrorize men, for example, by gossiping or manipulating their sons' loyalties (Wolf 1972; Rogers 1975). In a few societies, the power differential between women and men is not straightforward (Lepowsky 1993). Ortner's counterargument was that the cultural structures in which women, men, nature, and culture are all suspended ensure the trivialization of whatever covert power women may wield.

Another key contribution of that period was Rubin's (1975) model of a "sex/gender system," defined as social structures that transform the biology of sex into human action and its products. A synthesis of Lévi-Strauss's alliance theory, Freud's Oedipal complex, and Lacan's theory of the phallus, the model starts from a simple paradox: men and women are quite similar to one another, yet human society creates and emphasizes differences between them. It does so primarily through marriage, the exchange of women by men (Lévi-Strauss's alliance theory), which generates kinship systems that enforce compulsory heterosexuality for women, the conduits between men. Therefore, a passive female sexuality serves the needs of kinship, and that is achieved by the Oedipal complex, which confers onto men rights over women (Lacan's phallus). Rubin's theoretical synthesis opened a new approach in the anthropology of gender and sexuality.

Because a holistic approach to gender must address its complementary and co-constructed ideals, it cannot limit its scope to women (Ortner and Whitehead 1981). In the following two decades, anthropologists explored gender as a multilayered system through synthetic approaches. Sherry Ortner's writings (anthologized in Ortner 1996) particularly stand out for the way they combined symbolic and social analyses. For example, she distinguished two kinds of gender systems in stratified societies: patrilineal systems, like those of India and China, emphasize women as wives; bilateral systems, like those of Polynesia, emphasize women as kin and sisters, with women attaining greater status. The broader conclusion is that understanding gender requires attention to the cultural definitions of personal and social value, and to kinship as the mediating point between them and gender.

### HISTORICIZING SEXUALITY

For the first century of its existence, contrary to its public reputation, anthropology was very timid about sexuality (Vance 1991). Although Mead (1928) and Malinowski (1929) were considered titillating in their time, they did not in fact engage seriously with issues of sexuality. Despite its title, Malinowski's *The Sexual Life of Savages* is mostly about reproduction, marriage, and the life cycle. Until the 1980s, the "sex" side of the sex-gender distinction was considered to be a biological fact, and the two most widely read anthropological works on human sexuality were by primatologists (Symons 1979; Hrdy 1981). Sociocultural anthropologists attended almost exclusively to marriage and heterosexual relations because of the traditional importance of kinship, conceived in a narrow, functionalist way as ensuring reproduction. Consequently, same-sex relations, gender bending, and other gendered or sexual behavior outside the purview of kinship and marriage constituted a blind spot.

Then Michel Foucault (1978, 1985, 1986), locating sexuality at the center of cultural analysis, argued that sexuality was more than a biological drive shaped by human evolution. Although not stimulated by feminist or anthropological theory, Foucault's work demonstrated that sexuality had a history, that its form and meaning changed over time. For example, although homosexual behavior has probably always existed, it came to define a deviant class of people only in the nineteenth century, through the regulation of legal, religious, educational, and medical institutions. Whatever its biological components, sexuality is the object of a "discourse" (mechanisms that define the truth) in which institutions of the modern state are invested and that defines its configuration. This discourse is one of the techniques of "biopower" by which states seek to discipline, monitor, and control bodies and sexual reproduction. Science and medicine, in particular, permeated by a hegemonic system of values, support the established order and the dominant classes, whose views on female bodily processes, for example, affect all women (Martin 1987). The implicit logic of Foucault's work is demonstrated in Laqueur's (1990) history of Western scientific thinking about anatomical sex: the body itself did not clearly mark distinctions such as father vs. mother, male vs. female, and man

vs. woman; rather, these were read into the body, and differently so at different times. Thus, sex is as cultural as gender, and biology is the expression of other and more pervasive truths.

A key text that precipitated anthropology into this discussion was Rubin (1984), which can be read as a corrective to one of the unintended consequences of Rubin's (1975) argument that sex and gender form a seamless system: it obscured the fact that sexuality is the focus of regulation and repression independently of gender. The paper was written in the context of acrimonious "sex wars" pitching "sex-positive" against anti-pornography feminists, many of whom later moved on to other panic-inspiring topics like sex trafficking and child abuse (Rubin 2010). Its core idea is Foucault's, but Rubin's elaboration would inspire anthropological explorations of the political conditions under which some sexualities are considered mainstream while others become the object of control.

