

## **ECON 460: Women, Work, and the World Economy**

### Reading Guide: Understanding Early Civilizations

Bruce Trigger's fascinating book provides detailed information on the social, economic, and political organization of seven early societies. The book is available online in its entirety through the Williams Library, so you may wish to peruse other sections. For our purposes, you should skim the first part of Chapter 2 (it should be of interest after reading David Reich's book and the plough paper) and then read the section on "The Present Study" carefully. Then read all of Chapter 9 ("Family Organization and Gender Roles").

#### **Chapter 2: Comparative Studies**

1. What are the seven early civilizations included in the study?

#### **Chapter 9: Family Organization and Gender Roles**

1. Which of the seven civilizations were patrilineal?
2. In which societies did women's status depend on whether they had sons?
3. In which societies could a woman own land or property?
4. In which societies could a woman inherit property from her father or her husband?
5. In which societies could a woman pass her wealth on to her children?
6. In which societies were women allowed to hold positions of power in administrative or religious organizations?
7. Which types of women were required to be celibate, and in which societies?
8. What are the two classes of women that existed in all early civilizations?
9. To what extent were women and men in early civilizations held to the same standards regarding promiscuity?
10. How did the status of women change over time in the seven societies?
11. How was homosexuality viewed in early civilizations?