There are factors which not only affect an individual but are influenced by the individual. Factors such as society and history are factors mentioned in the readings following this idea. Margaret Mead mentions the difference between three primitive tribes. In one tribe women and men both are passive and calm but in another they are the complete opposite they are violent and aggressive and there is a third tribe which is the median of both sides of the spectrum represented by the tribes. All tribes although very different on the way they act are affected by the thought that their culture has made such behaviors for men and women but for their behaviors the culture has been established in such a way. Just as these tribes were observed elementary school children were observed to monitor the gender role in school. Same sex groups formed with very little mixing or no mixing because of the different mentality among each group. Sara Fenstermaker accounts stories which transformed her to the feminist that she is. Fenstermaker states ?Individuals, the history that makes them, and the history they make are unique not because they emerge at particular moments,... itself a product of individual action and social structure.? Fenstermaker's transformation and all the other observations in the other readings demonstrate the idea of how we are all apart of this society that makes us who we are and how we affect the society that we live in.

My question is how those who are influenced by society the most such as minorities are able to in turn affect society? Why is it so difficult to change their life struggles caused by the repression from society?

When telling an individual biography, does it not include the views of society nonetheless? If the individual is created by society wouldn't the individual unconsciously analyze the life in regards to fulfilling what is expected of us in our society? In the emotional story, fear led to curiosity and then self-development, how is that possible? What happens when the gender roles in the home switch? How is explained for homosexuals?

Sarah Fenstermaker explains her life through three different kinds of stories. She talks through an emotional story that talks about her childhood and how she grew up, a political story that talks about her life throughout college, and an intellectual story about her life after college. Her life was kind of similar to the lives that we live now. Her parents went through the depression, and we are going through a recession as of now, her elementary and middle school tales seemed accurate. As of right now we are all in college and trying to find what we are good at. However, there is one thing she mentions, "It was always assumed that if one did housework and child care, one has less power than if one didn't, presumably because no one with any power would ever do any." In the time that we live in
now, that statement can be true and false. Most people in power have people to
do that kind of work, but other people that have power tend to do that work by
themselves because it see
ms more appropriate. In reality these jobs however seem to be left to women
instead of men. What makes it so that men are more superior to women in this
type of work and work environment? Why is it that men are the main provider,
and women are the ones that take care of the homes and the children? Also,
What kind of power is it that people who do not do this kind of work have? Is it
the money, the fame, or is it who they know and who their ancestors were?

Fenstermaker adresses how society must be understood as a process
constructed historically by individuals who are constructed historically by society.
By offering glimpses into three aspects of her life, she aims to demonstrate
exactly how society plays a role in formulating an individuals thoughts and
opinions. She is able to accomplish this by literally laying out her emotional life
as a child, political life as a student and intellectual life, mainly emphasizing on
her career especially here at UCSB. I agree with Fenstermaker when she
addresses sociology as an ambiguous field because humans and institutions themselves are quite complex. She goes on to argue that because of this, such
work in sociology should mirror this sometimes intangible form and be less
theoretical. She lays out two approaches to sociology: showing specific views
and outlining main points, and a storytelling approach leaving more room for
confusion and interpretation. Does this mean that she stands
for the more ambiguous approaches since she practices this form in explaining
her life, in this very essay? If so, shouldn’t it depend on the context and purpose?
Educationally, room for interpretation may translate as room for error. Isn’t a way
to lay out the facts without any “confusion”, then somehow transfer those ideas
into such things as stories or direct examples?

In Sarah Fenstermaker's article, it became apparent to me that the feminist
movement was quite an underdog movement during the dramatic political
upheavals present in the last half of the 20th century. It must have been terribly
difficult to galvanize a new force and way of thought, having to come up with and
piece together ideas without any prior reference. Rather than asking more about
the intellectual part of her story, I'd like to know more about the emotional journey
during her development into the feminist she is today. Was it hard to promote the
ideas she was studying? Surely the predominantly male intellectual
contemporary base presented quite an obstacle. How did she personally deal
with the skepticism, belittling, and criticism? From my own personal experiences,
I know it is terrifyingly difficult to live or promote life outside of the prescribed
gender norm. Is there any advice she could give us for our own selves in this
battle for better gender equality? What can
we do to help educate and correct people so ingrained in their own perceived view of gender that they may even ridicule and profess hate towards those fighting for better equality?

I found this week’s reading especially interesting because in comparison to the other readings, Sarah Fenstermaker’s piece is composed of many stories. This allowed me as a student to truly understand Fenstermaker’s points because she gave direct examples opposed to the norm, which are studies. This approach to conveying her sociological viewpoints enabled me to understand first hand the severity of certain issues.

The issues that I found most interesting were Fenstermaker’s intense compassion for both women’s rights and racial rights. In lecture on Tuesday, we learned about gender issues, which is usually somewhat similar to racial issues, and that lecture gave me the background information necessary to fully understand the stories. Over twenty years ago, when she was in school, Fenstermaker noticed the differences between men’s and women’s rights and the same went for rights of difference races. She did not approve of these inequalities and did all that she could to give her support to equality. This inequality really demonstrates the sociological differences between men, women, and different races, and these unfair treatments have always been intact. Real life accounts such as Fenstermaker’s prove that the mindset of sociological gender institutions constantly do take place in all sorts of environments and although they are sociologically normal, we should take extra consideration to try to solve these discriminations.