Starting in the 1990s, a vast ethnographic corpus emerged focusing on nonheterosexual practices and gender categories that do not conform to an opposition between women and men: ritually castrated *hijras* in India (Nanda 1990), transgender prostitutes in Brazil (Kulick 1998), cosmopolitan gender benders in Polynesia (Besnier 2002), Filipino gay migrants in New York (Manalansan 2003), working-class women's same-sex relationships in Suriname (Wekker 2006), and so on (see Weston 1993; Boellstorff 2007). These practices and categories were heterogeneous and often ambiguous as to whether they were about gender, sex, or something completely different. For example, many transgender activists in the United States insist that transgender is a matter of gender and not sex (Stryker 1998), but other transgender people are not so sure (Valentine 2007). Rituals of manhood in the New Guinea Highlands, in which boys ingested their elder kinsmen's semen to transform them into men (Herdt 1981), could provocatively be reanalyzed as one component of a large system of exchange that has little to do with erotics (Elliston 1995). This line of inquiry began to coalesce in the form of a "queer" anthropology, alongside the transformation of gay and lesbian studies into a politically critical queer studies. Expanding on Foucault's insight that sexuality is contingent, queer anthropology works toward developing an understanding of sex, gender, and sexuality as interrelated, culturally variable, historically grounded, and politically charged.

### DENATURALIZING MASCULINITY

From the 1980s, another trend was emerging, largely independent of the developments described above, and it would coalesce into "masculinity studies" a decade later. Its impetus came from outside anthropology. An historian, George Mosse (1985, 1996), located masculinity at the center of the rise of nationalism in nineteenth-century Europe, predicated on an increasingly rigid gender ideology. In particular, bourgeois masculinity became equated with beauty, moral rectitude, and heterosexuality, ideals that came to permeate almost every aspect of modern history, culminating in the rise of fascism in the 1930s. Dangerous "countertypes" (homosexuals, degenerates, Jews) were to be

controlled and eventually eliminated. Works in this vein began to "denaturalize" masculinity, questioning why it is that men and their actions are taken to be the norm, making women and their actions into the problem that requires explanation (Gutmann 1997). This exercise later inspired explorations of the ways in which such normative categories as heterosexuality, whiteness, and middle-class status are naturalized.

In the 1980s, societies that emphasized male honor and female chastity provided rich materials to the anthropology of masculinity, which remained rooted in a kinship approach even as it was tentatively extending its theoretical reach. One of the earliest examples was Stanley Brandes's (1980) account of the Andalusian folklore of masculinity. Michael Herzfeld's (1985) ethnography of Cretan shepherds centered on the relationship between masculinity and constant cycles of sheep theft and feuding between patrilineal groups. Lila Abu-Lughod (1986) reversed the male-centered approach to honor by showing that, among Egyptian Bedouins, male honor was complementary to "women's honor," modesty. All three works imparted a sense of gender as a system, with detailed symbolic accounts of sex, gender, and sexuality.

The works also slighted power differences, did not stress the oppression of women even where it was clearly operative, and slighted the relationship between local gender constructs and the state. The exception to this is Herzfeld, for as it happened, the Cretan shepherds he described were the prototype for the folkloric figure of the mountain thief. Such thieves occupy an important place in Greek national identity because of the legendary role of mountain bandits in throwing off Turkish oppressors in the nineteenth-century war of independence. In other words, local Cretan masculinity "traveled" to the national level, where it became a key part of Greek identity. Appreciating a nationalist ideology's appropriation of local gender constructs is predicated on an understanding of gender as a mobile symbolic construct, which can disengage from its local roots and expand throughout a social system, transforming as it goes.

In this period, mild tension separated the (largely female) specialists in gender and more mainstream scholars such as Ortner, Herzfeld, and Brandes, who were influential in anthropology as a whole and produced many other works that were not about gender. In retrospect, because the latter were read more widely than were gender specialists, they connected the anthropology of gender with mainstream anthropology and facilitated its de-ghettoization a decade later.

