

Study of the cultural sexuality: a matter of honor and shame

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Abstract: This research seeks to understand the nature of a collective society. It seeks to attain knowledge about the role of sexuality and women in the context of a collective society. I intend to ascertain information through interviews and qualitative research with Turkish Cypriots. My questions will relate to a specific topic and how honor and shame are present. In the end of the research I hope to find connections between the concepts of honor and shame and the idea of sexuality in a collective society. I also want to note if morals and ideologies of the aforementioned concepts shift with each new generation. I will use a specific case to pursue the answers to these questions.

Part I: Introduction

Research Question:

How are women's shame and honor constructed in a collective society, specifically in the Turkish Cypriot Community?

Introduction and statement of the research question:

The topics discussed in my research will directly pertain to the identity and social construction of gender. If gender norms are not followed then there are certain consequences and stigma's associated with the individual. The terms of honor and shame are a global phenomenon. Although they are construed differently throughout different cultural traditions they are a common element shared between societies. These terms go hand and hand with collective societies. I am using a specific case study in order to delve in depth to the concept of honor and shame. By examining a specific case, I can use it as a microcosm or paradigm for these concepts.

For example, is it important to keep an honorable place in society? Living in a home stay and seeing how people my age interact with each other led me to question the role of genders. The specific case study is directly concerned with women and the shifts of thought through generations. So my focus is more narrowed specifically on the perceptions of women.

It is important to highlight the response to questions and differentiate individual perceptions from the perceptions of the society. How would my life and role in society be different if I was raised in the new society I have been exposed to compared to America? I was immersed in the culture that was extremely different from my own and wanted to explore why I found it so dissimilar. How do you pin point the differences? I hope to gain a deeper understanding of collective society compared to the individualistic society I have been raised in. I was placed in a home stay in the Turkish Cypriot community when I started this program. I have chosen to do my research in the there because it is more accessible. I have many willing participants who can discuss the specific case study. Since the issue occurred in the northern part of Cyprus it is only natural to continue gaining my knowledge from the north. The fact that we are allotted a certain amount for Independent Study Projects forces me to only address this specific community Cyprus. Therefore I do not have any information pertaining to the Greek Cypriot population in Cyprus. I would not have enough time to give a comparative analysis of the both these group population

Historical Background:

Turkey has been intertwined with the interests of Cyprus throughout its history. It has influenced Cyprus through many facets. All the empires that touched upon Cyprus left some fingerprint of their culture. The Ottoman Empire conquered Cyprus from 1571 until 1878. In 1878 “The Ottoman Empire hands over Cyprus to British Rule while retaining nominal sovereignty” (Solomon1).Cyprus remained a crown colony and was annexed in 1914. It became an independent nation in 1960 as stated in the Treaties of London and Zurich. The countries involved in establishing this treaty were Britain, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus as they were invested at the time. This is where the problems begin to arise as “In 1964 a Government is formed without Turkish Cypriots” (1). This immediately expedites the discord between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. But Turkey still held its link due to the Treaty of Guarantee. This treaty allotted Greece the United Kingdom and Turkey the right to interfere military when there was just cause. In 1974 Turkey took advantage of this clause in the constitution and sent Turkish troops to the island Cyprus after this Cyprus became two entities. The Turkish Cypriots moving northern and the Greek Cypriots southern bound spreading in opposite directions and self segregating for fear of retribution (1).The declaration of the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” (TRNC) occurred in 1983. Today Turkey is the only country that recognizes the legitimacy of the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus”.

The Republic of Cyprus became a member of the European Union in 2004. This further complicated the political situation between all involved parties, including the question of joining the European Union. As Turkey is the strongest at mostly sole supporter of the “TRNC”. This subject is still being debated today.

Background on the research question:

Gender roles of Turkish Cypriots and Turks share similar characteristics. The traditional role of the women was in the home. Their role was to rear children, take care of the house and cooking and take care of her husband. Their social time consisted of visiting other women in their houses. It was essential to maintain the honor of the family by never being sexually immodest and maintaining a positive image (Kinsey Institute 10). If these mores were not followed it would reflect on her family. Gender roles were implanted on children very young. After the age of six mixed gendered children rarely played together. The girls were encouraged to take a traditional role because this could affect the outlook of her future (Kinsey Institute 10).

The role of the women began to shift as it became necessary to have another source of money in the family. As modernization and mobilization to the city increased the gender social norms became slightly more lax. The role of the man in traditional society was that of the “breadwinner”. His role was never to take a larger part in the domesticity. Men were encouraged to socialize publicly especially in coffee houses. At a young age boys were encouraged to become more independent. Due to mobilization of Turks to Cyprus and more economic opportunities gender interaction increased. Even though boys being educated still took precedence over girls, school prolonged the interaction between girls and boys (Kinsey Institute 11).

