

Biography of Nicole Sault

Nicole Sault is a cultural anthropologist whose research has focused on kinship and gender among the indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica. Her major fieldwork is with the Zapotec of Oaxaca, in southeastern Mexico. More recently, she has been doing research on the symbolic attributes of birds among indigenous cultures of the Americas. In Costa Rica, Peru, and California, she has been studying the ethno-ornithology of condors, vultures, macaws, and hummingbirds. Through their beliefs and practices about birds, each of these societies teaches us about relationship to the world and our obligations for reciprocity.

While studying Zapotec rites of passage and other rituals, such as the use of incense and the sweathouse (*temazcal*), she became increasingly interested in how different cultures conceptualize the human body. This theoretical effort is reflected in the publication of *Many Mirrors: Body Image and Social Relations* (Rutgers University Press, 1994). In the book's Introduction and her chapter on contrasting views of motherhood, she examines the history of the fragmentation of the body into parts, as well as the relationship between body image and parenthood in Mexico and the United States.

Her interest in body image and whole persons eventually led her to investigate the meaning of cosmetic surgery and breast implants, as well as the politics of food in relation to body image, globalization, and sustainable agriculture in Mexico, Costa Rica, and the U.S.A.

Nicole Sault has published and presented on a variety of anthropological topics, including godmothers, water symbolism, the evil eye, religious conversion, peace mediators, community supported agriculture, and the cultural context for "natural disasters."

A popular teacher, Dr. Sault has given courses in Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, and Women's Studies at Santa Clara University in California. Later she taught anthropology in the Masters Program at the University of Costa Rica, where she also advised students on their graduate theses. She is fluent in English and Spanish, as well as conversant in Zapotec.

She received her Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of California at Los Angeles and her B.A. from the University of California at Santa Barbara, where she graduated

cum laude in Anthropology and English, and Phi Beta Kappa. She is proud to be a recipient of the Sisterhood is Powerful award from the Women's Studies Program at Santa Clara University and a recipient of a Fulbright-Hayes Doctoral Research Scholarship.

Courses Taught in Anthropology:

Family and Kinship

Women and Men in Society

Body Image in Cultural Context

Indigenous Peoples of Mesoamerica

Anthropology of Native Americans (in the United States)

Medical Anthropology

Anthropology of Aging

Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology

Antropología del cuerpo (Anthropology of the Body)

Técnicas de investigación (Research Methods)

Courses Taught in Ethnic Studies:

Introduction to Ethnic Studies

Introduction to Native American Cultures (in the United States)

Native Peoples of Mexico and the United States

Reviewer for Journals:

Agriculture and Human Values

Medical Anthropology Quarterly

Journal of the History of Sexuality

Sociological Perspectives

Cuadernos de Antropología Universidad de Costa Rica

Reviewer for Book Manuscripts:

Holt, Rinehart, and Winston Press

University of California Press

Greenwood Publishing Group