QUESTION: Because gender institutions are sociological, meaning they are embedded in people’s minds by nature, do you think there will ever truly be a perfect balance between men and women?

In Fenstermaker's essay, she takes on the feminist point of view and says, "Men and women may share a living space, but the maintenance of that space affects primarily wives" (222). Though I am a woman and believe in equality of the genders, I can't help but feel that her ideas are through the eyes of a woman who is upset that society has placed women in a category of "taking care of the man and child." Looking at this from the opposite point of view, a man could feel like a woman who simply stayed home and cleaned, wasn't doing her part in contributing to the family. While he went off to work to earn enough money to support the family, the woman was sitting at home, resenting him for not helping with the things she does to take care of him, overlooking that all day while she is cleaning, cooking, etc., he is providing for her and their children. I don't feel that this
essay is a fair portrayal of our society because the woman could, just as easily as the male, search for work. If the roles were turned and a man was complaining of this story, that the woman in his life had the "easy job" and the man had "frequent bouts of despair" how would feminists view this man? How would they judge him? How would they react?

In "Womanspeak and Manspeak" the authors: Nancy Henely, Mykol Hamilton and Barrie Thorne reference some gestures and physical actions that are typical of domination and submission. These Dominating gestures are stated as being "male" gestures, and they are typical done by men in high positions of power. The "female" gestures are that of submission and are typical to female positions under powerful men. My question is: if societal institutions influence how women and men cope, deal with uncomfortable situations and command space, do you think that these gestures are the reasons why men typically "succeed" and hold more power or do you think the gender inequality taught by society prepares men better for positions of power and teaches women to cope and accept their submissive roles.

After reading "Womanspeak and Manspeak," by Henley, Hamilton, and Thorne, I found myself in utter disagreement with nearly everything noted in the article. On page 151, "...males in our culture have more freedom and encouragement to express their sexuality..." Think about the very prevalent example that we witness every weekend spent in Isla Vista- girls walking around in half-of-nothing on. If that isn't expressing sexuality than I don't know what is.

Margaret Mead discusses the personality traits of the different genders that make up different tribes, not connected to the western ideology. She elaborates by describing the differences between the males and females of three different tribes. Concluding that the gender roles are assigned from the society in which people are raised in, basically saying that gender roles are learned. But what does this say about homosexual individuals, like in today's society? I am not saying all homosexuals share the same personality
traits, but let's say there is a homosexual with very feminine traits. Yet this person has a very masculine father and other very masculine family members, yet they still develop female characteristics. Is this something he would have learned from his mother or other female roles in his life? Or was this something he learned from society that he had to be because he is a homosexual?

Or like if a heterosexual man is characterized as having female characteristics, where did he learn those from? I mean I know Mead feels the gender roles are learned, but is there anyway it could be biological factors that determine some sense of gender roles?

In present society, when a man's attention is turned down by a woman, he compensates for his shortcomings through derogatory name-calling. Bitch, slut, and whore are often used to describe a woman who is often uncooperative, sexually promiscuous, or both. (Womanspeak and Manspeak pg 147) However, consider the individuals calling names they are the ones who are unsuccessful in their pursuit of reproductive success. That leaves the small minority of men who are socially cognizant individuals, able to woo women. What characteristics are typical to the sexually attractive male? Verbal skill, mystery, and social dominance. Womanspeak and Manspeak argues that "[T]ouching is a status and dominance signal" (pg 151). Teachers of seduction often emphasize establishing one's self as an alpha-male through touch. Anthropology professor Steven Gaulin revealed in one of his lectures that women are far more likely to be attracted to a male capable of providing financial security/power. Society doesn't tell individuals to be attracted to rich, powerful males, but rather the anthropological reproduction strategy does. It's not that these "Casanovas" force women into sex, but rather they conform to the burning sexual desires of the female mind.

A key argument present within the feminist movement is that there is an inequitable distribution of power between the sexes. However, feminists fail to note that women withhold the greatest power of all: sexual
pleasure and more importantly, reproductive success. As women have become more career minded and sexually free, they have begun using their sexuality to exploit men in positions of power, only further perpetuating the reproductive success of the top men in society, creating an elite class of men confident and socially powerful. Conversely, this practice has led to sexually frustrated men with a disdain for women. Where does this practice lead? Is it possible that the feminist revolution has only led to create a social hierarchy dominated by a few successful men and an abundance of average frustrated chumps?

The readings this week were very interesting for that they worked hand and hand with our own personal life. Many of the facts that I picked up upon in the reading I could not realize until now such as the topics of males taking more space in work areas and the cootie factor among kids. I also felt the first reading by Mead was not as much connected to the overall general topic as the other readings. It seemed too much of an anthropologist view rather than a sociologist. I found the third reading titled ?Womanspeak and Manspeak the most fascinating to read for that it discusses the very diverse lifestyle society goes through and surprisingly no one has the ability to change it. It is structured in us as a child and grown a beast of sexism today.