Today are some grassroots organizations such as Women’s Center of Northern Cyprus, whom work on “empowering women, strengthening families and providing skills to youth”. These organizations hold events such as positive thinking work shops and summer camps to educate children along with social activities such as movie nights. All these are funded privately and receive no government support monetarily. Therefore it is hard to maintain and sustain these kinds of institutions because funds are not readily available.

Rationale:

As aforementioned there are many facets that go into cross cultural issues and the ever-changing roles of gender. In order to understand the roles of gender cross culturally one

must attempt to analyze gender roles. To create harmony between nations understanding is essential. If one understands then the chance of empathy increases greatly; in other terms they are not perceived as the other. I chose the terms honor and shame due to the amount of material available to reference. Many studies have been done in this area of principles. These two notions can be greatly identified with a collective society. I decided to use this term because the concepts of shame and honor are strongly present and readily able to analyze. There are many examples therefore there will be more data available and examples to compare.

I chose to focus on three specific age groups for several reasons. The chance of miscommunication is much less due to the knowledge of the English language. As my Turkish is not on a level to conduct a deep conversation the accuracy of communication is much improved with the use of English. Also, due to the nature of my research is it important to establish a trusting relationship with my participants. When a trusting relationship is nurtured and anonymity assured, a participant is more likely to speak freely. However, the interviews will include an older generation as well. It is easier to connect and interview people in my generation because we can relate on many levels. My participants are all going to college, dealing with being away from home I want to compare and contrast the generations to see if there are any perceivable differences. I want to see if opinions have changed over time and if so why? I also chose a unique path of examining a specific example. I feel that this will serve as a good example of honor and shame, as sexuality is an umbrella for the concepts of honor and shame.

Literature Review

Moira Killoran in her article “Good Muslims and bad Muslims Negotiating Identities in Northern Cyprus” uses a specific case study and sociological observations to tie in the themes of a collective society, sexuality and a patriarchal society. She does an in depth analysis of a perceived feminist in society and the nature of her relationships to others within that society. As well as focusing on a less politically active women within society. Her research found that “women generally go to public places with their families or other large mixed sex groups.” This leaves less possibility to have a discrepancy about women’s actions. If women are with their families and/or are in a large group there is no need to question their individual actions. Both women she focuses on speak about how their community consists of a “tightly knit world of gossip and social constraints particularly for women called “acik hava

hapishane” which directly translates to be open air (weather) prison (Killoran 198). This term was first applied politically as a metaphor to denote the feeling of oppression and tension from being an unrecognized nation (Killoran 184). But she applies the term in context to the Turkish Cypriot community especially relating to the women’s role within society.

This term along with “Cultural Privacy” which refers to “complaints that she could not share intimate private thoughts with anyone because everyone would find out” was another common worry of Turkish Cypriot women. That “hal etmek” or gossip was an every day occurrence in society that women were wary of yet participated in. She then further explains the different ways that two women dealt with these pressures and their resulting actions.

The relevance of this study correlates directly to my research. She conducted her research in “northern Cyprus” (as she refers to it in her article). Within her study she analyzed the “good and bad Muslim identity and relates that within cultural and historical framework. Her main goal was to come to a conclusion on how cultural controls and “attempts to subvert societal pressure” dictate “women’s gender identity particularly their sexuality” (Killoran 183). I share the same goal with taking these terms and applying them generally and to my specific case study.

Michael Herzfeld of Vassar College examines a “terminology system as an independent whole in its local setting” as well as addressing the concerns with cross cultural comparisons of the concepts shame and honor (Herzfeld 339). He begins by defining that previous research on Mediterranean values and investigates the concepts of honor that “have been used to represent an enormous variety of local social and sexual standards” (Herzfeld 339). He is concerned with the translation of the concepts and with ensuring that each “linguistic tradition” is upheld correctly (Herzfeld 339). He uses the specific example of “onore” which in Italian “only concerned the sexual conduct of the females in the household as it reflected on its male members, therefore when translating it is vital to understand the direct translation and whom it applies to (Herzfeld 341). The necessity to clarify the terms which with the researcher discusses with their participants is great! If not the data could be seriously skewed.

I also garnered the essentiality of applying the terms honor and shame in the specific social context of my research and in the community. It is also necessary even to stratify the terms within that of the individual verse the society that they live in. That the term honor most consistently throughout the Mediterranean was defined as “To maintain his honor intact one has to conform to expectations his neighbors have”. This research would support the

implication of the correlation of shame and honor in a collective society, especially evident in a small community such as the Turkish Cypriot population.

