Archaeology of Sex and Sexuality 2013 Research Abstracts

April 11: Please update your research abstract for HONR 207. This will be graded Monday May 6.

Alyssa Penn

A Spatial Analysis of the Dormitory

Spaces in which males or females congregate indicate a lot about societies values. College changes our perception of public and private spaces, as well as our perception of acceptable actions for specific spaces. College becomes our “quasi-home,” where we live for several months out of the year, but which has different rules than our original residence. Various spaces become more public while others may become more private. Gender has also been shown to influence territorial interactions. In previous literature, it has been observed that because men and women have a different definition and perception of territory, with women emphasizing the spaces relation to others, while men generally see it as a reflection of themselves. Grammar of this sentence should be corrected. In these studies, this determines their behavior in specific spaces. I lost, could be clearer. In a similar manner, I hypothesized that the behavioral standards in any given space raises were would be largely based on gender with various levels of acceptability. I'm lost again... to what does acceptability refer? Do you mean accessibility? based on the gender of the visitor, as well as the gender of the residents.

To test this hypothesis, I observed a 6 person homogenous male living group, an 8 person homogenous female living group, and a heterogeneous 6 person living group. All of these living groups were housed in suite-style living arrangements at SUNY Geneseo. I then proceeded to label spaces both inside and outside the living spaces as public, semi-public or private based on the number of people who could have access to the space freely, meaning that there was either no special requirements or the number of people who possessed these requirements. I then observed each suite between 4-6 times throughout a period of about 3 weeks, taking note of various people entering and exiting as well as their interactions in the living space. I also noted whether the visitor was a stranger, acquainted or familiar with the residents. Their gender was also noted.

Upon analyses, the data seemed to indicate a system based on familiarity rather than based on gender. In both the homogenous spaces, members of the opposite sex entered freely. These visitors commonality however was that they were all familiar with the residents living there. On the other hand, all visitors who were non-familiar, whether they were male or female, across all of the 3 observed living spaces awaited permission to enter.

College dormitories provide many avenues of research. Gender relations in dormitories are particularly interesting in contemporary times because of the demographic changes happening in dorms all over the world. It is not uncommon to have dorms on campus, as SUNY Genesee does, where males and females can live together. This was something that was considered taboo by many as little as 20 years ago. This presentation looked at entrances and exits to various spaces, analyzing based on previously stated factors, however the opportunities to study this unique living style are endless. Examining these interactions led to a surprising conclusion and raises the question of how gendered space really is or if it is simply our previously ingrained views of gender as a natural divide that lead us to believe in the idea of gendered spaces.

awkward sentence should be reworked

Lauren Aulet

Extending beyond the binaries: The extended mind in archaeology, and implications for theories of sexuality

Extended Mind Theory, a recent controversial theory in the philosophy of mind, established by Andy Clark and David Chalmers (2000), is not only important to philosophy, but also provides new and interesting framework for many other fields, specifically studies of archaeology and sexuality. Specifically, in regards to archaeology, Material Engagement Theory (MET), put forth by Colin Renfrew and Louis Malafouris, argues that archaeological artifacts can provide insight not just into the human minds that made them, but the human minds that they made. In other words, objects, especially tools, can be causally effective in the human cognitive system. Of course, acceptance of the most extreme version of externalism, the belief that the things in the external world are a literal part of the mind, would result in a revolution in almost all fields of thought. I argue, however, that even the rejection of the literal externalism still allows for Extended Mind theory to greatly influence our views of archaeology and sexuality. Objects can be recognized not just for their symbolic purpose in a society, but for their effects on the cognitive ability of those who used them. In addition, by blurring the divisions within commonly accepted binaries: internal and external, nature and nurture, it becomes necessary then to question our beliefs about the innateness, or lack thereof, of gender and sexuality. A good general overview although you had room to add some specifics

Sarah Ackerman

Using DNA to determine the biological sex of ancient bodies

Archaeologists search for patterns and attempt to piece together the lives and habits of ancient people. Gender and sex often play a large role in determining how a society functioned. Often ancient remains are incomplete or difficult to interpret. The forensic method of determining the biological sex of a body involves examining the pelvis, the jaw bone, cranium, and the length of the limbs. Yet these bones cannot always be found and even if they are this method does not guarantee an accurate sex determination.

Many archeological studies have benefited or could have benefited from DNA analysis. Especially studies which focus on children since it is nearly impossible to distinguish between male and female child skeletons. Combine previous two sentences, one is a fragment. Determining biological sex can resolve situations where the sex of a skeleton is in questions and provide a springboard for archeologists to begin theorizing about gender and sex.

Since the advent of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) in the 1980’s physical anthropologists have devised methods to amplify ancient DNA. Both methods are based on the sex chromosomes of men and women. Women are XX while men are XY. The Y chromosome contains the Sry gene which controls testosterone and thus many secondary sex characteristics. These techniques aim to determine which sex chromosomes are present in the ancient DNA.

The first method uses two distinct primers, one for the X chromosome and another for the Y. This requires more original sample and thus this technique was used on the ancient mummies from the Taklamakan desert where the DNA was well preserved. This method produces two PCR products of different size. The products are run on an agarose gel using gel electrophoresis to visualize the separate bands. Those samples with a band that matches the size of the target Y chromosome segment are determined to be male.
The second method targets the amelogenin gene which codes for an extracellular protein involved in tooth development. The reason it is used for these experiments is because the gene is present in different forms on the X and Y chromosome. Thus probes specific for the X and Y chromosome can be used to detect which chromosomes are present. This is done using a dot blot.

