

Comments on the World in Which They Live: A Narrative-Theory Approach to Meaning-Making among Young Girls on Timpaus Island, Indonesia

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Abstract

This article offers some ethnographic glimpses into Timpaus village life emphasizing gendered behavior cast in a perspective of general norms for behavior and age-related expectations of moral conduct. Aspects of village life are interpreted through narrative analysis to demonstrate both general and local patterns of meaning production. The goal is to uncover common themes in the data based on observations, discussions, conversations, and listening to and participating in various discourses with young and older villagers. In the analysis of the material a hermeneutic method is applied and narrative theory tested to investigate meaning production among villagers and especially young girls. The aim of this is to bring forth mental processes that sometimes produce and at other times confirm or oppose particular ways of understanding oneself and others' place and position in the world. In this article, narratives are seen as linking individual human actions and events into interrelated aspects of an understandable

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composite, displaying the significance that events have for one another. My concern is not how narrative as text is constructed, but rather how it operates as an instrument of mind in the construction of reality.