Thomas Scheff of UC Santa Barbara works to define the relationship between shame and the need to conform to societal norms. He references Emile Durkheim's theory that the collective consciousness entirely subsumes individual consciousness and that social norms are strong and social behavior is well organized (Scheff 395). He questions when social mores are violated how the consequences are sanctioned and how they influence the individual within the context of the society. He also links it to Goffman's theory that the "notion of embarrassment or anticipation of embarrassment plays a prominent role in every social encounter" (Scheff 396). Therefore with every social encounter it is important to think about the consequences of these actions, particularly if the shame of the actions will not only be reflected on the individual but the individuals' family. All this is under the umbrella term Deference Emotion System which encompasses the idea that social forces compel people to act in a certain manner in order to avoid sanctions. It is as simple as action and consequence as "we experience the system as so compelling because of emotions- the pleasure of pride" juxtaposed with "punishment of shame" (Scheff 396). This system is differentiated from formal sanctions because it is regulated on the non legal aspects. For example, It is the ability of a community to dictate the ex communication of a women after the divorce of her husband (as the blame and shame is placed on her).

This is supported when Scheff refers to Darwin's idea that "it is not the simple act of reflecting on our own appearance but what others think of us which excites a blush" (Scheff 398). When a negative stigma is attached to an individual he/she is now accompanied by what the outer society thinks inevitably influencing what he/she thinks of himself. In a traditional society where social norms are quite clear and there is no room for individual interpretation conformity is necessary for survival and to function successfully.

A Mediterranean relevance is pertinent in Cyprus as well as a Middle Eastern explanation of ideas as both influence Cyprus historically and modernly. Pastner seeks to define honor and shame and their relation to sexuality in the Baluchistan society in Pakistan as well as how the study of honor and shame is pertinent in most societies (Pastner 248). She begins by maintaining that within Islam and Islamic culture there lays an extreme dichotomization of the sexes (Pastner 248). She further aims to meet three goals which acquire to elucidate the specific code of honor and shame, relate that to social organization-kinship and historically document the elaboration of an ideology based on honor and shame

and how it relates to purdah (Pastner 248). (Purdah is the segregation of sexes physically and by the wearing of the burqa symbolically)

She emphasizes the relationship between these two concepts, the sexuality of women and how that reflects upon the male members of her family. She sets up her research under Schneiders theory that “honor and shame complement institutional arrangements for the institutional arrangements for the distribution of power and the creation of order in a society” (Pastner 251). The social controls used to preserve modesty include the mobility of the women (meaning their physical place in society in the home) and the “establishment of sexual invisibility through such items of clothing such as the burkah and the shawl (Pastner 251). These ideas resonated throughout the Baluchistan community by many statements the men made such as “A women’s shame is the shame of her husband and kin; her honor is theory honor” as well as “A man is a man he can go anywhere do anything ... a man can be bad and no one will say anything but a women is bad, everyone knows.”(Pastner 252). These quotations establish the clear roles of men and women and their personal freedoms within a strictly Islamic society in Pakistan. It also outlines the social restrictions and norms that both set of sexes are compelled to obey and their consequences.

The importance of kinship is again stressed later on in her research and their correlation to the role of the women. This can be seen in the case of a widowed woman who is dependent financially on her family and her with for economic gains. In Baluschistan and many other Muslim societies a marriage constitutes an exchange of land and other economic assets. Therefore if a women is “tainted” it effects her whole family and somewhat their chance of economic prosperity.

Baluschistan and the Turkish Cypriot population share similar traits. They both are Islamic influenced and small in population (Baluschistan about 11,000). They are both considered collective societies and stress the important of kinship roles.

The Library of Congress World Studies seeks to observe the changes in society as a country begins to shift politically, socially and economically. Along with modernization follows shifts in ideologies and expanding roles of men and women in society. This shift effects not only the marriage arena but family and economic arena as well. Traditionally when defining a family in Turkish Cypriot society it included not only the nuclear family but the extended family as well. However due to “socio economic changes in recent decades...have led to the existence of two types of families: traditional; and largely rural and modern and urban” (Congress 1). In traditional Turkish families the “father had the last word in his children’s choice of spouses” and the role of the women was to “tend to domestic tasks

while sounds dealt with...other concerns outside the home (Congress 2). This began to shift at the start of the 1990's when "young couples began to meet in groups...and if they decided to marry both parents were consulted." (Congress 2). The women's role also began to shift as urbanization occurred because they were needed to work to help financially support their family. Urbanization also affected the family structure as "large multi generational extended families were unusual." (Congress 2).

These statements are corroborated by IES the International Encyclopedia of Sexuality. There was always the importance of family involvement in their children's marriage. The preservation of the girls' virginity and honor was always vital. Some of the older traditions performed by families included "the visual display of the bloodstained sheets proving the brides virginity" was a customary (IES 3). Men had more sexual freedom than women. This changed in the 1940's when new jobs were created and the educational system expanded (IES 3). They were exposed to new ideas and became more independent as new jobs were created. The concept of "romantic love" which became apparent in the mid -1970's demonstrated that the youth were beginning to have more power in the choice of their spouses. This later translated into the approval of mixed gendered outings becoming socially acceptable.