Though many replications of these experiments are performed to reduce error, the absence of a Y chromosome may not mean that the person was a female. It could be that the DNA was damaged or it is possible that the person had a genetic mutation in their sex chromosomes. There are also other limitations. Contamination presents a problem. The archeologists must keep the bones sterile to avoid contaminating the samples with their own DNA. The bones must also be cleaned which often destroys the samples use as archeological evidence.

Despite these challenges, DNA analysis can provide irreplaceable evidence for archeologists. Not only can amplification be used to determine biological sex, but it can be used to determine familial relationships and patterns of disease. It is also possible that, using a similar PCR process, mitochondrial DNA can be amplified which can be used to trace maternal lineages. If this process can be perfected then it could provide concrete evidence for studying sexual identity, gender, and social roles. Very good summary.

Ginny Tate

Title: The Rise of the Hemline: An Examination of Female Sexuality in America Since 1900

A phenomenon known as “slut-shaming” has taken the media by storm recently. “Slut-shaming” is when a person is said to deserve unwanted sexual attention due to their attire, oftentimes a short skirt. This harsh judgment based on clothing stems from the strong connections that many Americans make between clothing and personality. In order to see if there is historical evidence of a link between skirt length and female sexuality, I decided to examine skirt patterns from companies such as Vogue and McCall’s and complete my own analysis of skirt length and its relationship with female sexuality.

I have numbered each decade 0-6, with 0 being the decade with the longest skirt lengths and 6 being the shortest skirt lengths. There is no arguing that hemlines have risen over the years, but based on my statistics, so has the median marriage age and the percentage of women who work regular jobs.

Median marriage age is an important aspect of female sexuality because marriage is often seen as the end of sexual freedom. The fact that women are getting married later as skirt lengths rise could indicate that women value their sexual independence more.
Also of importance to female independence is the percentage of females who work. Since the 1900s, women have begun to rely less and less on men to provide for them. This breakaway from traditional gender roles emphasizes the general trend of female independence.

The number of children per household has been, in general, declining since 1960. Women have become less focused on producing children and are more focused on their careers. In general, women are in less of a rush to settle into the cookie-cutter family pattern.

While there is a correlation between these graphs, I am hesitant to assign causation. I had been hoping to find conclusive evidence that rising hemlines led to changes in female sexuality, but after completing my research, I am not comfortable making any bold statements. There are too many external factors that could be influencing skirt length or sexuality that were not accounted for. I only examined three variables, but there are a myriad of further research opportunities. Additional avenues could include an examination of the impact of women’s pants on skirt length, or the different settings in which various skirt lengths are appropriate.

In my opinion, skirt length is less about sexuality and more about independence. As women become more comfortable making their own decisions, they will wear the clothing that makes them feel the best. For some women, that means seeking sexual approval by wearing short skirts. For others, it might be sweatpants and an old AC/DC t-shirt. Regardless of what a woman is wearing, it is unfair to assume that her skirt acts as a label for her sexuality or values. While skirt length seems to reflect increased female sexual independence, there is not conclusive evidence that short skirts cause females to be viewed as more sexual.

As hemlines rise and necklines fall, female sexuality has come under fire. This presentation is an examination of the relationship between skirt length and female sexuality in the United States from 1900 to present day. Looking at dress patterns and advertisements from the various decades shows that skirt lengths have changed drastically over the last one hundred years. We are in an age where photos on the internet can change one’s reputation drastically, especially for females. Never before has skirt length been so closely linked to female sexuality. Examining the rise and fall of the hemline leads to an interesting question: Does skirt length sexualize women, or does female sexuality dictate skirt length?

A good summary of your argument but this was 100 words over and abstracts do not have images.

Emily Wanamaker
Over the course of history, various cultures have created unique methods for assigning gender roles in society according to the male-female dichotomy. Often these involved physical alterations of the body in order to signify sexual status, class, or simply to force individuals into the accepted ‘norm.’ The ancient Chinese, for example, utilized foot binding in order to confine women to appropriate domestic and sexual roles. In addition, the lotus foot (bonded foot) was considered the standard for beauty and social status in ancient Chinese society. Due to this fascination with the foot as a symbol of eroticism and femininity, the Chinese allowed a violent and extremely painful process to continue for over one thousand years. This practice in Chinese history, while it may seem barbaric, is indicative of the importance of cultural traditions. In modern Western culture, gender assignment surgery is often performed at birth on children with ambiguous genitalia in order to make them fit the mold of the Western sexual dichotomy. As we have studied throughout this semester, individuals have been present in a variety of other cultures, including the Indian hijra, the Byzantine eunuch, and the Native American two-spirit.

The term ‘hermaphrodite’ originated from the Greek mythological union between Hermes and Aphrodite, during which they created a son who became half male, half female after his body fused with that of a nymph. It has been argued that in reality, there should be five sexes, including male, female, true hermaphrodite (both ovarian and testicular gonadal tissue), male pseudo-hermaphrodite, and female pseudo-hermaphrodite (two of the same gonad, but external genitalia and secondary sex characteristics that are not consistent with the chromosomal sex). Based on these classifications, as well as physical characteristics such as penis or clitoris length at birth, doctors and parents try to determine the appropriate sex for an intersex infant. It is generally assumed that this decision about sex must be made within twenty-four hours of birth. By analyzing disorders of sex development such as congenital adrenal hyperplasia, and adrenal insensitivity syndrome, researchers are attempting to discover the most effective means of managing disorders of sexual development (DSDs) at birth. There are both pros and cons to performing sexual assignment surgery at birth. Those supporting these “normalizing surgeries” argue that children must be either one sex or the other in order to develop normally from a psychological standpoint. There are also advantages in terms of retaining function of the reproductive tissues if surgery is performed at a young age. On the contrary, many adults who were assigned a gender at birth resent the fact that they were not given a choice, and consequently feel as if they are in the wrong body. In addition, there can be a lack of sexual sensitivity due to surgery, particularly when multiple surgeries are required. There are many links between physical modifications and sexual identity that can be explored through this research in relation to methods of modern and ancient cultures. It is also important to consider the advances in technology that allow gender reassignment to occur. With these advances, is it possible that our culture can be less accepting of alternate gender roles such as two-spirits or berdaches?

