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Assignment

Applying Gender Norms: Innovative Research and Reporting

In this course, we will learn both about how our society's norms around sexuality and gender are created, and also how we can recognize these norms in action in our everyday lives. In this introductory assignment, you are asked to consider what you learned in the context of your community and apply the knowledge while honing your observational skills. You will no doubt have seen and thought about some of these ideas and issues before. That's great! However, try to integrate your NEW knowledge and apply your NEW observational skills.

Careful observation is an important research skill that anthropologists use when trying to understand human behavior. It takes patience, humility and a focus on stripping away all the preconceived ideas we have from living in the world for so many years. It is important to assume nothing and really focus on what you see.

Important! Do not try to accomplish all parts of this assignment in one session.

Post all three parts of this assignment, one at a time, on your e-Portfolio on the dates marked on your syllabus. Please create a page under the course with the name "Applying Gender Norms".

Part One: Look Around You: Identify Gendered Behavior

1. Be a keen observer of "gendered behavior." Thinking about the gender norms we discussed in class, begin noticing how people behave in the public spaces you find yourself- the subway, the park, the deli.
2. Identify at least one instance in which gender norms are being enacted. What is the evidence for your identification?

Part Two: Watch Carefully: Observation

1. Observe the gendered behavior for as long as you can up to an hour at a time. Really focus on what you see and not what you expect to see- there is often a difference. What are people doing? Can you hear what they are saying?
2. Write a narrative of at least 2 paragraphs describing your observation. Do not write about your opinions or judgments of the behavior, simply describe what you see.

3. Next, write one paragraph describing how what you see is an expression of gender norms. Try and answer these questions in that paragraph: What norms did you observe? Are these norms regularly challenged in urban environments? Can you relate to how these norms are enacted in your observation? Do you feel that there are changing norms or several sets of norms around this behavior? Reflect on how this relates to the norms you regularly see.

Part Three: Share and Teach: Peer Video

1. Create a short video summarizing what you learned in a way that you think a person your age trying to find more information about what you observed would understand. Explain thoroughly but clearly. You are not simply completing this assignment, you are creating this to help others in your community benefit from your knowledge and observations. Note that this can be a very casual and simple video using a webcam- you don't need to have production skills to be successful in this assignment but you do need to think about what you learned and share it in a clear way.