Many can admit that the world is male dominated, I was wondering what are your thoughts about when a female is the dominate one in relationship and the term ?being whipped??

Sarah Fenstermaker's three short stories together describe how and why she came to define herself and a feminist sociologist. Though each story does not blatantly connect to her becoming a sociologist they illustrate how at every stage of life people are being formed by society and more specifically by all the institutions that they experience in daily life. In her first story she reflects on her family and how she was affected by the life her mother lead. Though at the time she was a child and
unaware of gender roles, she already sensed her mother's unhappiness and inability to free herself from her "unhappy housewife, mother" role. Seeing this at a young age prompted her to be more aware of her future, and brought her to scrutinize the institution of marriage so that when she married she realized that her reason was she "believed she was unable to live on her own." Throughout her life different institutions, her family, marriage, elementary to graduate schools, etc shaped her beliefs and opinions about feminisms. What strikes me most about Fenstermaker's story is how her personal life and that which she mastered and teaches conflict in many ways. The points she makes about women's roles in society give a negative connotation to the duties of wives and mothers, I would like to ask Sarah how her being a feminist changed the roles of herself as a mother and wife in her family in comparison to her own mother's role as a wife and mother, and how this might shape her own child's views of gender roles.

In her essay Telling Tales out of School: Three Short Stories of a Feminist Sociologist, Sarah Fenstermaker discusses the theme of ?fairness,? or more specifically, ?fairness? between boys and girls, and men and women. In her day, ?once a girl reached high school, there were simply no sports teams available? (214). Was that considered fair? In my opinion, all boys and girls should be given the opportunity to participate in any sport they desire, regardless of the stereotypes surrounding each sport.

Fenstermaker touched on the fairness of the roles in the typical nuclear family, as well. Was ?the division of household labor ?fair?? in her day? (223). ?It was always assumed that if one did household work and childcare, one had less power?? (219), thus proving that it was not fair. Men participated in little to none household duties, as they felt that their job was fulfilled in the workplace. To me, the fairness between the roles of men and women today has increased greatly, as more women than ever have full-time careers and leading positions. As a current female student in college, I feel equal to those of my male counterparts. With that said, my question to the speaker is this: How much more expansion do you see in the rights of women? Has women?s equality already reached its peak? Or is there still more to look forward to in the future?
I think it is very brave of Fenstermaker to write such a personal and emotional story of her own life. She explains a little about what her life was like growing up and about how she got into feminism and sociology. I found it interesting that she had to go through so many trials before University of California at Santa Barbara would give her the job that she was originally promised. However the most interesting part of this work is about her study of how men and women divide up the household work. I would like to know more about how this study was conducted and more of the findings. She writes that she has drawn the conclusion that since the doing of dominance and submission are part of everyday life then it can make it possible for household members to take on a certain view of household work. She says that work and gender ultimately combine to make the members of the house make choices about how to complete household work that needs to be done. I am unsure of how this conclusion was drawn. What kinds of families were studied exactly? Were they of any specific socio-economic class? Were they of any specific race? Where did they live? Have there been extensive studies on the division of household labor among homosexual relationships? If so, what were the results of these studies?

In “Telling Tales out of School: Three Short Stories of a Feminist Sociologist”, Sarah Fenstermaker talks about three different stories about her life and she describes how these three different experiences shaped her as a woman and as a social human being in society. She argues that, “society must be understood as a process constructed by individuals who are constructed historically by society” (p.209). Why and how should we see society as process? What would be an example of a social process? Process means something that takes over time. So how does this apply to the construction of society?

She also argues that “I chose sociology because I was at home with its focus on inequality” (p.215). What were some inequalities that you experience at home? And how does this apply to sociology?
and society helps to guide individual growth and development. Essentially, society and the individual become critical influences on each other (209-229). What is Sarah Fenstermaker trying to say about American society and its rituals/customs? How does she reconcile Carl Marx’s and Eugene McCarthy’s influences on her as a sociologist? Who currently influences her sociological ideals? Is someone without society unable to develop critical thought processes due to the fact that society influences the individual?

In Sarah Fenstermaker’s ?Telling Tales of School: Three Short Stories of a Feminist Sociologist,? her stories remind me a women wearing to many hats. I know she knows where she was going, but I do not. I got the concept of her search for equality within all aspects of life, within her marriage the work place, even in high school when there were no longer sports teams for girl. The question is brought up of ?what would a sociology look like if women?s experience were really present in it?? (p. 218). I do not understand how women?s experiences are not present? How do women not impact everything? Unless Fenstermaker is trying to explain it as, the inequalities of women do not allow for their experiences to be seen in the equal, but I do not think that is what she meant. So I would like to know what is meant by what would sociology look like if women?s experiences were really present in it?