Kimberly Aebli

Title?

The Aztecs had many sexual practices we can identify with today, such as heterosexual intercourse and oral pleasure. However, the Aztec association of sexual behavior with conquering others, human sacrifice, punishment, and with their gods may be harder for us to identify with. Documents recovered often reflect the views of the Spanish conquerors, which can make it difficult to find unbiased views of Aztec sexuality. Much of what is known is taken from artwork, as well as from similarities drawn from other groups of people during this time period.

Aztec mythology reflects sexuality through male dominance and conquest using the legend of the god Huitzilopochtli’s defeat of his elder sister Coyolxauhqui. She became a symbol of feminized submission, and of male dominance to promote social order, which can be extended to their conquest over others as well as their own rise to power. Gender-duality was central to Aztec society, as seen in Ometeotl, their dual-sex creator deity. Gender dualism embodies both wholly male and female aspects to bring power and prosperity, as seen through marriage.

Sacrifice was also very important for Aztec life and sexuality; male priests would dress as feminine deities in order to bring about stability and balance. They sacrificed many people to the goddess Chihuacatl, a powerful warrior goddess who was masculine and yet distinctly feminine in the sense that she had to be continually defeated for the stability of the empire. Warfare was laced with sexuality because it relates to dominance over a feminine land, and submission of a weaker opponent. Chihuacatl was also the goddess of women who died during childbirth; these women were considered honored warriors.

Sexual deviance/immorality was often represented through images of inversion and contortion. The intestines were seen as a symbol of wickedness and misbehavior because of their twisted physical nature, and physical properties. Moral correctness was equated with the removal of excrement; so Aztec doctors would prescribe enemas as well as allegedly perform disembowelments. The name Tlazoletl, who was the goddess of lust and excessive sexuality, meant, “Eater of Ordure” or “Goddess of Filth.” She was thought to ingest the sins of the sexually deviant and transform them.

The Aztecs believed that gender was created through repetitive social rituals that would suppress one gender and encourage the other. The first important ritual was that midwives would bury a girl’s umbilical cord by the hearth and a boy’s umbilical cord on the battlefield to signify future gender roles. Young children’s bodies were manipulated through various piercings, scarring, and hairstyles which marked their intended adult work and future sexual practices. Sexuality and gender was also expressed through the layering of specific clothing.

Dancing was a way for young Aztec men and women to express their sexuality. It was a gender performance of elaborate clothing and lively, sexual exchanges. Female identity was expressed through spinning because it was a way to show ones independence, contribution to the empire, achievement, and connection to female sexuality and power. Studies have been conducted that reflect the pride women took in their spinning, and how spinning affected other “female” gendered roles, such as cooking. Male identity was conveyed through political and military dominance. The Aztecs expressed their sexuality in a variety of ways, indicating that it was an integral part of their culture.

Megan Kleespies

Incest: Myths and Realities of the Ancient World

Incestuous relationships are quite taboo in our culture. We do not like to talk about them, and seem to believe that they have very dire genetic consequences. Although this mentality makes these relationships very rare nowadays, they were much more common in ancient Egyptian and Iranian cultures, especially among the royals. Even though they were quite common, scholars still seem to exaggerate these occurrences. removing “quite” “very” etc will strengthen your writing.

There are many different types of incest: brother-sister, cousin-cousin, father-daughter, and mother-son. Although brother-sister incest was the most common overall (in Egypt? globally?) , father-daughter incest was very common among the royals. In fact, incestuous relationships were most common amongst the royal families. Roman census reports show that only one percent of incestuous relationships occurred amongst commoners. Even though it was not the most common practice outside of the royal family, incestuous relationships still accounted for twenty percent of all marriages, and forty percent of all marriages in the urban regions of Egypt. briefly indicate period as this is a key fact.
There are many different reasons why ancient Egyptians and Iranians entered these types of marriages. Many Egyptians believed that incestuous marriages held supernatural benefits. Another reason for this practice was for increased reproductive success and purity of the bloodline in the royal family. Other reasons included maintaining property and status in society. One case study in particular exemplified why incestuous marriages became so important in ancient cultures.

When the Greeks and Romans colonized in ancient Egypt, they set up a strict hierarchy with many consequences. The Romans were the ruling class, the Greeks were upper class, and the native Egyptians were seen as subordinate to everyone else. There were laws about marriages between the different classes and Egyptians were only supposed to marry other Egyptians. If a Greek and an Egyptian married and had a child, that child was given the lower status of an Egyptian. In order to avoid this, Greeks tried to only marry each other. Since there were very few of them in Egypt during the time of colonization, this commonly led to incestuous marriages. This case is a perfect example of why someone would marry a relative, but since it is so specific, it should not be used as a generalization for all incestuous relationships.

It is quite evident that incest is quite taboo in our culture, but why does it seem to elicit uncomfortable reactions from people? We now know from scientific research that interbreeding leads to many genetic consequences. The risk of genetic disorders is nine percent greater in children whose parents are cousins, and eighteen percent greater in children whose parents are siblings. Also, fifty percent of babies died prematurely in ancient Egypt, but sixty percent of children from incestuous marriages died prematurely. Even centuries ago, it was clear that these relationships had consequences. Even with all this knowledge of genetic consequences, there are still some interesting facts. We tend to look for mates who are genetically similar. The ideal genetic similarity between mates is considered to be 12.5 percent, which is ironically the percent of genetic similarity between first cousins.