By the 1990s, works on masculinity began engaging with problems of scale, bringing together the dynamics of the intimate with larger-scale dynamics such as the workings of the state. Matthew Gutmann's (1996) ethnography of male honor in Mexico City followed this trend in its attention to transnational structures (in this case, the Mexican-U.S. labor economy). In the last few decades, masculinity has gradually emerged as a social problem, as societies blame young men for economic and other problems, denouncing them as passive, uncooperative, disrespectful, and irresponsible (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000). Fordist structures used to provide a solution for what to do with men: put them to work. The decline of Fordism, the flight of industries to developing countries, and the dominance of neoliberal politics have left a vacuum. In

Japan, for example, before the 1990s, work defined men and consumed their every waking hour (Allison 1994), while now they can no longer secure employment and fulfill breadwinner expectations. These changes have prevented most young men from reproducing the sociality and the sense of self and belonging that guided their fathers. (Young women worldwide are more adept at reinventing themselves, probably because they are starting from much lower expectations.) A focus on masculinity thus sheds light on the general malaise that began gripping the world at the turn of the millennium.

### GENDERING THE NATION-STATE

Writing before many of these intellectual developments, Benedict Anderson (1991: 12), a political scientist who is one of the most influential theorists of nationalism, characterized the nation as an imagined community, the members of which may never meet yet are bound by a "deep, horizontal comradeship." As commentators later remarked (e.g., McClintock 1995), the model is highly gendered, and it is now supplemented with the recognition that the relationship between the nation-state, on the one hand, and gender and sexuality, on the other, is complex and significant. Nations have a gender relative to other nations, states have a gender, and notions of gender-in-the-nation permeate all levels of social interaction, from international relations to the minutiae of everyday life.

More subtly, gender and sexuality can also play a pivotal role in defining citizenship and determining who has the right to it under what conditions. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, gender and sexuality were at the nexus of debates over the meaning of the nation and citizenship in a Europe awakening to its internal Others, mostly postcolonial labor migrants. In a twist that would have surprised early twentieth-century nationalists, both gender equality and the normalization of homosexuality became the hallmark of secular modern European nationalism, which defined its foil as "the immigrant," particularly Muslim, to whom nationalists attributed many negative traits, particularly in terms of gender and sexuality.

Thus the "veil" (a term that refers to a range of garments worn by women of various backgrounds for a variety of reasons) became the focus of anxiety. In France and the Netherlands, the government, in its self-ascribed role of champion of gender equality, attempted to ban head covers, which it defined as a symbol of immigrant men's premodern oppression of their women (Guénif Souilamas 2003; Bowen 2007; Scott 2007). For their part, young second-generation immigrant women, some with no particular allegiance to the religious beliefs of their forebears, continue to don head covers in increasing numbers, as a symbol of an "authentic self," an assertion of political defiance, a stylish statement, or for a host of other reasons. But the garment places them in a quandary: late modernity may celebrate self-expression, but *their* particular form of self-expression arouses public scorn and places them outside of boundaries of citizenship (Moors 2009).

Struggles between the state and ethnic and racialized minorities also extend into the realm of sexuality. In the Netherlands, anti-immigration politicians have used antigay

statements by immigrant leaders to construct the Muslim Other in opposition to the secularism and humanism of the state, while conveniently forgetting their own past homophobic pronouncements and popular opposition to the normalization of lesbians and gays through, for example, legal same-sex marriage (Mepschen, Duyvendak, and Tonkens 2010). The most bizarre episode must surely be the 2005 Dutch government's issuing of a rule that those seeking to immigrate must watch a film that included scenes of two men kissing and of a bare-breasted woman at the beach. Not all of those seeking to immigrate, however, were required to watch the film: only those from certain countries (e.g., Morocco) who were deemed not to have reached a satisfactory level of gender and sexual equality; those from other countries (e.g., Japan) were exempt. (The film ran into difficulties because it was deemed pornographic in countries where prospective applicants were to watch it; Geschiere 2009: 161–62; Fassin 2010). The relationship of the state to gender and sexuality is, therefore, unstable and subject to segmentation—as yesterday's foe becomes today's ally—but it is never neutral.