Sarah Fenstermaker’s ?Telling Tales out of School: Three Short Stories of a Feminist Sociologist? discusses her personal experiences evolving from a sociologist and progressing to a feminist. Her story includes three main strands: the emotional, political, and intellectual. The emotional story describes Fenstermaker’s struggle with different emotions resulting from family dysfunction and her own ailments and interaction with her mother. She also reveals her desire to be a boy, and ultimately be someone with more power than she thought she could even attain. These early ideologies no doubt affected the rest of her life choices. The political story talks about her early involvement in anti-war efforts, and her developing passion for feminist ideals beside her already established sociologist identity. The longest thread, the intellectual story, talks about Fenstermaker’s efforts as a feminist sociologist. One main focus was a study on household work and women?s belief that though they did more work it was fairly? divided. She struggled with why this belief was so common among housewives and ultimately decided that gender relations combined with work lead to women taking charge of the duties around the house while men remain market specialists. Also, Fenstermaker’s work at UCSB started in sociology but she later became a women?s studies teacher when the department was added. Overall her story is one that reveals triumph in the area of women?s studies.
Over a period of three decades she moved from sociologist, to taking an interest in feminism, to teaching and influencing common conceptions about women’s role in society.

I was interested in Fenstermaker’s study of division of household labor, but somewhat confused about her conclusion as to why it is considered “fair” by housewives. Fenstermaker says that gender relations of dominance and submission affect household member’s stance on which duties they will or will not assume (p. 224). And earlier she struggled with the idea that social norms could be the only reason women felt it was fair for them to do more work. So I’m confused about the change in viewpoint. How are gender relations different from social norms? Are gender differences not primarily a result of social influences developing who should be dominant and who should be submissive? So basically I’m asking what the main difference is between her ultimate explanation for household duty allocation, and her previous explanation being social norms (that left her unsatisfied).

How, and to what extent do present day gender inequalities in the workplace compare to those of the mid-late nineties?

Since the norms of society have created these clear, gender roles, why do you think women find it “fair” for them to stay in the typical housewife role instead of progressing?

Do the characteristics, mind-set, or opinions of a person who is a product of his/her own environment differ depending on sex? If they do, which tendencies are relevant to which sex?

Sarah Fenstermaker broke down her life in three short stories to help her readers better understand her path to becoming a feminist sociologist. In the “emotional” third, Sarah describes her childhood and the historical context of her family institution. In lecture we talked about the Social institutions and how they shape the
individual's self. According to Professor Mohr, the institution has coercive power in which you can't wish it away. In Fernstermaker's essay she said that as a child, "I was either going to kill myself of hide the fear and reenter the world."(211), and in the end she chose the second of the two and got through life and turned out to be successful. If you can't wish away your institution, how then was Fernstermaker able to put aside the fear and get through life as if her agorophobia and childhood did not exist? If the individual is made by institutions, how do you explain the developing of Fernstermaker's self if her institution developed one self but she put it aside and developed another one?

Sarah Fenstermaker quotes Philip Abrams "Society must be understood as a process constructed historically by individuals who are constructed historically by society", Is this true for everyone? I do believe that society has an effect on gender roles and status but I believe it is slight one because an individual has the choice to not follow the so-called "norm". Sarah is a great example she didn't follow the typical female role, instead she joined feminist groups and she went very high up in her education. Would this also apply to homosexuals? Homosexuals grow up in the same social aspects that heterosexuals do, yet they don't share same sex preferences, where did society go "wrong"?

Sarah Fenstermaker never really applied her own life experiences to her sociological study of women in the domestic sphere until later on in her career. It is the fault of her mother and father in labeling her a "troubled" child. Does Ms. Fenstermaker believe that the repression of our opinions and questioning of reality stems from the institutional centered self or the individual centered self?

Women continue to fight over their rights and equality to men, yet
most women are just bystanders. If the minority of women are fighting for less prejudice and equal job opportunities then how can they expect to get anything done with so little support. So growing up in the 50's and not being expected to be anything more than a wife and mother, how difficult was it to become what you are today? Were you helped and inspired by the feminist movement which was a huge issue back then? So my final question is do you think it would be more difficult to try to get into a male-dominated occupation now with rights as they are and equal opportunities or would it have been more difficult back then, when you had the surge of the feminists behind you and supporting you the entire way through?

Sarah Fenstermaker's life stories give prime examples for the works of Thorne and Mead. If Sarah were to grow up in an era where women were more oppressed and not as vocal would she have turned out the same since her place in society would be different as well as the society itself? If she had not been fortunate enough to attend college, would feminist ideas still have reached her enough to make her want to change her situation?

By realizing that it was okay to risk her voice Sarah then fully developed not only in her personal life, but in her career of being a feminist and sociologist. Therefore, was there a time where Sarah Fenstermaker doubted her voice that she was not going to allow her opinion of the household roles out and where would she be now if that happened?