Although we have seen that ancient incest was quite common, scholars still seem to exaggerate its presence in society. This may be because Egyptians tended to use words like ‘brother’ and ‘sister’ as terms of endearment and would commonly call their non-related spouses by those names. Also, incest was present in Egyptian mythology; Isis and Osiris were full cousins. These instances make scholars pay much more attention to the practice than they probably should.

Although scholars tend to emphasize the existence of incestuous relationships in ancient cultures, it was still very common, making up twenty percent of all marriages. Although they may have led to genetic consequences, people were still willing to enter these types of relationships for their other benefits, which included purifying the royal bloodline, maintaining property and status in society, and fulfilling religious goals. From this perspective, it is quite clear that ancient incestuous marriages were more or less social contracts, not the romantic nuptials many people think of them as today. Good overview of an interesting topic

Ray Ferriera

Archeology of the Taino during the Contact Period (1492-1530): The St. Augustine Model and Its Problems

During the contact period (1492-1530), there were three main native populations living on the Antilles: the Ciboney, the Carib, and the Taino. The Taino populated the majority of the islands of the Antilles, and they were the most complex civilization living on the islands of the Caribbean. Although the Taino people were a diverse group, I will focus on the populations that inhabited the island of Hispaniola (present day Haiti and the Dominican Republic).

There is strong evidence that gender was not the most significant marker of difference prior to the arrival of Spanish colonists. Taino kinship patterns, political organization, and the division of labor show us that gender distinctions were not necessarily as important to the Taino people as is often projected onto the past. The only explicit evidence of labor being segregated along gender lines is that women seem to have been the only producers of cloth while men are assumed to be the producers of more labor intensive projects (e.g. certain farming, fishing, and building practices).

The arrival of the Spanish on the island of Hispaniola in 1492, set in motion a uniquely Spanish system of oppression and social restructuring. This system of labor functioned mostly along gender lines, removing non-elite men from their homes and transporting them to work in labor camps. Women, on the other hand, had greater interaction with the mostly male Spanish colonists due to colonialist ideas about the proper role of women.

As women became intrinsically linked to the lives of Spanish male colonists a new mixed culture was developing. The public realm of the mostly male Spanish colonists existed alongside the indigenous, private realm of Taino women through domestic servitude, marriage, and other relationships in which the Spanish male colonist was the dominant force. Within a decade of contact, women’s domains of food preparation and, by extension, ceramic production in mixed households had thoroughly incorporated Taino practices through the agency of Taino women who lived with colonial men. This dichotomy between Spanish, public men and indigenous (in this case Taino), private women is known as the St. Augustine model.

Although the St. Augustine model is important in that it explicitly marks women as agents in the transformative contact period, this model inadequately examines the diversity and variety of ceramics that are found at various sites on the island of Hispaniola. In addition, the St. Augustine model assumes that there was a strict dichotomy between the public sphere of the Spanish male colonists and the private sphere of Taino women. Finally and most importantly, the St. Augustine model ignores macro- and meso-scale economic factors that, to a certain extent, limit the choices that Taino women were able to make when procuring the tools needed in and the actual production of food. well-written overview.

Cortney Linnecke

Gender Roles in the South African Stone Age

There have been many assumptions put forth by archaeologists and anthropologists regarding gender roles during the South African Stone Age. Many of these assumptions are founded on heteronormativity and the modern notion of the male-female binary. For instance, several archaeologists have put forth the idea of gendered activities and spaces during this time period: that only men hunted and created tools, that only women cooked and tended to domestic activities, and that oftentimes males, females and the activities they participated in were exclusive to specific areas.

Artifacts from South Africa’s Stone Age can be used to critically analyze and deconstruct these presumed gender roles. For example, from Stone Age tools it can be derived that both blood and plant residues occur frequently on the same lithic remains. This makes it likely that both men and women were involved in plant gathering, butchering, cooking, and possibly even hunting. Furthermore, the rudimentary design and small size of these tools suggests that hunting of large game was more about sheer numbers than skill. The more hunters, the more likely to make a kill – and considering the relatively small size of nomadic hunter-gatherer groups, it becomes very likely that women would have been recruited to help with a hunt.
The spatial layout of faunal and lithic remains in Stone Age sites also suggests a lack of gendered activities and spaces. Remains of tools and animals are distributed in the same areas across several Stone Age sites, perhaps proving that eating, cooking, tool-making, and tool-use did not occur in function-specific spaces. As such, it becomes considerably less likely that sites included gender-specific zones: if all activities were incorporated in the same space, it seems probable that genders would similarly perform their activities there and ultimately share the area.

Carbon dating from Stone Age skeletons has also provided archaeologists with evidence that hunting was possibly a gender-neutral act. Male skeletons have been found to have higher levels of carbon than women, most likely meaning that men ate more shellfish in their lifetime while women ate more plants and terrestrial animals. Theories have been put forth that men made journeys to the coast throughout their lifetime, therefore meaning that women left behind would engage in hunting and trapping of at least small game to sustain their families.

Rock art is also a valuable resource in determining gender roles in the South African Stone Age, particularly its portrayal of hunting, female initiation, and sexual interpretations of females and animals (and potentially hunting). Rock art, in some cases, has been found to make clear distinctions between the male and female form. The female figure in particular emphasizes the hips, which many archaeologists simply attribute to reproduction, but which also may be linked to shamanism or eroticism.