#### COLONIALISM'S GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Edward Said's (1978) epochal *Orientalism* analyzed the complicity of Western scholarship and art about the Orient with colonial efforts to dominate it. Orientalist traditions elaborated the incommensurability of the Orient and the Occident, and represented the former as feminine, dangerous, irrational, and passive (yet immensely attractive to some) and the latter as masculine, rational, and active.

Said's critique stimulated a then-emerging postcolonial feminist critique of second-wave feminism, particularly its notion of universal sisterhood. The critics argued that the problems faced by white women in the privileged West bore no resemblance to the struggles of underprivileged women in the South (Mohanty 1984; Spivak 1988). In anthropology, these insights triggered a rethinking of the sex–gender–sexuality synthesis as the discipline turned its attention to colonialism. Ann Stoler (2002: 43) made the curious observation that “no subject is discussed more than sex in colonial literature.” What explains this fixation? Her answer was that Orientalism is a fantasy of male power, in which the Orient is penetrated, silenced, and possessed. The sexual submission and possession of Oriental women by European men stands for the pattern of relative strength between East and West, in which colonized men are demasculinized and European males are hypermasculine. Asian women are centerfold to the imperial voyeur; European women are rarely the object of male desire, or when they are (as when they began partaking directly in colonial projects), they become the focus of moral panic and a pretext for the repression of colonized men.

While colonial power is not always gendered in the same way everywhere and at all times, colonialism always genders the colonized in strategic ways. Thus, in some parts of the world, colonizers recognized colonized men as hypervirile and recalcitrant to colonialist emasculation (e.g., the Gurkhas, the Zulus, the Maori). Their masculinity was

employed, and carefully controlled, in the service of the colonial power: in the armed forces or in sports (e.g., Caplan 1995; Hokowhitu 2004). Tropes of masculinity that valorized the masculinity of some social strata but not others also could create new divisions among the colonized (Fox 1985). Images of either powerful or deficient masculinity were recuperated in anticolonial nationalist struggles and transformed by the colonized male, who might develop a new postcolonial masculinity that incorporates both local and extra-local cultural elements (e.g., Luhrmann 1996; Tengan 2008). These practices, however, could easily become means through which the new nationalism marginalized and oppressed others, such as women and other marginal men.

Imperialism often was justified as the West coming to the rescue of colonized women to save them from their men and regulating disorderly domesticity (Fanon 1965; McClintock 1995). However, gender and sexuality could also become the source of tensions between mainstream agents of colonialism and their own Others: lower-class colonists and other “unofficial whites,” whose sexual relations with colonized women and fraternizing with the colonized endangered the edifice of white racial superiority. The anxieties that suffused the colonial project also permeated social relations in the metropole (Gouda 1995; Stoler 1995). Thus, the valorization and demonization of forms of gendering and sexuality, which Foucault and Mosse found central to the development of Western modernity, played out in the colonies as well, so that the sex–gender system at the center and at the periphery formed a single, large-scale dynamic.

Highlighting the importance of scale, the Orientalist center–periphery tension can also operate between majorities and minorities within a single nation. For example, the Han-dominated Chinese state portrays its ethnic minorities, such as the Hui and the Miao, as feminine, backward, superstitious, and in need of masculine Han guidance. This is evident in the prevalence of eroticized images of minority women in Chinese popular media. In what Louisa Schein (1997) called “internal orientalism,” the oppositions between majority and minority, male and female, First and Third Worlds, are ideologically isomorphic (Gladney 1994: 93). Furthermore, members of minority groups, such as the Miao, can produce images of themselves in popular culture, and so are not simply passive (Schein 2000). These permutations are evidence of the far-ranging implications of Said's critique of Orientalism for an understanding of the place of gender in the formation of a wide range of structural configurations.

#### GLOBAL GENDER, GLOBAL SEX

Following the lead of historically oriented neo-Marxist anthropologists like Sidney Mintz and Eric Wolf, in the 1980s anthropologists increasingly turned their attention to the mutual constitution of broad structures and people's local lives, thus marking scale as a fundamental problem. While these first works were diachronic, later works became increasingly synchronic, demonstrating that broad dynamics affect everything in the everyday, including gender and sexuality (e.g., Constable 2003; Kempadoo 2004;

Wardlow 2006). The turn to an anthropology of the global raised new issues, such as the association among place, belonging, and culture. For instance, the recognition that labor migration affects people in gendered ways may be old, but globalization has opened the door for the transnational circulation of workers in larger numbers than before and has involved categories of people whose lives were hitherto geographically much more grounded. At the same time, these people may also be exposed to new structures of power, many of which are gendered if only because of the gendered nature of much transnational labor.