The most important thing Fenstermaker did while at Northwestern was to run studies about housewives: "the allocation of household labor and employment time" (222). She concluded that women do almost all the work at home, although men and women share the living space equally. She came to the ultimate conclusion that "the division of household labor becomes the activity around which each can determine and capacitate each other" (224). She claims to have been enlightened and struggled with finding the conclusion she finally reached, but I must not be understanding it correctly
because I don't see anything amazing about it. What exactly is the significance of the conclusion? How does it explain the conclusion to her results better than she previously had?

If our society (in the US) accepted more flexible roles in the difference of genders, would the children still separate from the opposite sex and practice the same "masculine" or "famine" roles?

At the beginning of the chapter she states that she always wanted to be a boy in her youth but then later goes on to get married and became a feminist. Were these conflicting ideas just part of her self-discovery? Was she confused about her identity? Or was she evolving as she grew as a person?

According to Sarah Fenstermaker (1997), people should realize that "Society must be understood as a process constructed historically by individuals who are constructed historically by society". [She details this with her three areas of life stories.] What other things can we categorize as "constructing" us in society and to what extent?

If I was able to talk to her or have a conversation with her, I would want to know what caused her to switch from being a feminist to becoming interested in sociology. I understand that feminism relates to gender inequality which I suppose would eventually lead to sociology, but was there a certain turning point where she just realized that sociology was what she wanted to study? Was there a certain event or something that caused a revelation towards sociology or was it a gradual realization?

How did she feel after her study when she realized that women were okay with the life they lived? Additionally, did it bother her that at the end of her study she concluded with the same explanation everyone else did??norms made them do it (pg.223)?? And in the
end how did this study affect her life and how (if it did) did it change the way she viewed her life as a feminist and as a woman?

How long can an observation be used before it becomes obsolete? Does the high level of technology and information separate the children of today from their peers of the past in terms of child development? Why is it that boys and girls develop their own unique styles of play? Does one gender assume domination because of the language or does the dominant gender create a language that reflects its domination?

1. When reading Fenstermaker’s paper, I was intrigued to find out more about certain topics she talked about like her personal troubles, and the moral lessons taught by institutions. Her An Emotional Story gave me an insight to the way her childhood life was. Having a dysfunctional family affected her deeply that she saw no other way to deal with it other than hiding it and continue with life. Her statement “I carried the secret fear that someone would find out I wasn’t entitled to that decision to be in the world (pg. 212),” surprised me because to me it seemed as if she was in a conflict with herself. Could this be that after revealing her “I” to her parents by being a “difficult child (pg. 211),” she noticed that her real problem would go unseen, so she chose to hide her “me,” and face the problem herself? Did she manage to overcome her troubles? If so, in what point of her life did she accomplish that? And what contributed to it? Her moral argument that “real institutional mistreatment at the hands of bullies teaches lifelong lessons- if one survives (pg. 221),” caught my attention because of the gender attack it exemplifies. From what we discussed in class about malleability of gender roles, I believe that her bulling was due to being a woman. Or do you think if she were a man this type of bulling would occur too? Did being a socialist and feminist contribute to her survival? What does she think helped her get through this? What is the most significant moral lesson that she learn from this experience? Does she think that being bullied made her stronger? I seemed to me she went through harsh struggles before getting to where she is today. But her establishment of the woman’s studies major was a great accomplishment.
Barrie Thorne and Zella Luria in "Sexuality and Gender in Children's Daily Worlds," discuss children's play and examine its implications for relations between females and males. Discussing sexual scripting, the ways in which gender is constructed and how sexuality coincides with male and female performance, especially amongst each other. "Boys tend to interact in larger and more publicly-visible groups; they more often play outdoors, [...] Girls do engage in conflict, although it tends to take more indirect forms than the direct insults and challenges more often found in interactions among boys, and between girls and boys." Relating this to Sarah Fenstermaker's reading "Telling Tales out of School: Three Short Stories of a Feminist Sociologist" it become apparent that women are not staying within the guidelines of "expectation" of women but more as being able to strive for opportunities. So would this change the way boys and girls grow up, especially in adolescent years? Girls getting the opportunity to do what they want and become more equal to boys?

Fenstermaker states that her "earlier self" was crippled by a fear of being "discovered" and rejected. She then goes on to reveal that her goal in life was to become a doctor. During the 1950's, being any kind of doctor was not a normal occupation for a woman. In fact, it was more of a rarity. Was Fenstermaker scared, or inwardly ashamed, of being a girl? She states that she wished she was a boy to have the "most powerful position" available. The idea that men are supremely dominant was living inside Fenstermaker from an early age. Was her wish to be a boy inate or did society push its views of gender roles and gender acceptance onto her? Also, at what age does one become fully aware of society's ideas of gender?

In this weeks reading, Sarah Fenstermaker discusses events in her life that influenced her and what she does as a feminist sociologist. I feel Fenstermaker's experiences as a child in the 1950s greatly influenced her outlook on life and what she wanted to do. As a female growing up in that day and age, she was not revered for having such goals as becoming a doctor, or being interested in sports etc. I feel that these things, along with others, including her relationship with her mother, stirred up her interest in social interactions of people, and the equality of women.