The roles and relationships begin to form and change as modernization continues. Therefore it is only logical that opinions regarding men and woman's social interaction would differ between generations. With my specific case study it will be interesting to denote the differences in morals ideas and attitudes if there are any.

The seed and the soil is a metaphor used to describe the specific roles the male and female play in the pro creation process. Carol Delaney's research took place in small Village in Ankara that practiced Sunni Islam. Sunni Islam is differentiated from Shiite Islam by that they believe Abu Bakr was the next rightful Caliphate after Muhammad. Cypriots follow Sunni Islam as well although less rigidly. Her researches as well as a lecture received in Thessaloniki by Aigli Brouskou both argue the theory of monogenetic procreation or in metaphorical terms the seed and soil. This theory states that it is a man who gives life and women are only the vehicle through which life is given. In other words women sustain life but do not generate it. This can also be seen in women's roles within society such as "keeping the house" they are just the house not the vivacity inside it (Delaney 35).

Brouskou also stated common themes found in Turkish society that were historically traced back to the Ottoman Empire they entailed the ideas of "patriarchy, gender segregation, kinship loyalties and a hierarchal system partly based on gender roles." (Brouskou). The roles of women in Turkish society have been defined for generations. Delaney agrees and

constructs her own model to explain the patriarchal system called the “Structure of Authority”. The bottom represents the feminine space and the top the masculine authority, which is a perfect paradigm for a patriarchal society as it shows the hierarchy of power.

The practice of a patriarchal society is evident through endogamy and also with law within their own culture. As Broskou stated women had a lower and status and did not have inheritance rights. Therefore when a couple only had a daughter it was logical for them to marry a relative so any land or other inheritance would not leave the possession of the family. If the women had the power to choose then the possibility of losing assets was greater. Exogamy also introduced strangers in to the familial structure which easily would create some distrust. By keeping it in the family so to speak the family already has a pre established connection with the husband. The importance of kinship was not only for economic support for loyalty ties as well. If someone offended your family you would have an automatic foundation of support to fight back. The extreme importance of kinship is illustrated in the example of the Turkish women put on trial for killing her own so whom killed her brother. Her reasoning entailed “she could always have more sons but she could never have nor create more brothers” (Brouskou).

The Cypriot society has obviously modernized from comparatively from this example but kinship ties are still extremely relevant. Both the research of these authors was done in Turkey. As pre-established in my paper Turkey has significantly nurtured Cypriot culture.

Conceptual Framework:

The themes of patriarchy, collective society, and gender roles are present in this research. I seek to intertwine them. To establish this goal I will be using a specific case study found within the society I am conducting research. This study will be used to illuminate those themes and elaborate on how they work within my case study and how my data may be an applicable paradigm for the larger society.

I will use the theories of Goffman, Durkheim Schneider as well as the research of Pastner and Killoran to analyze my data. These sociological theories have been applied in similar research done on honor and shame. The research of Pastner and Killoran are relevant because the concepts of honor and shame were addressed in similar societies to that of the Turkish Cypriots. My data is going to be qualitative so the analysis is easily comparable to that of Killoran and Pastner.

Conceptualizations of definitions:

It is always essential to define the terms used in research. Without the Conceptualizations terms may be easily misconstrued. In being clear and to the point there is less room for discrepancy. The terms I am using apply to all my analyzed data and of my qualitative data aforementioned written work? These terms as defined are for the sole purpose of this project.

Operational Definitions:

Sex: The differentiation between the male and female based on biological organs.

Gender: The role of the male and female due to social construction and stratification.

More: Strongly held social norms or customs particular to a society.

Honor: to be held in high public esteem due to ones personal attributes.

Shame: Feeling a sense disgrace due to previous actions.

Sexuality: recognition or emphasis on sexual matters. An integral factor that may be questioned and is linked with the concepts of honor and shame for the purpose of this paper.

Virginity: Having taken no part in any other physical activity but open mouthed kissing, holding hands and putting an arm around a shoulder.

Greek Cypriot: A Cypriot who identifies with Greece culturally, historically and share a common language.

Turkish Cypriot: A Cypriot who identifies with Turkey culturally, historically and share a common language.

Republic Of Cyprus: The nation that is recognized by the European Union.

“Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus”: Area of the “north” of the green line that was established in 1983 and that is recognized by Turkey and administered by the self defined “Turkish republic of Northern Cyprus”. (As defined in Killoran’s research and terminology used by my participants)

Qu’ ran: The holy book used in Islam.

Patriarchal society: A society wherein males are the predominating ruling force and masculine characteristics are perceived as authoritative.

Collectivism: which stands for a preference for a tightly knit social framework in which individuals can expect their relatives, clans, or other in-groups to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. Individuals are bounded through these strong ties. (Hofstede1). In which positive and negative traits are reflected in the family as well as the individual.