Many influential works on globalization have ignored gender. Others have tacitly conflated the global and theoretical with the masculine, and the local and ethnographic with the feminine (Lutz 1995; Freeman 2001). Feminist scholars called for a serious examination of the masculinism that underlies hegemonic forms of globalization ideology (Gibson-Graham 1996), embodied in things like metaphors of capitalism's inevitable, if painful, "penetration," and of the "prying open" of "virgin" markets. In short, the scope of the problem extends beyond the fact that labor flows are gendered. The very process of globalization is gendered.

The call centers, data-entry industries, garment sweatshops, and electronics factories throughout the developing world that serve transnational corporations depend almost entirely on women employees, who are expected to be compliant and docile, "nimble-fingered," nurturing, and able to withstand repetitive tasks (Freeman 2000). Likewise, women from South and Southeast Asia who become domestic workers in the households of the industrial world are confined to oppressively feminine forms of labor, although they also join an otherwise-masculine world of worldliness and wage employment (Constable 1997).

It is not only people who circulate at an unprecedented rate, but also images, ideas, capital, technology, and so on, and these manifestations of globalization are steeped with gender and sexuality. Media images from elsewhere can disrupt, but then reinforce, gender inequalities in many locales: young men in India, for instance, consume with abandon the gendered images in Bollywood films, in which the Westernized woman is an object of sexual attraction but also one that is, ultimately, rejected in favor of the submissive, traditional Indian woman (Derné 2000). The Internet facilitates the transmission of new sexualities: pornography constitutes such a large proportion of Internet traffic that it is sometimes considered to be the medium's driving force. This has resulted in new forms of repression, such as in China, where the government frequently proclaimed that its tight censorship was designed to control pornography more than political opposition. In other places, it has presented the possibility of forms of pleasure that were hitherto unimaginable.

Sexual practices are profoundly implicated in globalization: from transnational prostitution to the global health industry, transnational sex tourism, the circulation of new moralities, the spread of new technologies of reproduction that by-pass sex, Internet transnational romance, and the global availability of sexual images through the Internet.

In the 1990s, the AIDS epidemic forced a rethinking of sexuality as a phenomenon that stopped at national borders, and opened up a whole industry in applied medical anthropology (Parker 2001; Hyde 2007). Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were instrumental in pushing sexuality into the public realm to a degree never seen before, arguing that the prevention of sexually transmitted infections required open discussion of sex, which often sat uncomfortably with local mores, but which also served to produce the local in contrast to the global and its alleged openness (Fischer 1997; Adams and Pigg 2005). In developing countries, rural women are drawn not only to urban jobs created by multinational corporations, but also to sex work. In China, as elsewhere, many of the rural women who migrate to cities to work in the sex industry are simultaneously exploited by the male-dominated market economy and by the patriarchal family: male government officials and businessmen (whether Chinese or not) publicly demonstrate their masculinity through their consumption of sex workers on the one hand, and on the other the women's main source of identity as women is derived from their ability to send money home to their parents and thus fulfill the obligations of filial piety (Zheng 2009).

Dennis Altman (2001), a political scientist, provocatively proposed that the global circulation of gay and lesbian politics is encouraging people to identify as part of a worldwide gay or lesbian community with common goals, whereas in the past their self-identification and sexual practices may have differed. These global identities, Altman claims, are now displacing older ones, such as those that may be better described as transgender. Anthropologists have reacted with caution, arguing that identification may be considerably more complex, partial, and equivocal than it might appear. People understand sexual desire, as they understand everything else, in reference to different contexts—some local, some global, some in between—and they engage with ideas and images flowing in from elsewhere (Boellstorff 2005; Besnier 2011). Furthermore, the complex and disjunctive nature of global flows makes their outcomes singularly unpredictable: repressive discourse can emerge just as quickly as can new forms of self-understanding. In some parts of Africa, for example, the emergence of discourses of universal human rights promoted by a variety of agents, from NGOs to the progressive politics of the Anglican Church, has provoked a sometimes-violent backlash against people whose gender or sexual nonconformity previously went largely unnoticed (Hoad 2007). Repression also travels well: calls for handing down the death penalty for certain forms of same sex activity in Uganda in 2010 were directly linked to the transnational work of North American Evangelical Christians.

