Anthropology 2240 – Fall 2010
Week 5-6 Discussion Group Questions

Names of Participants in Your Group:

1. The film 'The Women's Kingdom' depicts a society without marriage. Is that title accurate or misleading? Why? Are the benefits of marriage simply replaced by something else?

2. The Mosuo are described as a matriarchal society without marriage. Given that matriarchies are very rare, and societies without marriage are very rare too, does this film imply that marriage is inherently patriarchal?

3. What are the problems with Margaret Mead's research? Does knowing that some people question her results make you think that cultural determinism is overblown hype? Why wouldn't you want to be culturally relative? (ie what situations or examples?)

4. An anthropologist named Janowiak defines romantic passion (or romantic love) as "any intense attraction involving the idealization of the other within an erotic context" (Jankowiak 1995:4). He continues, arguing that the idea of romantic passion is a (near) universal. Do you believe the in universality of romantic passion? What lines of evidence would you demand from someone claiming that romantic passion exists in all cultures?