

Anthropology 2240
Worksheet for Herdt's "The Sambia"

	Sambia of Papua New Guinea
Central characters (list with one or two keyword characteristics)	
Central storyline	
Identify two or three themes from our course that are central to the book.	

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Discussion Group Questions for Herdt's "The Sambia"

- Sketch out the initiation 'cycle'. What aspects of Sambia culture is it tied to?

- What would be considered sexually deviant behavior for the Sambia?

- What ethical concerns are raised for you by this book? Consider Herdt's ethics as an anthropological fieldworker and the Sambia's initiations of boys. (Don't be afraid to be ethnocentric or politically incorrect here. Let's get to the bottom of what's going on and whether or not we can accept what we read.)

- Do you appreciate Herdt's presentation of the Sambia? Why or why not? Where are the inconsistencies in Herdt's presentation?

To put it another way: if this is the only book about Papua New Guinea that your parents read, what are they going to know about the Sambia and anthropology at the end of the book? (Consider, perhaps, what's missing in the presentation, style of writing, are there things that are included that shouldn't be, potential for ethnocentric observation.)