#### AGENCY, PRACTICE, PERFORMATIVITY

Just as the anthropology of gender sought, through its distinctive approach to topics of general import, to disrupt previous views and offer alternative ways of constructing social theory, a related project sought to disrupt previous views of agency. Practice theory



attempted to move beyond the opposition of the individual to society. Bourdieu (1977) argued that structures can arise out of practice, contra the simplistic view that practices are dictated by structures. While practice theory was not specifically oriented toward feminist concerns, it clearly had implications for understanding power differences based on gender.

These implications were articulated in the work of such scholars as Annette Weiner (1976), who injected gender into Trobriand islanders' structures of economic exchange, which Malinowski had analyzed in the early decades of the twentieth century. "Women's wealth" and the exchange of yams reinforced matrilineal solidarity (which Malinowski had ignored), while the *kula* (which he documented in detail) reinforced individual male prestige and fame. The two realms balanced each other out. Marilyn Strathern (1988) argued that, among the Kewa of Highland New Guinea, gift exchange constructs persons "dividually" (rather than "individually") as a composite site of the relationships that produced them. From this vantage point, the opposition of "individual" to "society" looks like a specific product of Western culture. (Later scholars found forms of actions in the same region that suggested perfectly individualistic understandings of the self; Wardlow 2006.) As one element in this concept of the person, male and female are merely descriptions of the forms of the person that have emerged out of the gendered practices of economic exchange. Strathern and Weiner's works demonstrated in detail how gender is continuously enacted through the economic practices of daily life.

A memorable feminist contribution utilizing practice theory is Mahmood's (2005) analysis of a Muslim women's piety movement in Cairo. Positioning themselves in opposition to the Egyptian government, which they saw as secular, capitalist, Western-supported, and deeply corrupt, women in this movement did not opt for political confrontation. Instead, they presented themselves as modest, pious, and virtuous through actions that emphasized strict adherence to religious practices. These women were exercising agency that inscribed their political stance vis-à-vis the state but that was also contained within a religious sphere that an uninformed witness would describe as gender-oppressive. This demonstrates that there are more forms of agency than those envisaged by the rational subject of Western political theory. The latter, in fact, is the exception rather than the norm and, if we are to understand the workings of agency and subjectivity as historical and cultural, we must attend to other subject formations. Mahmood's ethnography was a prime example of how feminist anthropology can provide a powerful rethinking of classic problems in social and cultural theory (also, e.g., Mir-Hosseini 2011).

Embedded in a different scholarly tradition, Judith Butler's (1990, 1993) work led to a rethinking of the relationship among gender, sex, and subjectivity across many disciplines, including anthropology. Using the idea of "performativity," a concept developed in ordinary-language philosophy, and following Foucault, Butler approaches gender as the product of discourse, and sex as the product of gender rather than its antecedent. It is, of course, not physiological sex that is at stake here, but the meanings that we attach to physiology, their associations, and the structures that regulate them. What is novel in

Butler's work is the importance of the repetition ("iteration") of discourse that creates the normative order. Because biopower is fragile, despite its regulatory force, its terms must be repeated over and over. This reliance on iteration, however, offers the possibility of disruption. Butler famously illustrated the point by claiming that drag queens are the only non-hypocrites among us because they expose, through humorous exaggeration and incongruity, gender as artifice.

For the anthropology of gender and sexuality, performativity theory had both a familiar ring and the feel of the new. It evoked themes, such as performance and ritual, that anthropologists had long known to create gender categories: circumcision turns boys into men, public defloration turns girls into women. But it also stressed ritual's dependence on iteration, the fact that it can only operate through repeated performance, highlighting the difference between performance and performativity (Morris 1995: 576). This insistence on instability encouraged anthropologists to distance themselves from relying on the analytic notion of "identity" and gave rise to a rich ethnography of gender and sexuality, which was simultaneously inspired by the theory of performativity and suspicious of some of its more extreme interpretations, which attributed infinite agency to subjects.