Considering these artifacts, it seems that we can arrive at a tentative conclusion about the South African Stone Age. Although we will never know for sure, gender roles may have been much more equalized in this period than archaeologists originally believed.

Olivia Derella

Tools of Power, Tools of Pleasure: A Contextual History of “Sex Toys”

“Sex toys” in certain cultures across history reflected gender roles and societal beliefs, and the context in which these objects were used helps refine our understanding of them.

Primates are observed to use stones and branches as masturbatory tools (Vasey 1998). The earliest human evidence of possible sex tools are Upper Paleolithic phallic “batons.” Despite phallic details on these objects, previous scholarship emphasizes non-sexual uses; however, Taylor (1996) suggests that we must strongly consider sexual uses of the objects, which may have been inserted vaginally, orally, or anally. Taylor offers the “Grimaldi Figure” as supporting evidence for sexual use of “batons.” Though the figure was originally thought to be intersex, displaying both breasts and a penis, Taylor posits that it may represent two figures, one inserting a dildo into the other.

Figure 1: Drawings of phallic batons (Taylor 1996:Fig. 5.6-5.9).

Figure 2: The Grimaldi “hermaphrodite” (Taylor 1996:Fig. 5.10).
The “Grimaldi Figure” further demonstrates a key issue in analyzing historical dildo use: if an image portrays sexual use of phallic objects, does this imagery reflect reality of sexual behavior of the time? Ancient Egyptian (Manniche 1987), Chinese (Saslow 1999), and Indian (Penrose 2001) texts illustrate harem women penetrating themselves or other women with objects; Penrose believes the Indian depictions to be representational, while Saslow views them as metaphorical. No physical evidence indicates whether women used these objects overtly for sexual stimulation, and if so whether it was accepted behavior, or if the images and text were merely pornographic. The concept of compulsory heterosexuality suggests that lesbian sexual activity was ignored if women were married and producing children.

Classical Athenian sexual politics, oppressive of women, highlight the strict limitation of female sexuality to the values of chastity and motherhood, with images of married women always clothed (Keuls 1985). However, pottery with graphic depictions of nude women using dildos exists. Because the social context deems unlikely the use of dildos among Athenian women, the female figures in the images may have been imagined, or hetaerae, period courtesans. Again, it is difficult to determine whether the depictions were mere erotic images reflecting societal phallic fixation, or whether hetaerae engaged in these behaviors.
The invention of the vibrator in Europe reflected gender beliefs of the late 1800s and was inextricable from the diagnosis of hysteria, a socially constructed disease meant to oppress female sexuality and non-normative womanhood (Maines 2001). Vibrators were used to induce “hysterical paroxysms” (orgasms) to treat hysteria. Though this seems antithetical to goals of oppressing female sexuality, an androcentric perspective prevented doctors from imagining women sexually stimulated without phallic penetration. Home-use vibrators were sold from the late 1800s until early 1900s, marketed as female health-aids. However, sexual vibrator use in “stag films” of the 1920s led to strictures against their purchase, some currently maintained.

The consumption of sex toys continues to be influenced by context in today’s capitalist society. While sex may once have been a class equalizer, aesthetically elegant sex toys are now marketed as aspirational luxury accessories needed to elevate a higher-class love life (Isaacson 2012). With these exclusive tools, class structure is constructed around sex itself.
Gregory Palermo

According to archaeologist Rosemary Joyce, one of the major problems we have when engaging with the past is the imposition of our preconceptions about gender and sexuality onto the history of other cultures. This presentation seeks to extend Joyce’s ideas to the selective way in which we interpret and represent our own culture’s past, particularly that of the 1960s through AMC’s hit show Mad Men and its “paratexts” (Gray 2010, 2).

One of such texts, Jim Heimann’s coffee table book Mad Men: Mid-Century Ads: Advertising from the Era, The Sixties, is a perfect example of this selective representation. The book offers a sample of ads that are scandalous and sexually provocative; they depict the affairs, flirtation, promiscuity that we come to associate with the 1960s as a time of sexual liberation. While the ads are supposedly progressive, however, they are also consistently gendered according to prevalent stereotypes: Wolfschmit Vodka depicts phallic vodka bottles courting fruits normally used in mixers; Smirnoff reminds a man that he is “the boss.” These ads reinforce stereotypical connections between alcohol and masculine courtship and control.

The link between alcohol, control, and masculinity is one made explicit in Mad Men. Masculine control is often exercised in the show through alcohol as a tool in seduction, but it is also performed in spite of alcohol—it is the ability to remain in control despite a three-martini lunch.

This type of “elegance, coolness, and pride of appearance” is what critic Heidi Brevik-Zender suggests that Don Draper (the show’s protagonist) performs through his business attire, a quality she suggests that the show “represents…as a universal, even quintessential quality of 1960s manhood” (33). She contrasts the public, suited Don with the private, casual Don and recognizes the “sentimental pull” of these scenes on the viewer; the fiction is that he or she sees the ‘real’ Don.

Ann M. Ciassulo uses this contrast between the performance and [suggestion of] the real to distinguish between what she calls “positive” and “negative” nostalgias that viewers of Mad Men experience: the the regular sort of “positive” nostalgia invoked by idealized images is complicated by depictions of “sexism, homophobia, [and] racism” (14). The show, she says, “does not invite moments of uncritical nostalgia.” The idea is that Mad Men is a “thinking person’s series” that is critical of 1960s culture—and, for that matter, nostalgia itself (18).

