

filename Feb 4 93 Rarotonga Fieldnotes Polynesia

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FIELDWORK INTERVIEWS: GENDER VARIANCE

WALTER L. WILLIAMS

Professor of Anthropology

University of Southern California

Los Angeles CA 90089-0032 USA

Today's Date: Feb 4 1993

Location of Interview: Avarua, Rarotonga, Cook Islands, South Pacific

Name: N

Pseudonym: N.

Year of birth: 1966 (now age 26)

FAMILY BACKGROUND:

Age of Mother at birth:

Age of Father at birth:

Family social status: typical islander

Attitude and closeness of S (subject) toward grandparents: ?

GENERAL SOCIAL ATTITUDES TOWARD GENDER VARIANCE

Define in your own words what is a __le-le_____

(it is important to use local term for Alternative Gender (AG below)

ex. mahu, fa'afafine, le-le, etc.)

Is that word acceptable to use in polite conversation? yes

If not, when would it be used?

Other words meaning the same thing? Auntie

Do you have any relatives who are _____ (use local term for AG)? ?

If yes, who?

How did you think of them when you were a child?

How did family treat them?

How did community treat them?

When do you remember first seeing or meeting an AG?

What was your reaction to that person?

What are the reactions of other people in your community to a person who is AG? They accept le-le.

What are the reactions of non-native outlanders to AG?

How does their reaction differ from those of native people?

Did you ever hear any stories about the position of AG years ago, in the old days? (any pre-Christianity knowledge?)

Did AG have anything to do with the native religion?

Did that religion have any special ceremonial role for AG?

Is AG ever mentioned in the Christian churches?

What is the attitude of the Christian leaders and active followers to AG?

Did you have any particular skills or abilities as a child? Yes, liked to dance, cook and stay around the house, did not like to go out fishing much with the men and boys

What kind of play did you enjoy doing as a child? stay at home

Did you play mostly with boys, girls, both, or by yourself?

Did you see yourself as typical of other boys? no

Were you in any way different from other boys? yes

If different, How? like a girl

Did others see you as different from other boys?

Who? Mo, Aunt, Sibs, friends

If different, did they ever call you names?

What names?

How did you feel when they called you this?

Did your Mother try to encourage you to act like other boys,
or did she allow you to act the way you wanted?

How much or little pressure?

Did your Father try to encourage you to act like other boys,
or did he allow you to act the way you wanted? N/A Fa deceased

How much or little pressure?

When you were an adolescent, what activities did you most enjoy doing?

Who did you spend most of your free time with?

In adolescence, who were your closest friends?

(girls, boys, both, or none?)

Did your Mother support or resist your activities?

AFFECTIONAL HISTORY:

Be careful here not to make S feel uncomfortable. Emphasize he should not answer any question which makes him feel uneasy. Emphasize I am not asking these questions because I am just being noisy. It is important that we gather accurate information so people's life histories can be compared in different cultures around the world, to see how alike or different these life experiences are. Depersonalize as much as possible, and periodically throw in some detail about my own sexual experiences to make S more comfortable and not to feel he is the only one divulging personal information. If S reveals something really personal, I try to do the same. Otherwise, few people will talk about such matters to a person who is just listening.

How old were you when you went through puberty?

At what age do you remember feeling erotic thoughts as a child?

Toward whom?

What age did you first engage in sexual behavior? 11

With whom? (category of that person; age? sex? males
relation to S?

What specific sexual acts did you do (optional if S not comfortable):

How did you feel about this experience afterwards?

Did you tell anyone? no

If not, why not?

If yes, Who?

How did they react?

Did this experience affect your long-term development?

If yes, in what positive ways?

If yes, in what negative ways?

Did anyone ever force or coerce you to have sex when you did not want to?
were you? What age were they?

If yes, what age

What acts did they do to you (optional)?

How did you feel about it afterwards ?

Did this experience change you afterwards?

If yes, in what ways?

Did you ever have sex with a relative?

If yes, what category of relative?

Your age at first contact? Their age at first contact?

How did you feel afterwards?

Did this experience changed you afterwards?

If yes, in what ways?

Get S history of love affairs and erotic pairbondings:

Range of erotic practices (optional if S uncomfortable):

Have you ever had any erotic desires for females?

If yes, explain:

If no, explain:

PRESENT SELF-IMAGE:

Describe your ideal lover:

Would you like to marry one person permanently, YES
or be single with different love partners?
Why?

Would you like to change your body or personality in any way?
If yes, explain how and why:

Is your body different in any way from that of a typical male?
If yes, in what way (optional)?

Do you see yourself as a boy/man or girl/woman,
or something distinct from either of those categories?

What does being a _____ AG mean to you?

Does your Aunt accept you for the way you are,
or does she try to make you different?
How and why?

Other relatives' attitudes?

How do you feel about being _____AG?

What are the advantages to being _____?

What are the disadvantages to being _____?

Do you ever feel depressed about being _____?

Do you ever feel lucky, especially chosen, or blessed to be _____?

Why do you think you are _____?

Ideally, what would you like your life to be like when you are ___ years old (give about 20 years into future)?

What would you like your life to be like when you are elderly?

Who do you think will take care of you in your old age?

How are most AG treated in their old age?

Have you ever thought about adopting children?

Is that ever done by AG?

KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER PEOPLES' AFFECTIONAL INTERESTS:

Would you ever have sex with a le-le?

Why or why not?

What is the range of their sexual behavior?

If you have sex with males, how do they identify their own sexuality?

Are there native males who are not _____ AG, but who only like having sex with other males?

How do they define themselves?

How do others define them?

Do they live together as a couple?

What is the difference between _____ AG and "gay/homosexual"?

How are they similar?