

March 8

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Sociology 100 - Winter 1993

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MINI-ASSIGNMENT #3

Some social scientists believe the "discovery of paternity" led to dramatic changes in a society's gender system and its overall social structure.

Imagine how things might be arranged today, in Canada, if the role of male semen in the conception of human life was still unknown around the world.

Would there be marriage? How would families be organized and how would children be named? Would there be differences in sexual behaviour and activity, for both men and women? What other differences might there be in gender relations and social structure?

[Please confine your writing to this page.]

Thousands of years ago, and in some areas until quite recently, marriage was a union designed primarily around economics, not children. Birth was considered to be a divine gift, the Spirit Children a community responsibility and a community asset. "The discovery of paternity" has added a new level of individual jealousies and competition into a logical order, much to the detriment of our children.

The implications of the population explosion that would have resulted from the continued lack of that knowledge are staggering; the specifics of social organization much easier to comprehend. ~~Though~~ Marriages would continue, as they do with couples who want to remain childless, but with children still thought of in the old way, their care would have a much greater priority with the decision-makers. I see the gender roles coming much closer to equality, with "homemaker" being everyone's role, not women's. Children would still have the beautiful types of "spirit-names" used by North American Indians (for example). The jealousies produced by "owning" children would vanish, and children would experience equal opportunity for education and jobs; with a community sense of responsibility, the enormous problems of unwanted, unprotected, abused children would end. The discovery of paternity should have been combined with the "divine gift" theory.

Very thoughtful