Mad Men and its paratexts, however, rely on nostalgia in order to sell products to men: the show itself, the Mad Men fashion lines at both Brooks Brothers and Banana Republic, and Heimann’s book. A sample of ads containing alcohol from nine 1964 issues of LIFE magazine includes a fewer number of provocative or masculinity-driven ads than Heimann’s book suggests is the norm. This fact suggests that the preoccupation with the provocative may be our own. Mad Men constructs problematic gender and sexual norms as something of the past, while aggrandizing the same (supposedly) outdated ideals in order to sell itself and other products. Good overview but no in-text citations are needed in abstracts.

Sean B. Neill

Bodies, borderlands, and biometrics: an archaeology of gendered mobilities
In this presentation, I aim to theorize the role of biometric technologies in the movement of bodies in, across, and through border spaces, and the role of material culture in controlling mobility, clarifying difference, and policing identity. In opposition to the Global War on Terror's discourses of risk and (in)security, I will be reading borders not as fixed and determinate lines or points, but as precarious, fluid, and shifting spaces of seepage, leak, and openness, in a constant state of emergence and becoming, an archipelago of securitized, surveilled, and biometricized geographies extending throughout the "homeland." The border does not exist in itself, but necessitates perpetual reinforcement by a panoply of technologies—facial recognition software, fingerprint scanners, surveillance cameras, ID cards, etc. Similarly, I will be reading biometric technologies not as objective, unbiased objects free from human interpretation and interference, but as complex politicized, racialized, gendered, and classed discursive strategies for policing "monstrous" populations. I begin by situating current biometric technologies and discourses within a long (racist, colonial) genealogy of other technologies that measure and classify the body: e.g., phrenology, physiognomy, and Cesare Lombroso's anthropological criminology. I then look at the role of current biometric technologies in the War on Terror and the War on Immigration. Focusing on instances of biometric "failure," I discuss the ways in which biometric technologies assert a prototypical template body (that is, a white, heterosexual, able, male, white-collar body). After teasing out the analogies between border discourses and gender discourses (the border, like gender binaries, asserts an either/or, self/other, us/them, here/there dichotomy; it demands the clarification of difference and ambiguity; it delineates "in place" and "out of place"), I follow the trans figure (the transgendered person, the mestiza, the hyphenated subject, the border's abject) in, across, and through the border, as a figure that undermines the supposed unity, homogeneity, and consistency of the border. Finally, after looking at the ways in which material culture is used (and has been used) to enforce and police identity, I look at experimentations in creative praxis that take a critical approach to the movement and identification of bodies, and that call into question the ability of biometric and surveillance technologies to "know the truth" of the body. Because meaning does not inhere in objects themselves, technologies like facial recognition software can be used not only to control and police, but also to resist, escape, and defy. Technologies can be (re)programmed, hacked, détourn ed. Ultimately, I hope to read the biometric project for its ruptures and sutures, and to tease out the intersections between gender, material culture, and geography. OK, good summary of a complex topic. You could have stripped your writing down even more for an archaeological audience but this is clear enough.

Jessica Kroenert

Title: The Effects of British Colonialism on Sexual Values in the Indian Subcontinent

As is the case with many colonized civilizations, the values and norms of Indian culture changed greatly with the presence of British colonials. This is especially true in regards to social and political acceptance of sexual minorities and sexually deviant behavior. In pre-colonial times, there was generally a far greater acceptance of sexual difference than in more recent times.

Historically, and today, sexuality plays a key role in Indian religion, especially in Tantric Hinduism, which emphasized the ideal of hermaphroditism. To followers of Tantric Hinduism, believe love and sex are of divine origin and spiritually important. Every human, whether biologically male or female is known to have male and female principles within, as can be seen in the combination of two key gods, Shiva and Parvati, into the androgynous Ardhanarishvara. There was a much greater openness surrounding what we would consider sexually deviant.

It is important to note, however, that the change of ideals brought on by colonialism were not a complete 180 degree turn around, but that there was always a stigma surrounding homosexuality. The Manu Laws, which were the most accepted authority on gender and sexuality (when?), condemned anal and oral sex. However, while homosexual practices were officially condemned, these ideals were not necessarily followed and individuals were far more concerned with breaking social caste than sexual preference. In reality most sexual practices were tolerated.

This tolerance is emphasized by the sexual authority held by the Kamasutra, which encouraged all sorts of methods of sexual pleasure between a variety of sexual partners. In representations of the Maithuna, or "sacred couples" depicting practices from the Kamasutra on the Khajuraho temples (built from 950-1050 CE), one can observe orgies, homosexual tendencies, and even bestiality.

The acceptance of sexual difference was not a foreign concept to Indian society, as is particularly evidenced by the historical significance of third gendered individuals in India, known as Hijras. Hijras encompass individuals of a wide variety of sexual needs and identities, including individuals our society would refer to as transgendered, eunuchs, transsexual, and hermaphrodites, but not homosexuals. Many of these individuals would undergo the process of castration, from which they would receive spiritual power from the goddess Bahuchara Mata. Due to this spiritual authority, the Hijra had significant cultural roles. They would earn their living by performing at births, baptisms, and weddings, and collecting alms, and were perceived as having the ability to bless or curse individuals, especially children. Due to the extremely patriarchal nature of Indian society, families would often discourage their sons from taking on the Hijra role, but for the most part, they were accepted.

With the onset of British colonialism and Victorian prudishness, sexuality changed a great deal. Homosexuality was a crime in the Indian Penal Code and there were purity campaigns throughout India. It has been theorized that since the Victorians valued masculinity, they saw themselves in the colonizing role as a masculine force effeminizing India, which caused Indian movements for independence to focus on taking back Indian masculinity, leading to a fear of effeminacy and large scale homophobia.