I have a question regarding Fenstermaker's learnings from John Kitsuse. I
understand, to some extent, why sociology would succeed most when it is limited to "the study of social life as a social process subject to change, situated interpretation, and relations of power", however, I do not quite understand what Kitsuse meant by the "natural" unfolding of social organization as the sociological problematic." What does he mean by this?

Fenstermaker points out that individuals and the history they make are unique because they are the outcome of individual action and social structure, which relates to Philip Abrams quote, "Society must be understood as a process constructed historically by individuals who are constructed historically by society." It's not clear to me how there is a connection between individual agency and social structure compared with this "sociology of process." What are some examples defining individual agency and social structure? Does individual biography and history correlate with this social process? Are individual actions affecting the social structure and vice versa?

Society has placed certain stereotypes on males and females that affect the views that people may have upon us. In our society, the stereotype that has been placed on women is that we are more submissive, passive, and less likely to cause violence. However, in Margaret Mead's work, she described 3 tribes that placed very distinct stereotypes on woman. It was interesting to read that one tribe had the traditional gender roles; where the woman were feminine and maternal while the males showed more dominant and aggressive behaviors, while another tribe had both the male and female being dominant and aggressive. It is evident that many societies place gender roles on males and females and the children are raised to conform to this mold.

In the reading entitled "Sexuality and Gender in Children's Daily Worlds" the kids being studied played out their gender roles. The little boys were more competitive and more prone to rule breaking while the girls were more social and "playing nicely" with one another.

Sarah Fenstermaker's also showed that we are given our gender roles in childhood and it is very difficult not to conform to these traditional roles. However, she did state that is challenging for a female to not be dependent on others.

Question for Sarah Fenstermaker:
With many of the stereotypes placed on females, what was the most difficult challenge you faced in your college experience/career being a feminist scholar? Were there any limitations placed on you for being a female which kept you from achieving certain goals?

All of the articles assigned for this week were very interesting to me. What got me really thinking was Margaret Mead’s article, in which she talks about three different societies (Arapesh, Tchambuli, and Cannibal Mundugumor) and the different roles of males and females within those groups. She pushed me to really think about why our society is the way it is. For example, what is it about the U.S. that’s different than the Tchambuli, a society whose gender roles seem to be opposite of ours, with their women that are aggressive and industrious and their men that are artistic and enjoy gossip? How did the roles of men and women come to be so divided and why? From what I understand, Mead explains in her article that a reason why three different groups can have such different gender roles comes down to social conditioning. Meaning, the roles of men and women are not determined by their sex, but they are determined by society’s passing down of these roles. I also enjoyed reading the Thorn and Luria article because it brought back memories from my childhood and the many moments I spent on the playground. However, it was a little strange reading about the girls not participating in any sports because I feel like all I did during my recesses at that age was play touch football or soccer. Do boys play sports on the playground because it’s in their nature or because they saw the boys from grades above them playing them? And do girls sit around and talk because it’s what they must do or do they learn to do so from observing grades above them? Where do these behaviors originate from?

In Sarah Fenstermaker’s article, "Telling Tales out of School", she discusses the relationship between household labor and gender and determines that gender may serve as a warrant for household members? claiming particular relationships to, or stances toward, household labor?work and gender combine, and the division of household labor becomes the activity around which each can determine and capacitate each other?. Could gender then be considered not only an act of social conditioning as witnessed in children’s play (Thorne and Luria article) but also as a means to provide a particular structure through which a family unit can function and thus survive? Specifically, does society condition human beings through the notions of gender to behave and perform in a particular manner in order to harmoniously adapt to this socially constructed design of a household? Is gender the model society provides for us so that we can function within the boundaries of the “family” structure?
Professor Fenstermaker, in our readings we have learned of various tribes throughout the world with gender roles very different from our own. According to our own societal standards gender roles are reversed or blurred into nonexistence. Is there any reason why the gender identities of these tribes developed differently? Would particular environmental factors change the role of one specific sex, the other, or both? If so, what is this factor, or combination of factors?

Fenstermaker describes the academic debut of feminism first as the naming of a problem, followed later by the problem actually emerging in society. More specifically, she describes the development of feminism as a new theoretical context within which to view adversity. Specifically, how is the women’s view been left unacknowledged by contemporary sociological scholars? What new insight does viewing sociological constructs through the lens of a feminist perspective bring to the field? How has the creation of a framework within which to view adversity changed the way women function in commonly stereotyped situations (i.e., when female children are aware of pigeonholing, do they tend to rebel or fulfill expectations)?

You (Sarah Fenstermaker) mentioned that all of the separate life stories you tell about yourself ("An Emotional Story", "A Political Story", and "An Intellectual Story") came together at UCSB where you became a professor, fighting for equal treatment as a woman. Do you believe that all persons' lives can be told in a way that emphasizes the importance of circumstance and opportunity? Do you think that there are there some people who operate in a more independent way and are not dependent on societal circumstances alone? In other words, are there people with inherent motivation or destiny that will achieve their goals inevitably, no matter what society they are surrounded by?