Generation: a group of people who are close in age and share similar ideologies and morals.

Individualism: stands for a preference for a loosely knit social framework in society in which individuals are supposed to take care of themselves and heir immediate family only. In individualistic countries, solidarity is seen as organic rather than mechanical (Hofstede 1).

The individual traits whether negative or positive are reflected on themselves rather than their family.

Taboo: Is not regarded as socially acceptable.

Sanction: social punishment whether it be legal or just social ramifications.

Methodology

The research method and data I am going to be accruing is qualitative. The data will be collected through a series of interviews. I am using information about a specific case so that significantly decreases the amount of people I can interview. The interviews were constructed with standardized open-ended interviews. This means that a few fixed questions were asked to all the participants yet they had the freedom to go on a tangent with other subjects. As another example, if I am interviewing a participant of an older generation I might cater the questions compared to that of a younger generation. As each might feel a certain level of comfort with the sensitive nature of my topic.

The specific case I am using took place in the same time frame as my home stay. Two students on a local high school were involved in a telephone video of a sexual nature. The identity of the girl could be seen in the video but not of that of the boy. The video was then distributed by an unidentified source to other classmates as well as teachers and eventually reached the general public. The girl and boy were not publicly reprimanded but there was a shock in the community to the video footage. Nothing of this nature had been documented before this incident.

As stated in my consent form the participant had many options. They can remove themselves from any part of the research up until the near the end. They may elaborate on any question and have the freedom to add anything they think is relevant to my research. If they did not deem a question appropriate they were able to not answer.

Population of Sample:

By the end of my research I will have interviewed six people. This had shifted from in size due to the amount of time I had in Cyprus. I ended up changing my topic from my first proposal which limited the time I would have in the field. All of them will be between the ages of 15 and 60. Three of the younger generations 15 up to 17 then college aged 20 to 24 and finally the older generation 40 to 55. They also all identify with the Turkish Cypriot community. That way I will be able to compare them to see if there is a pattern in opinions and answers. Although the sample size is not large I feel that it will give sufficient data for me to analyze and interpret. This size will also enable me to question in depth the differentiation between the individual verse the societal view. I separated each if these pairs (classified by age) in to generations. I named them Generation A B and C.

All the contacts were made through social interactions so they should not be classified as a random selection. I found because of the nature of my subject a relationship filled with trust and respect was essential. Once I created an environment of comfort I feel the individuals would give more candid responses. Thos is why the sample selection was limited to participants with whom I had had other encounters.

At the end of my research I want people to be able to benefit from what I have done. My participants have taken the time to share themselves and their culture with me I want to give something back. I want to give my research to two organizations that I feel could use my data in further studies on gender roles and the concepts of honor and shame. If I had time I would want to do more extensive research on these topics.

Ethics:

One of the most important aspects in my research is to preserve the anonymity of my participants. The nature of my topics is sensitive and therefore if taken in our out of context could prove to be very detrimental to my participants. In order to preserve these identities I take the utmost precaution in giving pseudonyms and allowing the participants the option of backing out at any time if they feel are uncomfortable or unsafe. By signing the consent form I let all my participants aware of all the rights they posses. I get to leave the island after my project but this is their environment. Therefore the preservation of their identities is at the core of my research. I realize that without them I would have no research!

The society is never being judged in this research. I may compare into to the society from which I come but neither is bad nor good. They research is simply my analysis based on a case study compared to other previous work in the field. The questions were never in an attack on the individual pr society. The questions were asked out of curiosity and a yearning for knowledge and understanding. I only have the utmost respect and gratitude for the participants.

Limitations

I also realize that I have several challenges that face my in my research. When being exposed to a new situation we take what we have learned in the past and apply to the now. Therefore we take experiences and ideologies that we have learned and apply them to a certain extent to the new things we learn. I realize that I am taking in some of my opinions and bias into my work. As a sociology major I had read and taken classes before on similar subjects so I had previous knowledge about the concepts of honor and shame. However this is my first crack field based research. I can guarantee that every part of my work was done with the utmost sincerity and effort although it may not be the most methodically perfect.

Being an outsider contributes as well to my limitations. I do not understand the culture and language as well as a native Cypriot. I have to somewhat limit my interviewees to those whom I can communicate with my limited knowledge of Turkish and their knowledge of English. It is possible to try and attain a translator but that can further create a more complex situation. That adds an additional person to the mix, for example maybe the other participant feels less comfortable speaking freely with the translator present. As for my resources that is easier for me to analyze because I can translate some of the text with help from a teacher.

As always communication is essential when a common language is not shared it is easy to misinterpret. Therefore it is important to ask the questions clearly and in simple terms to ensure for a better understanding. It is also important to make sure the participant feels comfortable enough to ask a question if they do not understand. This will ensure more accuracy in the data. It is important to preserve the culture and not to damage to anyone or institution. Therefore I will remain in close connection with organizations and my advisor to insure I am not being detrimental in any way.