With this process, the Hijra lost their culturally accepted role, and are commonly degraded to working as prostitutes due to a lack of other economic opportunity. Most often, they are no longer accepted at traditional ceremonies due to western ideas causing a lack of undermining belief in their powers. The idea of reclaiming masculinity also could be seen as a causality of the modern rape culture in India. Modern Indians often claim that homosexuality is "un-Indian" which is blatantly ignorant of their rich history of sexual variety.

A bit long but well-written

Andrew Christy

Topic: Sexualization of the Dead in Funerary Art and Grave Goods
In the dominant ideologies of contemporary western societies, attitudes toward death and the dead are thoroughly desexualized. The dead are seen as sexually inert, and afterlife beliefs largely point to an incorporeal existence in the next world. In *The Denial of Death* (1973), cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker suggests that humans have a fundamental fear of death, which is regulated by investing in cultural worldviews that establish individual significance. Becker's writings suggest that we have a motivated aversion to sexuality because it reminds us of our status as biological, and thereby mortal, beings. In Becker's words, "guilt is there because the body casts a shadow on the person's inner freedom, his 'real self' that - through the act of sex - is being forced into a standardized, mechanical, biological role" (1973: p.42). This theory suggests that our contemporary funerary practices derive from this universal concern with mortality. If sexuality functions to remind us of our mortality, we will be motivated to keep it out of funerary contexts, where we are already confronted with the reality of death. Experimental research in social psychology suggests that mortality reminders cause certain individuals, but not others, to become disinterested and respond negatively towards sexual imagery and seductive behavior (Goldenberg: 1999; Landau et al: 2006). The fact that these effects are not seen among all individuals indicates that an association of sex with mortality is not as universal as Becker suggests.

Archaeological evidence reveals that sexual imagery was frequently included in the funerary art and grave goods of past cultures, further speaking against the theorized necessary connection between sex and death. Mesopotamian funerary art often contained images of Ishtar, the goddess of female sexuality and fertility (Barrett 2007). Caitlin Barrett argues that Ishtar's transcendence of sexual boundaries is symbolically linked to the transcendence of mortality. In mythology, Ishtar embodies the contradictory aspects of the virgin and the prostitute, and as an androgynous deity she also incorporates both aspects of the male-female dichotomy. She is also a resurrection figure, traveling to the underworld and returning alive. Thus, Ishtar is a clear example of sex and death being united within a cultural narrative, contrary to the predictions of Becker's theory.

Further examples come from Egyptian sources. Small figurines, or shabti, were commonly included in Egyptian burials (Meskell 1998, 2000, 2001). These figures were believed to accompany and assist the deceased in the afterlife, and some shabti were concubines. This reflects a sexualized view of the dead, again out of step with Becker's theory. The Egyptians understood the passage into the afterlife as a sexual process; the deceased reconstituted themselves through a masculine autoerotic act (Cooney 2010). In order to facilitate this transformation, female dead were buried in masculinized sarcophagi.

The Moche of Peru (Weismantel 2004) and the Etruscans of Italy (Bonfante 1996) also made prominent use of sexual imagery in their funerary art. In all of these examples, sexual imagery, including fairly graphic depictions of sex acts and nude bodies, is prominently displayed in funerary contexts, undermining Becker's suggestion that sex serves as a threatening reminder of mortality. Rather, sex can be imbued with a wide range of meanings, including spiritual and metaphysical significance that transcend mortality. The association of sex with the mortal body may simply be an artifact of the modern western worldview. Very well-written abstract.

Matthew Fitzgerald

Topic: Mulan and Han China

The Disney corporation has a large number of very popular animated films marketed primarily towards children. One of the most successful of these films is *Mulan*, the story of a young woman in Han China. This study seeks to address two primary questions: whether or not *Mulan* is an accurate portrayal of Han China, and what the overarching theme of both *Mulan* and other Disney movies is. The script from the film, along with previous analyses of the Disney corporation are utilized in order to synthesize a conclusion.

Ultimately Disney's portrayal of the historical aspects of Han China is incorrect. *comma splice* there are several glaring inaccuracies regarding the Huns being contemporaries of the Han dynasty (when in fact the Han were contemporaries with the predecessors of the Huns), and several cultural aspects of Han China or portrayed in a manner that is not fitting with archaeological evidence. The best example of this would be the "matchmaker", who historically would seek to help negotiations between a bride's family and the groom, whereas in *Mulan* the matchmaker's role is to determine whether or not a woman is fit to be married. There are, however, some relatively accurate aspects to *Mulan*, particularly some of the aspects of Confucian thought which are displayed through attitudes towards women. The concept of filial piety, respect and worship for the ancestors, is emphasized very heavily in the film, as it would have been during the Han dynasty. *pay attention to your use of commas*

Finally the overall theme that Disney seems to universalize throughout its animated films is one of female subservience and reliance upon males. While *Mulan* the character may be the most independent and "masculine" of the female leading roles in Disney films, it must also be noted that in the end she only truly finds happiness through her father's acceptance rather than through vindication from her own actions. Throughout Disney's animated films this pattern can be observed, from the need of a princess to be rescued by a prince to the inevitable ending wherein an independent female ultimately finds true happiness through marriage. This message, that women can only fulfill themselves through taking a partner, is both historically inaccurate and demeaning to women. *good summary of your paper.*

