

# The relationship of feminism and anthropology anthropology essay

[Sociology](#), [Feminism](#)



The relationship of feminism and anthropology can convey a new development to the manner descriptive anthropologies are written and done. Lila Abu-Lughod's statement 'women's rightist descriptive anthropology is an 'ethnography with adult females at the Centre written for adult females by adult females' can be seen as an attempt to happen a distinguishable manner of making and composing descriptive anthropology. In this essay I will look at the roots of feminism and feminist anthropology. I will so discourse Abu-Lughod's statement and seek to explicate how her statement is good to anthropology and whether it is possible to make research her manner. I will secondly look at the advantages and disadvantages of the statement. I will concentrate on impressions of partial individuality and objectiveness. Finally, I will reason by discoursing some of the issues environing the authorization of adult females, and that although Abu-Lughod's statement does hold some benefits it misses the of import point. I will reason that feminist descriptive anthropology should be used as a political tool for deprived adult females and it should reflect a ``corporate, dialectical procedure of edifice theory through battles for alteration'' (Enslin: 1994: 545).

Feminism can be defined as 'both a societal motion and a position on society. As a societal motion, it has challenged the historical subordination of adult females and advocated political, societal, and economic equality between the sexes. As a societal and sociological position, it has examined the functions that sex and gender drama in structuring society, every bit good as the mutual function that society dramas in structuring sex and gender' (Oxford dictionary 2007). There are three

chief class in which the different moving ridges of feminism can be divided. Among the first one which was from 1850 to 1920, during this period most research was carried out by work forces. Feminists aimed to convey the voice of adult females in descriptive anthropology, they gave a different angle on experiences of adult females and the environing events. This brought a new angle because male descriptive anthropologies merely had the chance to interview other work forces e. g. what were adult females like. Important figures during this period were P. Kayberry who worked with B. Malinowski at LSE. She focused on faith but she examined work forces and adult females in her work.

Traveling on to the 2nd moving ridge of which was from 1920s to 1980s, here the separation between sex and gender was made by of import women's rightists. Sexual activity as nature and gender as civilization. This takes us to the nature civilization duality which is of import when we are concentrating on the subordination of adult females in different societies. The dualities between sex/gender, work/home, men/women, and nature/culture are of import in societal theory for raising arguments. Important figures in the 2nd moving ridge feminism were Margaret Mead she made a batch of part in her work on the diverseness of civilizations here she helped to breakdown the prejudice that was based on constructs of what is natural, and she put more accent on civilization in people 's development. Most of import work 's of Mead was Coming of Age in Samoa ( 1928 ) . Another of import figure was Eleanor Leacock who was a Marxist feminist

anthropologist. She focused on catholicity of female subordination and argued against this claim.

This 2nd moving ridge of feminism was influenced by a figure of events in history, the 1960s was closely linked to political agitation in Europe and North America, like the anti-Vietnam war motion and the civil rights motion. Feminism was something that grew out of these political events during the sixties. Feminism argued that political relations and cognition were closely linked with each other so women's rights were concerned with cognition and we have to oppose the cognition that was being given to us. Feminism during 1960s called for the constitution of adult females 's authorship, universities, feminist sociology and a feminist political order which would be classless.

Feminists became interested in anthropology, because they looked to ethnography as a beginning of information about whether adult females were being dominated everywhere by work forces. What are some of the ways that adult females are populating different societies, was there grounds of equality between work forces and adult females. Did matriarchal societies of all time exist and to acquire the replies to such inquiries they turned to ethnography.

This takes us to the issue of descriptive anthropology and what we understand about adult females in different societies. It became obvious that traditional ethnographic work ignored adult females. Some of the issues concerning adult females are ; ethnographies did not speak about adult

females 's universes, it did non speak about what went on in adult females 's lives, what they thought and what their functions were. When we discuss the inquiry are adult females truly subordinated, we realize that we do non cognize much about adult females in different societies. B. Malinowski 's work on the Kula did discourse the male function in the exchange of valuables. But during the 1970s Anette Weiner ( 1983 ) went to analyze the same society and she found out adult females are playing an of import function in Trobriand society excessively. Their involved with the Kula, exchanges, rites etc but Malinowski ne'er wrote about it. Female anthropologists of the seventiess would travel and look for of import work forces, and so they would analyze their values, their societies, what was of import to them. These anthropologists assumed, that work forces followed male logics in this public/private divide in line with this divide between the domestic and public sphere. They would besides presume that what went on in the populace sphere, economic system, political relations was more of import the domestic side.

The construct of objectiveness came to be regarded as a manner of male power. Feminists claimed that scientific ideals of catholicity, eternity, and objectiveness were inherently male-dominated and that the more feminist properties of particularism, empathy and emotionalism were devalued ( Abu-Lughod 1990 ) . Feminists argued that to take over male domination these female properties had to be given more importance and made clear. Abu-Lughod 's ideal manner of making research is when a female ethnographer takes portion in the descriptive anthropology, instead so taking herself, who

listens to other adult females 's voice and gives histories ( Abu-Lughod 1990 ) . The female ethnographer is able to make so because although the adult females studied differ from the ethnographer, she portions portion of the individuality of her source. The female research worker therefore has the appropriate `` tools " to understand the other adult female 's life ( Abu-Lughod 1990 ) . this is why harmonizing to Abu-Lughod female descriptive anthropology should be an descriptive anthropology with adult females at the Centre written by and for adult females. Abu-Lughod says that early women's rightist anthropologists did non truly make anything about cognition. They had good purposes but they did n't make much as they were trapped in ways of thought that had been given to them by the masculine nature of the academy.