Time is also of the essence, as I have a limited amount to conduct my research. This is also my first go and field based research therefore I am a bit slow. Given the amount of time I

have and the sample size it is not a huge representation of the Turkish Cypriot population. All I cannot assure all the validity of my participants responses. All I can guarantee that what I write is true to my interviewees.

Generalizability, Reliability and Validity:

I realize that my population size is quite small therefore it cannot be assumed that every person within a certain generation shares the same views and conclusions. I cannot guarantee that the natures of the participants' answers are absolute truth. I can guarantee the accuracy of their statements and that the environment was trusting and respectful and professional.

It is of the utmost importance never generalizing a community base on a sample size this small. My findings and conclusions are based on this sample size therefore cannot be applied to every member of the Turkish Cypriot community. It is true overall that a generalization will never be completely accurate because individuals hold their own beliefs and morals.

It is also natural as the nature of your research progresses to have a shift in ideas. For who knows where or when a participant can take the researcher on to a new train of thought! This happened to me as my research opened a new venue

Data Analysis

Differentiation and Separation

As historically preset gender roles have been allotted throughout the history of Cyprus. The nurturing of roles still begins at a young age and is still very prevalent today. When sitting in a café regarding the make up it is clear that same sex groups dominate the social scene. As clear through the four younger participants mixed social outings are still cautionary. Throughout the interview I had to clarify the questions in order to apply to the boy or the girl in the specific case study. Again when asking questions of divorce and blame the question had to be repeated regarding which sex to blame. The questions although somewhat leading yielded responses that immediately differentiated the blame, faults and significance of the identity and sex and preferential treatment because of it.

It is evident from the participants that they have a clear interpretation of what they society dictates yet still hold their own individual opinions. For example all the participants agreed that there was shame and fault to both the both the boy and girl yet they made some allowances. They knew that society would not accept that behavior yet they each gave some

allowances for example “We are humans we make mistakes” and “maybe she did this as a rebellion”. The participants wanted to know why the girl took these actions but did not completely write her off as having a shameful character. They first stated what they thought society valued but then on an individual level questioned the actions on a deeper level. Yet the each had their own personal idea of what honor and shame meant to them.

Ambiguous Freedom and Stigma

All the participants spoke about the freedom of being a woman. Their ideologies can even further be broken down into sub categories based on their generation. Here I want to take a comparative and contrast approach. For the sake of clarity I will refer to the youngest generation as A the next as B and the oldest as C.

Common Traits:

All three generations shared the concern of what others think of themselves. They all consider that their society is small so any action that they take that might be considered “not normal” and will be scrutinized”. The associated stigma of that action is so pressuring that they adhere to social norms to avoid it.

- For example, one participant states “If I go out I prefer to go out with girls I feel less watched” and “it is not good to be seen out all the time I don’t want people to talk”. While Generation B confirms these feelings by comments such as “We live in such a small place. I know wherever I go I will run into people I know and that make me cautious.” Generation C put into simple terms the negative stigma that follow incorrect actions by the proclamation “If someone knows about you as a bitch you will always be a bitch”.
- All the women were concerned with being seen as an honorable woman in society. After elucidating a response they all shared similar characteristics of what an honorable woman should be including “respectful, sexually immodest, and has a good relationship with their family”. Generation B made continual reference to the advice given by their parents to watch their behavior “because everyone knows us”. As well as “I have to make sure I act well in public” they did not want to be associated with a negative stigma. Generation A highlighted this by describing the girl in the video and describing all her friends as “bitches” as well as “If you are not careful “ you will be sad people will talk about you”. Not only was the girl in the video seen as a bitch but all the other girls she associated with. ”. Therefore tying in ones girls’ actions and the community “gossiping”. Generation C’s ideologies fall in line with the

previous two by stressing the importance that we “live in a small society brought up in a conservative way parent’s taught to behave, taught in a way that people would talk if you do something bad, disrespectful family would be upset, always try to be good you know.” All three generations knew that the size of their community along with their public actions was intertwined. They held concern for their own actions (being perceived as normal) so as not to bring attention to themselves.

Differences:

- Generational differences included the amount of freedom each of these women received in their childhood years and even new found freedom in the past five years. Generation A was excited that they had the opportunity to go out with friends in a mixed sex social group. Yet were still aware and cautious of some of the ramifications it could cause as one participant stated “If I go out I prefer to go out with girls I feel less watched.
- Generation B had a bigger line of communication with their mothers. Meaning that that had discussed themselves the differences of freedoms that they both shared at a similar age. A participant revealed “I think things have loosened a little bit over generations.” She was aware that her mother could not go out at night in a group of all girls let alone in a mixed sex social group. Both generation B’s felt that they had more freedom then their mothers.¹
- Generation C was adamant that their children experienced more freedom they did at a young age. They said that the new generation wants to keep some of the same “activities they did before marriage”. They even realized a shift in recent years that they more often they go out with just the girls as men go out with just the men.² Both participants agreed that their children have more freedom to move about in different social groups.³ They have observed that now women are becoming more financially independent enabling them to be more capable of paying for their own activities. For example, a once a month dinner of getting together with old high school friends.