Samantha Catron

Sex, Gender, & Sexuality in the Supreme Court

I explored one hundred forty years of United States Supreme Court decisions, searching for ahistorical or trans-historical arguments as bases for rulings in court cases in some way involving sex, gender, or sexuality. I primarily examined opinions, concurrences, and dissents, although I also examined a few summaries and the transcript from the DOMA case currently before the court. Among dozens of others, I read through the opinions of Bradwell v. Illinois; US v. Bitty; Hoke v. US; Caminetti v. US; Poe v. Ullman; Griswold v. Connecticut; Loving v. Virginia; Eisenstadt v. Baird; Roe v. Wade; Doe v. Bolton; Frontiero v. Richardson; Planned Parenthood v. Danforth; Carey v. Population Services; Zablocki v. Redhail; Bowers v. Hardwick; Webster v. Reproductive Health; Planned Parenthood v. Casey; Romer v. Evans; Oncale v. Sundowner; and Lawrence v. Texas, which are available via Findlaw, Justicia, or Wikisource. Most of these were landmark cases that drastically altered or otherwise affected the legal and social treatment of sex, gender, and / or sexuality in America. I also noted that most of the cases in some way invoked the Ninth Amendment, regarding federal vs. states' rights, which seemed odd to me, or the Fourteenth Amendment, regarding equal protection under the law, which made sense.
The older decisions, circa 1873-1910, relied more heavily on ahistorical arguments than the modern cases, which were more concerned with legal technicalities than broad arguments and dichotomies. For example, in Bradwell v. Illinois, in which a married woman sought to become an attorney, the state court of Illinois argued that “That God designed the sexes to occupy different spheres of action, and that it belonged to men to make, apply, and execute the laws, was regarded as an almost axiomatic truth”, and Justice Bradley agreed in his concurrence to the majority opinion that “[Nature] herself, has always recognized a wide difference in the respective spheres and destinies of man and woman. Man is, or should be, woman's protector and defender. The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfit it for many of the occupations of civil life. The constitution of the family organization, as is founded in the divine ordinance, as well as in the nature of things, indicates the domestic sphere as that which properly belongs to the domain and functions of womanhood.” In the DOMA case currently before the court, US v. Windsor, the Supreme Court Justices are primarily concerned with establishing legal grounds for hearing the case, and less concerned with traditional views of marriage, etc. Based on my reading of the transcripts I found pertaining to that case, the Court is trying very hard to avoid discussion of tradition as an acceptable basis for the decision they will ultimately make. Whenever one of the attorneys, particularly those of the defendants, attempted to use that line of argument, they were interrupted and even derided by the justices. The Court appeared to treat such arguments in a sarcastic manner, as when Justice Breyer said, “There has been this uniform one man - one woman rule for several hundred years or whatever, and there’s a revolution going on in the States. We either adopt the resolution -- the revolution or push it along a little, or we stay out of it. And I think Mr. Clement was saying, well, we’ve decided to stay out of it and the way to stay out of it is to go with the traditional thing.” This would suggest that although such historical arguments are popular in the press surrounding the case, the Court is making a concerted effort not to allow traditional values to affect how they decide the matter of US v. Wilson.

Clear statement of your overall argument but a bit long.

Frankie Mandracchia

Topic: Adornment in Ancient Iran

Throughout the span of the course, an issue that was prevalent was the underlying assumptions some archaeologists made when looking at sex and gender. Often they would extend their conceptions of social norms of the present into the past. Rather, in observing these phenomena at sites it is helpful to see the self, including gender, as analogous to the Möbius Strip. That is, seeing the self as something that is fluid, constantly being shaped by experience but also altered by outward expression of how an individual perceives reality. Identity does not simply ‘signal’ information about someone but is also telling of the interaction of a person within the context of their society.

In looking at the case of Ancient Iran, particularly at the Hasanlu Tepe (1000-800 B.C.E.) site in Northwestern Iran, we see how these assumptions are particularly problematic. Archaeologists who initially discovered the crushed remains of the city’s inhabitants were unable to identify their sex using DNA testing. Instead, they based their data on sex on the assumption that females are more heavily adorned than males, as they saw the adornment as “frivolous”. Further study found that in Hasanlu culture that males were actually quite adorned as well. Statues and reliefs depicted kings bearing bracelets and other jewelry as Hasanlu was a prosperous cultural center that was a stop along a major trade route at that time. The presence of pins at the one of the city’s intact burial sites also provided another issue for archaeologists trying to understand the purpose of the artifacts. It seemed as though the pins were worn predominately by females, however, some men did wear them as well. While it is suggested that this could signal a third gender, it is concluded that these men were probably older as their masculinity would have faded over time. Again, this presents the issue of seeing gender as a ‘signal’ for a specific identity, in this case having biological implications. We find that an individual's biological characteristics do not always define identity or gender.

In trying to understand the prevalence of the pins among female burials, it is important to look at the historical context of the objects. During the Iron age, the period much of the Hasanlu artifacts originated, the city was being increasingly encroached upon by other surrounding factions. During this time, public spaces were walled off to increase protection and war scenes appear in art showing foreign soldiers, possibly the Uratarians. The pins are seen as an extension of the attempts the inhabitants of Hasanlu Tepe made to put on an illusion of a very secure society of which even the women were protected. Though at first ‘pin’ may be thought of as a tiny, insignificant object, the Hasanlu pins are substantial in size and could probably inflict a considerable amount of harm to an assailant. Further, in an age when Hasanlu was exposed to more cultures, the pins also provided a sense of identity for the city. A great number of lion pins were found in the city and are thought to have been a symbol of Hasanlu and its royalty.

Cross-cultural comparison of gender adornment highlights gender fluidity, dismissing the initial assumptions that of the archaeologists exploring Hasanlu. Drawing from cultures like the central plain Sioux, the Mehinaku, and Wodaabe, we see cultural practices where men are actually more adorned than females. Good overview.