Butler (2008) insisted that these interpretations were misguided, illustrated by her analysis of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal during the U.S. occupation of Iraq. That was triggered by the revelation that U.S. soldiers had systematically subjected Iraqi prisoners to sexual torture and physical humiliation, and documented their practices photographically. Inspired by a pseudo-anthropological book from the 1970s, *The Arab Mind* (Patai 1973), the soldiers had specifically targeted what their reading told them were topics of high anxiety for "Arabs": homosexuality, cross-gendering, nudity, proximity to dogs, and the like. Butler argued that the soldiers were coercively producing the backward "Arab mind" through these practices, forcing Iraqi prisoners, through torture, to experience the sexual and gendered anxieties in question. At the same time, they were also enacting the U.S. military's own violent masculinism and homophobia, but turning that projection into signs of the civilizing mission that, for mainstream America, motivated the invasion of Iraq. This analysis demonstrated in dramatic fashion the role of iteration, across different modes of communication and spheres of discourse, in generating structural oppression.

### GENDER EMBODIED

Since the 1980s, the body has emerged as a method for anthropologists because it is also a method for agents in the world. The insight that people engage with structures through their bodies has a long genealogy. "The first and most natural technical object of man," declared Mauss ([1934] 1983: 372), "and at the same time his technical tool, is his body." Politicizing both Mauss and Merleau-Ponty, Bourdieu (1977, 2004) considered "body hexis" (movements, expressions, decorations) as a prime vehicle of social and cultural capital, or lack thereof. Because people live through the body, it constantly

serves to reinforce their orientation vis-à-vis the world, acting as a mnemonic device that reminds them how structure is organized. Similarly, Foucault (1997) theorized "technologies of the self," through which agents transform structural imperatives (e.g., to be thin, healthy, moral) into their personal projects, thereby ensuring the effectiveness of biopower as they convert it into the pursuit of happiness, perfection, or immortality. Since the initial impetus to take into account the body tended to come from humanistic approaches, concerned generally with cultural and mediated representations of bodies, it required some time before anthropologists sorted out an ethnographic approach to real bodies.

One of the first works to use this approach was Brownell's (1995) ethnography of athletes in China's state-supported sport system. During economic reforms from the middle of the 1980s, Chinese athletes' bodies were caught between the kinship system, the socialist state, and the market economy. Thus, they lived in state boarding schools, ate rationed food, and were forbidden to have relations with the opposite sex, all toward the goal of "winning glory for the nation" and redeeming China's perceived past humiliation at the hands of colonial powers. At the same time, however, after the age of 25, they were under pressure to marry and bear the one child allowed by state policy. Finally, as the market reforms progressed, gender difference became part of a backlash against the forced masculinization of the Maoist period and was considered an important expression of what people took to be Western-inspired individual freedom based in human nature (Brownell 2008).

Similarly, Besnier's (2011) ethnography of the anxieties of modernity in a seemingly marginal, yet deeply transnational, Pacific Island society stressed the gendered body as a site over which agents argue about the local relevance of modernity and its relationship to tradition. Gendered spaces like the hair salon, the beauty pageant, and the gym all configured different regimes of body hexis, each of which marked a different range of globalized understandings of how the body mediates between the self and the communal. This work showed the ways in which the body, and in particular its gendered attributes and elaborations, mediates agents' position not only in the immediate context, but also in the multiple contexts in which they increasingly operate.

A number of authors also explored the relationship between sex, gender, and emotions such as love and romantic passion. While not linking closely with the anthropology of the body, these approaches were motivated by a similar concern, that a focus on structures of power has a tendency to gut gender and sexuality of the bodily sensations and felt emotions that should properly be placed at their core (Holland 1992; Jankowiak 1995, 2008; Hirsch and Wardlow 2006; Padilla and Hirsch 2008).

At the beginning of the millennium, the turn to the body as an object of analysis transformed the anthropology of gender and sexuality, producing a vast corpus of analyses of the way in which gender, sexuality, politics, and the cultural order become naturalized through the body in various societies and at different historical moments (Reischer and Koo 2004; Schildkrout 2004; Gremillion 2005; Hogle 2005).

### THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

By the end of last millennium, different trends had finally begun to merge into a complex synthesis with broader interpretive power than any of them had possessed separately: feminist theory; the anthropology of gender; Foucauldian approaches to sexuality, the state, and biopower; masculinity studies; queer studies. Gender was no longer to be investigated as separable from other social and cultural processes, but as generative and reflective of them. Anthropologists' traditional interest in a broad swath of the world's societies placed them in a privileged position to engage with the problem of scale, particularly with reference to state institutions, colonialism, and global flows of culture and people.

Attention to scale revealed that similar forms of gender-power dynamics operated on local, national, colonial, and global levels. The scale is different, but the dynamics are remarkably similar. Power differences at all levels are conceptualized in gendered terms, in which those in power are masculinized (i.e., imbued with traits locally valued in men) while marginal people are feminized (i.e., imbued with traits locally attributed to women). This insight highlights the value of the anthropology of gender approach in contrast to a feminist approach, because it allows an inquiry into gender as an organizing principle of social life detached from the specific social statuses of sexed human beings. Patterns of domination, learned as symbolic schemata, are replicated wherever inequality operates, and gender is one of the fundamental ways of conceptualizing them. Moreover, sexuality is an inherent aspect of the gendering of power, as seen in two different tendencies: the tendency to relate a sexually active-passive binary with dominance-subordination, and the tendency to represent the sexuality of marginal and subordinate Others as a threat to the (male-dominated) social order.

Little anthropological work today can be conducted without at least an awareness of gender and sexuality, particularly when it deals with problems of kinship, work, and power, but also with issues less obviously related to matters of gender, including globalization, nationalism, ethnicity, fundamentalism, counter-terrorism, and economic crisis. At the same time, an anthropology that takes gender and sexuality as its starting point provides not only a different understanding of matters of general concern in the discipline and in the world, but also a subtle perspective that exposes and complicates power wherever it may be hidden, and inequality wherever it may be difficult to see. Gender and sexuality are, after all, the most ubiquitous basis of inequality in society.

It is, perhaps, not surprising that, even as mainstream anthropology was still shedding with some difficulty the mould of Durkheimian solidarity and cooperation, anthropologists concerned with gender were among the first to investigate the workings of power and inequality, gendered or not. As a result, they have been in a position to address critical problems not only of intellectual importance but also of broad political and social relevance, thus constituting a public anthropology. This may explain why,



today, the most visibly engaged anthropologists also double as specialists of gender and sexuality.

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## Development

MARC EDELMAN

Anthropologists have had an uneasy, ambivalent relationship with development. On the one hand, in the social-scientific division of labor, the discipline traditionally focused on what Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1991) tellingly termed "the savage slot" in the less developed peripheries of the poorer countries. Development for these people could signal their physical or cultural death and thus the loss of anthropology's objects of study. On the other hand, anthropologists' intimate engagement with those they study often leads them to embrace their interlocutors' hopes of a better life.<sup>1</sup>

Frequently, anthropologists and other scholars had occasion to witness development interventions that either failed as a result of inadequate cultural knowledge or that generated benefits mainly for rent-seeking elites. Perhaps as a result, in the 1990s many decried "development" as a malevolent project of social engineering and control and Foucauldian "discipline" or "governmentality" that inevitably harmed the people it was ostensibly intended to help (Foucault 1991; Esteva 1992; W. Sachs 1992; Escobar 1995). This critique, more influential within anthropology than elsewhere (Harrison 2003; Green 2009), had two, contradictory dimensions. In some respects it was fundamentally conservative, an incarnation of Albert O. Hirschman's (1991) point that warnings about unintended perverse effects recur in arguments for inaction or for the status quo (see also Bierschenk 2008: 8). At the same time, although its most articulate proponents were mainly professional academics, it claimed connections to radical grassroots politics and to the emancipatory projects that imagined "another development" (Cavanagh 2004), "post-development" (Rahnema 1997), or "alternative modernities" (Gaonkar 2001; Escobar 2008) and that sought to carve out alternative, local spaces in the interstices of the free-market juggernaut where dissident and minority subjectivities could be nurtured and celebrated.