Honestly I greatly enjoyed the article "Womanspeak and Manspeak." Unlike some of the other articles it was short and easy to understand and relate to. Topics such as the sexist bias of English, the differences in self-disclosure and nonverbal communication were all easy to think about through my real world experiences. The work really seemed to be from a feminists' perspective, in the way it puts a negative spin on anything men do for the most part. Such as how, "men exercise and maintain power over women by withholding self-disclosure" (111.) I must admit that for the most part, this article is very truthful, but it does not ever seem to be empathetic to the male in any apparent way. My biggest fault with the whole argument was the "Breaking the Mold-a First step" chapter. Simply, it told women to change everything they are doing nonverbally.
Is it wrong to assume that in addition to social cues that we learn, our nonverbal actions are somewhat determined by the differences in sex between male and females? Just the fact that males are larger and stronger than females causes me to question the efficacy of women consciously trying to change how they naturally act.

Throughout the autobiographical piece by Sarah Fenstermaker, I found a common theme to be her lack of self-recognition when it came to choosing between her internal feelings and what she knew was right, and the societal norms that surrounded her. For example, she found that when she was at Northwestern with her husband, she was treated as his wife instead of the scholar that she knew she was. Initially, she accepted this. However, Fenstermaker also reveals in her work that although she was unsure of opinions of her by people in her life, she was very sure of what she liked. She knew that she loved herself when she was working to stop the Vietnam War and she knew that she liked sociology because it was the process “revealing the secrets of social interaction” (215).

When Fenstermaker started studying gender sociology and researching the relationships between males and females, she turned to examine the roles of men and women in the household. However, there was a great lack of support for her research as many people resented her notion of household work being considered a job.

**QUESTION:** How did you respond to the resentment from the male and female critics of your experiments and studies, and why do you believe they saw your idea as unrealistic and not worthy of testing? Today, is there still a large population of people that do not see household work as a job for women?

Perhaps the most gratifying part of Fenstermaker’s piece for me was her realization that in the end, even after struggling to get a job and eventually tenure at UCSB, what she does successfully today would have only been a dream to her younger self. Over time she learned to grow into herself while being watched by other people and I think that is something we all can relate to whether we are females or males.

Mead discusses the temperaments of primitive societies, categorizing genders by the behavior they exhibit. Although she makes a point that behavior isn't sex-linked, she does not discuss what happens to those who do not fit into these neat categories. What happens to a man who displays "feminine" traits, according to the certain society? What happens to a women who goes against the
norm of her culture and neglects her children (something that would be perfectly fine in the Mundugumor society)?

In the beginning of her paper "Telling Tales out of School," Sarah Fenstermaker suggests that there are only two ways in which to honestly detail a story: the first way would be to wrap the entire story up nicely by explaining what the person did in order to make their lives end up a certain way and the second would be to tell the story as one influenced mostly by opportunities surrounding a person. She also quotes Philip Abrams as saying that "Society must be understood as a process constructed historically by individuals who are constructed historically by society." To my understanding, that suggests that the relationship between the individual and the society surrounding them is very cyclical. Basically, society influences the individual and the individual ends up creating society. But what happens when people want to change the way society works or create the opportunities that, as Fenstermaker suggests, end up defining their lives as a whole? If one wishes to make a difference and influence the way they and the people around them conduct themselves, do they have to go against what they have been, basically, programmed to do all their lives by the society that made them individuals?

Question 2: Referencing an excerpt from the emotional story, "Up until a decade ago virtually all my life choices were fundamentally influenced by a crippling fear of being discovered..." pg. 210. This agoraphobia was one that I took from the readings, crippled your ability to become a leader or a prominent figure in what looks to be your own personal view of society. Seeing as how you went to the doctor's office quite often you said you were inspired to become a doctor and this was in your eyes the most prominent and exalted if not respected figure in your life. Would you say that this opportunity to become, not a doctor, but a successful mainstream working woman, and aspire to your own personal goals, while at the same time overcoming your agoraphobia, stemmed from institutions that provided the opportunity? Such as the frequent doctor visits, schools, and the workplace. Or would you say that it was your want and need to overcome the gender disadvantage that was so prominent in much of your life?

"Individuals, the history that makes them, and the history they make are unique not because they emerge at particular moments, or because they are crafted in specific fashion, but because they are the outcome of a unique process, itself a product of individual action and social structure," Sarah Fenstermaker explains at the beginning of her autobiographical paper on her life as a feminist sociologist. I think that this quote does a great job explaining one of the most important ideas of sociology. The emotional, political and intellectual institutions that Sarah Fenstermaker was a part of
helped her to create the feminist self that she has then used to impact society. If we use the theory of the “I” and the “me” developed by George Herbert Mead, was Sarah Fenstermaker reflecting on the actions of her “I” to develop her “me”, which led to the discovery of her feminist beliefs, which led to the development of her own institution, the Women’s Studies Program at UCSB? In the article entitled “Sexuality and Gender in Children’s Daily Works” by Barrie Thorne and Zella Luria, sexual scripts are described as what society deems acceptable when it comes to sexual interaction. It is said in the article that sexual scripts are related to the adult society’s view of gender. Does that mean that sexual scripts will dramatically change as the adult view of gender shifts over time? Did time periods such as the “sexual revolution” of the 60’s have a large impact on sexual scripts? The article claims that peer-groups help to define the sexual scripts for adolescence. If outside groups are controlling what is appropriate in an intimate relationship, is this an example of how institutions have an effect on the development on the self? The article also states that girls often engage in conflicts that take more indirect forms than the direct insults of boys. It seems that society accepts that it is appropriate for boys to take part in physical fights and for females to remain proper at all times. This is enforced in the violent male characters in the Disney movies that most children watch on a regular basis. Could the difference in the way males and females handle conflicts be due to the societal expectations forced upon them as early as infancy?