Reoccurring themes:

¹ I can only say felt because these feelings of freedom were compared to their parents due to previous conversation I was privy too. I can only take their word that this is true. Although it is later confirmed by Generation C’s thoughts.

² Within the past five years

³ Both women in Generation C had at least one girl child.

“Acik hava society” was present in every one of my participant’s responses. The “tightly knit world of gossip” was seen from many angles. The actions of one generation can affect that of the whole because the size of the community is so small. These women did not condone the gossip yet were trapped to take part in it as well because the size of their community. When a scandal this big is made public not only in school but in the newspaper as well gossip is unavoidable.

Goffman and his “notion of embarrassment or anticipation of embarrassment plays a prominent role in every social encounter” is also evident in each of their statements. The actions of these women are dictated by what is perceived as the social norm because they do not want to receive embarrassment. The deference emotion system which encompasses the idea that social forces compel people to act in a certain manner in order to avoid sanctions is again relevant. No legal action was taken against these students yet the repercussions on their reputations can be seen as quite a strong sanction. All the women in this study wanted to overcome these social sanctions because they not only affected themselves but their family as well.

The Blame/Shame Game

There were the least generational discrepancies on these two subjects. Overall all but two of my subjects placed the blame on both the boy and girl in the video. Their logic was the girl asked to see the video after it finished (so she knew what she was doing) and the boy was the one who distributed the video. They also agree that the sexual actions were the choice of both parties and no one was coerced to do anything they did not want to do. Although the blame was equally distributed the consequences and amount of time spoken about was dedicated to the girl.

All of my participants agreed the shame of both students not only reflected shame on themselves but their families as well. Relating to the previous section it is important to keep the name of your family clean and their honor intact. It is a chain reaction when there is bad behavior people go back to the source of this behavior. All the participants agreed that it is the duty of the mother and father to instill morals and ethics in their children. It is then a reflection on the parents if the child takes a miss step and violates what is perceived to be normal within the society. The most succinct statement was “I don’t know how she has been grown up maybe good family but not a good relationship.” Every one of my participants discussed the nature of the mother daughter relationship and then questioned the good parenting of the girl’s mother. However they duly noted the mother of the boy in the video was not mentioned nearly as much or questioned to the same degree as the girl in the video.

Re occurring theme:

The importance of kinship and its strong intertwining with sexuality is clearly seen in this case study and my interviews. These ideals can be re connected to the research of Pastner in the Muslim society where “A women’s shame is the shame of her husband and kin; her honor is theory honor.” This strong statement illustrates the extreme bond between sexuality, kinship and the reflection of shame. The historical implications although somewhat more lax are still very present in this community today.

The family structure is still one of the most important if not the most important factor in the Turkish Cypriot community. My research only goes along with historical implications to support this purport. In Generation ABC the family was the source of where moral and ethics were taught and it was the duty of the family to pass on these morals and socialize their child. This set up an automatic system for the parents to be held accountable for their child’s actions. The relevance of this system was even more apparent in this specific case study because of the children in the videos age.

Influence of the Patriarchal society:

Even though both the boy and the girl were equal participants in the video the girl received more attention (whether it is negative or positive). As narrated by the participants she is the one with boys coming to school asking for her. She is the one who has the most time talked about in the interviews. It is her friend group that is brought as being “bitches” up not that of the boys. What about the friend group of the boys? Do they receive any negative repercussions because of his actions? The questioning of the parents was also primarily directed towards the girl. If they were both equal in blame and shame value why were they not equal repercussions?

Delaney and Broskou defend this answer because of the pre set gender roles and the hierarchy related to them. If all the men ascertain the power of course the women will have less freedom in many aspects of their life including sexuality. The importance of life still is placed on the man as he is the giver of life fertile and exuding sexuality out of control whereas a woman is just the receptor.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations:

I am afraid I was not too shocked to hear about an incident occurring like this in Cyprus. I guess I have become somewhat jaded or accustomed to hearing stories like this all the time at home in America. The statement that astonished me the most consistently

throughout these interviews was the fact that the police did not really help at all; in fact they were a hindrance. “This should have never been in the newspaper” was another comment that stuck with me throughout the rest of my research. These two ideas in conjecture with each other is my most important suggestion.

