

WGS. 101 Fall 2014 Assignment #3 --SAMPLE EXHIBIT

Note: THIS IS A SAMPLE FIRST PARAGRAPH WRITTEN BY A STUDENT FOR A SIMILAR EXHIBIT ON THE TOPIC OF MARRIAGE. THE SAMPLE ILLUSTRATES A TONE APPROPRIATE FOR A MUSEUM EXHIBIT. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT EXPECT YOU TO MODEL YOUR PROSE EXACTLY ON THIS PARAGRAPH. BELOW THE PARAGRAPH IS A LIST OF EXHIBIT ARTIFACTS. **THE BOLDED SENTENCE IS A “MAPPING STATEMENT” OR “INFORMATIONAL THESIS STATEMENT”.**

THE POLITICS OF MARRIAGE: A MUSEUM EXHIBIT

How do we view marriage—as a lifelong contract to stay together “in sickness and in health” or a commitment to remain wedded as “long as we both shall love”? Do we envision marriage as including same-sex unions as well as partnerships between women and men? Does marriage have a primary purpose such as the rearing of children or the happiness of the spouses? How does the ideology of romantic love influence attitudes toward marriage and divorce? How does a “love marriage” contrast with an arranged marriage? Does marriage imply monogamy? Can a marriage include multiple partners? **This exhibit examines these and other questions through exploring the changing face of American marriage in light of transformations in: law and gender roles, marriage patterns, divorce rates and attitudes toward sexuality, gender identity and same-sex unions.**

ARTIFACTS INCLUDE:

Examples of older (promising wife’s obedience) and modern (egalitarian) marriage vows

Excerpt from *New York Times* article on arranged marriages in the U.S.

TV clip: 2003 *Goodridge* decision on legal right to same-sex marriage in Massachusetts.

Current newspaper wedding announcements (illustrating female/male and same-sex couples, variety in races/ethnicities/ages/genders of couples and choices of last name)

Charts of marriage, divorce and remarriage statistics in the U.S. over the 20th century

Timeline of U.S. laws defining marriage

Excerpt from *Newsweek* article on couples deciding whether to become parents

TV clips: Interview with a man and woman married for 60 years; Interview with a middle-aged male/female couple in a nonmonogamous marriage (“polyamorous union”)

Photos of: individuals in different types of marriages/families

Marriages with and without children (male/female and same-sex unions)

Arranged marriage

Blended marriages—couples with children from previous marriage(s)

Polygamous marriage-one husband/multiple wives

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WGS.101 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies
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