

Sexual cultures  
between mexico and  
the united states  
essay sample



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In comparing two countries, one must analyze all the other factors that contribute to the identity of the country and the people. Between Mexico and the United States, sexual cultures and orientation between the two is and can be categorized as fundamentally different. These traits attribute to the great distinction between their own nationalities and the characterization of the cultures. Specifically in terms of its sexual cultures, Mexico and the U. S vary fundamentally because both races have different ethnic backgrounds and different cultures that govern their societal life and manner.

In talking about sexuality, we realize its importance as a historically and culturally- specific social construction being debated in modern times. We shall understand both dimension in context of Mexico and the United States by providing each country with an analysis of its sexual cultures and then arguing for the contrasting ideas that lie between them. In Mexico, sexual culture is predominantly affected by the different institutions that influence Mexican ideas at different times.

Starting from the pre-Hispanic times, such as religion, has integrated a value that is more strict and conservative than that of the United States. Today, the idea of sexual culture has becomes predominantly contested because of the diversity and the contrast brought about by the changing times and the changing influence of different countries affecting the Mexican youth or people. We shall look into more examples later. Even in the context of formal sex education, Mexico and the United States vary indifferently because of the cultures that entail gender equality issues.

Each sector in the society has different ideas regarding sexuality, from health, religion, and gender. Thus, this creates more tension, as I see it, for the Mexicans, because such tension creates a misunderstanding of what lies beyond the practical thing to do, and the norm for each society. In understanding the sexual culture in Mexico, we must stress that that the idea of sexuality in its culture is heterogeneous and is nurtured by a dynamic process influenced by social languages from different times, classes and social groups.

This phenomenon creates a more complex relationship attributing culture to the influence of modernity. The influence of modernity submerged in the cultural background and heritage in Mexico now brings a form of change that influences both sexual practice and also includes a structural change in their view of society. It is also important to note that the discrepancy between the concept of sexual culture between Mexico and United States has something to do with the institutions that influence the youth.

Government schools for example have a significant influence in both countries' perspective of the idea of sexuality and the continuous struggle for hegemony. (Kelly, 2004) Sexual identities are interpretations made by individuals in response to questions regarding about their individuality, sexually, and their place in the society. It is important to note in this context that the sexual identity is historically and temporarily bound and very susceptible to " human intervention".

With this definition entailing flexibility, the flexibility also creates a limitation as self-definition contributes to more new interpretation given in a new set of

context that is organized to become socially acceptable. The sense of sexual identity has become important in modern times as modern societies greatly affects the traditional and often times conservative societies. In this regard, individuals partake on their own struggle to find their own identity or even sometimes, experience “ identity crisis”. Sexual identities are greatly formed through sexual experiences. It does not happened over night.

Sexual experiences have a massive influence in shaping and individual’s sexual identity. (Carrillo, 2002) In this context of sexual identity, Mexico and the United States experience the similar occurrence of individuals questioning their own identities. In Mexico for example, men are born with a “ machismo” attitude that governs their description of sexual orientation and experience. As mentioned, sexual identity is brought primarily by historical factors. In Mexico, this sexual identity is greatly contributed by the patriarchal society that they have. Men have a higher role in terms of leading the family and the society.

Major influence from religion also contributes to the submissive roles of women in society. (Herrera, 2001) Hence, great gender inequality is experienced in Mexican society that affects their sexual cultures as well. This concept of sexual identities also contributes to the role of sexual labels in Mexican society. Now, they have concept of homosexuals. Although predominantly, the concept of “ machismo” still influences their behavior in the sense that men will still have sexual experience with both male and female while maintaining their “ manly” stance and image in the society.

In context of sexual identities, the U. S has a more liberal role in terms of gender equality and reasoning. The different freedoms entailed in the U. S Constitution provide to uphold the human rights of every citizen. This also influences the sexual identities (and crisis) in discovering the individual self. It is more tolerated in the U. S to define one's sexual identity because democracy entails that right; in Mexico, both history and their religion have gone in contrast with their pursuit to define their own sexual identities.

Gender equality plays a huge role in the difference between Mexico and U. S sexual cultures. Men does not have to live with their image being the dominant gender in the U. S. Rather, they know the equal opportunities of women in terms of dating, marriage and other issues on sexuality. At this point, we shall lay down specific examples to which the distinction between the sexual cultures of two countries happens. In Mexico for example, the legal age for sexual consent is 12 years old (greatly influenced by history and tradition). (Wooldridge, 2007)It means that in Mexico, it is socially acceptable to engage in sexual interaction with what is considered in the U. S as a minor.

Mexicans, brought by the patriarchal society, have been regarded as the most sexist's males next to Islamic men because of the integrated culture in their society. Because of this form of society and practice, customs such as "raptó", where men kidnap women for sex, is considered as a normal form of sexual amusement and thus accepted in their society. (Wooldridge, 2007) In the U. S, sexual crimes are very much placed under scrutiny and laws that disabled this culturally practiced customs to prevail and be caused to other people in the society.

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In terms of the formal education behind sexual culture and orientation, Mexico is still very much different from what the U. S lets its citizens experience. In the U. S, although there still remains a great debate of formal sexual education, parents are encouraged to talk to their children regarding sex. This encourages a healthy communication practiced between parents and their children in addressing one of the most common societal problems in most countries associated with sex.

In Mexico, according to statistics, illiteracy still prevails and this reflects the kind of regard they have for formal sex education. (Brooks, 2006) Usually, individuals are oriented with the concept of sexuality and sexual orientation based from what they see in their own family, or what the society tells them regarding sexuality. This limits the knowledge of Mexican people in terms of their own sexual culture and thus makes them more susceptible to the modernized idea of sexuality and sexual culture.

The limiting factor and influence from the education institution of Mexico reveals how more needs to be done for the part of the government to inform Mexicans about the different sickness and disease attributed to sex.

(Gutierrez, 2006) HIV and AIDS has become a predominant social problem not just in the United States, but also in Mexico. In Mexico, the reason for such is the problem caused by the pursuit of sexual identity, thus the consequences of experimentation and quest to uncover sexual identity.

In the U. S, this is limited because of the orientation about the safe practices during sexual intercourse. Fundamentally, there are great differences regarding sexual cultures both in Mexico and the United States. While

Mexico's sexual culture is still predominantly traditional, and has much regard for culture and tradition and the norms socially constructed, the United States entails a more liberal and more orientation with the regards for formal sexual education and the freedom to pursue each individual sexual identity.