- **Regulation of the media:** It is important for parents to know what goes on in the lives of their children in school. But not to the extent that it is put in a public newspaper where everyone in the public can find out. Maybe if a letter was sent home from the school to the parents of the individual children that attend that specific school is necessary. It is a given that the society is small so inevitably many people unrelated to the situation would find. But an article in one of the only widely circulated newspapers does not help it only instigates further longevity of the incident.
- **The Role of the Police:** It should be the roles of the police in any society to appease any incident not ignite the flame. Especially when the people involved are minors to protect the identities of all involved parties. In this particular example the police only added to the allure and publicity to the school and all involved parties.

Final Thoughts:

By the end of my research I found that I had gained an understanding of the community I was now immersed in. My research had then taken some twists and turns leading me to new ideas as I progressed. The collective society did play a large role but it was the size of the society as well. The combination led to the construction of honor and shame in the Turkish Cypriot community. Although I did not find one succinct answer I learned of many contributing factors.

Appendix A

Question Guide:

Recently a video of a sensitive sexual nature was shown of two students at a local high school. I am going to ask you about that video and then some more general questions about your life and what being a woman means to you. Please ask me if you need me to make clear any of the questions are if you want to add anything feel free.

Could you describe the contents of the video?

1. Who saw the video?
2. Why did the police get involved?
3. After the police got involved who else saw the video? Did they stop showing the video?
4. Is this the first time an incidence like this has occurred?
5. What were the consequences for the girl and boy involved in the video?
6. If a woman is unfaithful in her relationship is it a failure?
 - what about in a marriage?
 - Is it ever okay in any situation?
8. In your opinion is it important to remain sexually modest?
9. How would you define a honorable woman? What are her qualities?
10. It is important to you to be seen as honorable?
11. Who takes pride in your honor?
12. What types of actions or behavior are viewed as acceptable in society before marriage? Do you agree?

2nd set of questions

1. Did you hear about the video and if so how?
2. What was your reaction to this news?
3. What are your thoughts about this girl and boy?
4. Have you ever heard of similar incidences of this video?
5. What do you think about the school's communities and police's reaction?
6. How would you define an honorable woman and what are her personality traits?
7. Is it important to be seen honorable in society?

Appendix B
Consent form

I am enrolled in Wittenberg University and double majoring in religion and sociology. I am currently a student participating in the S.I.T Cyprus Transnational Identities and Intercommunal relations. In order to fulfill my academic responsibilities in the program and attain credits all the students must complete a research project. I will finish my research by December 14th 2006.

My project is to delve in to the concepts of honor and shame in a collective society. It is my aim to understand how these terms are defined and applied in the Turkish Cypriot Society. I will use a specific case study to attain such information. I will be writing all the answers down by hand.

All the participants will be asked a series of questions. These questions and answers will be included in the final compilation of the project. The interviews should take no longer than one hour. The participant may request to be removed from the project at anytime before December 14th. The research participant may withdraw at any point. No researcher has the power neither it is ethical to include data provided from a person who wanted to withdraw. By contacting me all information given by the participant shall be removed.

It is most important in my research and project to retain complete anonymity. Pseudonyms of names and locations will always be used in my research. I am aware that some of the subject matter is a sensitive nature and thereby will take special caution in my research and with my participants. If anytime they are any questions or concerns they contact me by telephone or e mail ay 009053383338746 or alyssanoelle3@hotmail.com. I and my academic advisor are the only people who will review these transcripts. There should be no harm to the participants because of their contribution to this research. The information will be available to anyone who wishes to read it. After completion it will be accessible through the S.I.T library.

If you have any questions before we begin do not hesitate to ask. If you agree to participate please complete the rest of this form. You will receive a copy of this consent form to hold on to.

Interviewee's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date:

Appendix C: Activity Chart

Activity Chart:

Oct 31 Interview Halloween ☺	Nov 6 Nov 6 Set up another Interview for later in week	Nov 10th Interview Interview (Generation a)	Nov 12 th Gather background on Durkheim theories	Nov 16 Go to U of C for potential resources
Nov 17th Meet with prof at EMU about Gender studies	Nov 17th Meet with prof at EMU about Gender studies	Nov 18th Go to Intercollege and check on more sources	Nov 21 st Set up another interview	Nov 23 rd Interview
Nov 26 th Observe at night social setting Mixed groups?	Nov 27 th Again observe in social setting	Nov 28 th Record observations into rough draft	Nov 29 th Send home paper to mother (English prof) for first round of editing	Nov 30 th Send to academic advisor to edit and make comments
Dec 1 st Solidify history rational and all interviews	Dec 3 rd Meet again or send copy of ISp to academic director	Dec 5 th Take a deep breath and start to synthesize the data.	Dec 7 th Edit the paper in its entirety.	Dec 9 th Turn in Final ISP
Dec 10 th PRESENTATION TIME				

Appendix D

Concentric Cone of Authority



Appendix E
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Appendix Five