In Fenstermaker’s essay she talks about the social “norms” of women in the household. She talks about how sad it is to always see a woman straightening up the living room and cooking for her children. So I wonder what she thinks should be expected of women. Should the work be spread evenly between the man and woman? Or should all women have a job and not simply be housewives? When she had a child did it change her opinion on any of her beliefs? Maybe once you go through the experience of having a child you get some sort of motherly instinct that makes her want to stay home and care for a child. What does she do different in her daily life than a typical woman? Does she think that some of these gender issues are instinctual?

She talks about studying the women in their households, interviewing them and observing. I wonder if that really encouraged her to attempt to change this stereotype for other women. When she first came to UCSB did she think that she would go so far as to help start the Women Studies Major and become a professor on her own?
In her piece, "Telling Tales Out of School: Three Short Stories of a Feminist Sociologist," Sarah Fenstermaker goes into detail about her life from both a sociologist standpoint and a feminist. She splits the story into three different parts, and discusses certain aspect of each one. Much in the same way that Nancy Henley, Mykol Hamilton and Barrie Thorne discuss the harsh realities of gender inequalities in their article "WomanSpeak and ManSpeak," Fenstermaker goes into the troubles she found as a woman in practice. The reading really delves the reader into her mind. My question for her is despite all of the troubles that you have faced over the course of your life because of gender and society, how close would you say we are to achieving complete gender equality. Is that even possible?

After hearing of how Ms. Fenstermaker reflects on her relationships throughout gradschool, specifically her observations on how the authority of her somewhat antisocial husband as professor to her closest friends; i pose the following question.

Is it possible for people to make genuine relationships within the dynamic that you Ms. Fenstermaker found herself during grad school. Is authority always pervasive into a personal relationship, or can a genuine connection be formed outside the grasp another preexisting relationship that has an inequitable power dispersion.

In the introduction of your essay *Telling Tales Out of School*, you mention the value of life history to sociology. The subsequent autobiographical life stories in the essay and your analysis of them shows the unique perspective on sociological problems that can be gained from viewing an individual life as a whole. One such problem you pose in your introduction: "What is the relation between individual biography and history, between individual agency and social structure?" (pg. 1 Fenstermaker). This is a fundamental question in sociology that is not easily answered. And yet, using your own life story, you paint a fairly clear and plausible picture of your own relationship with social structure and history.

`Clearly, viewing a life in its entirety offers us a unique opportunity to answer difficult sociological problems. However, most sociological experiments focus more on analyzing groups of people at specific points in time in their lives. For example, in your work with household labor you were studying adult women in their 20's or 30's and certain gender role studies have focused on children in elementary school. In this way, sociologists usually examine snapshots of life rather than the whole. But given your success at using your knowledge of you your own life as a whole to gain insight into a fundamental sociological problem in *Telling Tales*`
**Out of School**, do you believe sociologists would benefit from taking a temporally broader view of the lives of the people they study, assuming it were logistically possible?

In her essay, Sarah Fenstermaker describes herself as a "feminist sociologist." Her feminist point of view was greatly influenced by the women of her undergraduate school years, and she was educated about sociology primarily by the men of her graduate school years. However, she demonstrated inclinations towards both areas when she was just a little girl--when she wanted to be a pediatrician. What made her change her mind? Had she been a pediatrician, she still would have been able to express feminism by being in a profession dominated by men. Therein lies my confusion. In her essay, she does not elaborate on what makes her a feminist. What exactly is she fighting for? Equal rights? More respect in the workplace? In other words, what should women learn from her?

In “the emotional story,” Fenstermaker states “For twenty years thereafter I carried the secret fear that someone would find out I wasn’t entitled to that decision to be in the world”(pg. 212). She continually talks about her fear throughout the rest of the essay as well. What does this mean? I don’t at all understand what ‘decision’ she means, nor do I really understand what the fear is. Is the fear because she feels unequal or untalented, or simply because she is a woman? Originally she says "schoolphobia," but later on it doesn't seem like that is still what the fear is. Even if fear of going to school is the fear, I don't understand where that fear stemmed from. Also, she states numerous times how she was “fooling everyone.” What exactly was she fooling them about? I feel like she the ‘fooling’ had something to do with her fear, but I can’t really make the pieces fit.

Sorry if this question is uninteresting, but it was the only one really bugging me!