

Anthropology 340 – Living in a Pluralistic World
A Cultural Theme One-Pager

Find a theme: Find some concept, attitude, or value that runs throughout the Iraqi women's culture described in *Guests of the Sheik*. For example, many people suggest that the general culture of the United States is permeated by a conception of individual autonomy, which is expressed in many different ways, from how we treat children, to how our universities are organized, to how products are advertised. Notice that the theme (in this example, individual autonomy) is not one specific belief that is frequently repeated, but rather is an underlying concept or value that shapes many different beliefs and practices. It is a broad, general characteristic, a sort of key to understanding US culture, such that a foreigner might start off in describing Americans by saying "Well, first of all, they are all individualists." Your task is to find some comparable theme that characterizes the culture described by Fernea.

Find three examples: Find three scenes or passages in *Guests of the Sheik* in which your theme appears, plays a role, or is implied by the events.

Write a one-page paper: Write a one-page (double-spaced) discussion explaining what your cross-cutting theme is, and how it is involved in the three example scenes. The point here is to use the three examples to convince me that your theme really does exist, and that it really does shape a variety of different aspects of women's culture in El Nahra, as depicted by Fernea.

Indicate page numbers: Please indicate the page numbers of the scenes or passages that you have selected, so I know exactly what you are discussing.

Due: The one-page paper is due in class on Tuesday, March 13.

Computer version: You must also submit the paper as a computer file (Word, Wordperfect, Works, etc.) which you attach to an email message to me at

bruce.owen@sonoma.edu

Name the file in this format:

340-07s-theme-SimpsonHomer.doc

Replace "SimpsonHomer" with your own name (d'oh), last name first. The term "theme" identifies this particular assignment. Other assignments will have other words in this position. Your word processing program may use a different three-letter extension, like ".wpd" instead of ".doc". Following this format makes it much easier for me to keep track of papers.

Due: The computer version is due by midnight of Tuesday, March 13.

Good luck!