

CODING BOOK

The codings contained in the EXCEL file labeled “Foragers_Data.xls” were made usually from primary ethnographic sources. In some cases the author would make some factual statement or evaluation which I found difficult to understand or interpret and, as a result, I am not completely sure about my codings. For each characteristic of the society I provide two pieces of information: the rating and my (subjective) confidence in how closely my coding corresponds with what the ethnographer recorded, with A = quite confident; B = somewhat confident; C = not at all confident (my ratings may represent only an educated guess or interpolation). For some variables, such as sharing, I am not very confident in the accuracy of the original sources and, as indicated in the notes about them. The number of each paragraph of explanation designates the corresponding data column in the table.

1. Name of society. From Murdock and White (1969).

2. Number of society in the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample. From Murdock and White (1969).

3. Economic system. These evaluations are derived from the cluster analysis. 1 = classic foragers; 2 = transition foragers; 3 = unequal-politically foragers; 4 = unequal-socioeconomically foragers; 5 = unequal-intangibles foragers. A ‘B’ in column 3b indicates that in the course of six runs of the cluster program, that particular society ended up in several different clusters. As indicated in the text, in these cases I placed the society in that cluster where it was most often found. A ‘C’ in column 3b likewise indicates that the six runs of the program did not always assign the society to the same cluster, but that I placed it in that cluster where, on the basis of other information, I felt that it most belonged.

4. Distribution of wealth: 1 = general equality; 2 = some differences in wealth; 3 = considerable differences in wealth. These codings are quite subjective on my part since ethnologists have different

standards as to what constitutes a significant difference in wealth.

5. Food sharing/redistribution: This variable runs from 0 through 4 and is a composite including both food shared on-the-spot where foraged and food shared-in-camp. These two components receive weights of one-third and two-thirds respectively. On-the-spot food sharing was estimated by determining the customary rules for sharing foraged foodstuffs foraged through gathering, hunting, and fishing respectively and then weighting the results by the percentage of food coming from each source. The food shared-in-camp was a rough estimate, as it was difficult to quantify the vague adjectives used by the ethnographer to describe the situation. The confidence ratings in column 5b reflect how well I believe that I captured what the ethnographer meant; because of different standards used by the ethnographers, I do not have a great deal of confidence in the overall ratings. In some societies (but not in the sample), food is redistributed through the chief. This represents a type of food sharing-in-camp.

6. Market exchange or barter. Market exchange appeared to form a Guttman scale: little internal market exchange occurred in the absence of considerable external market exchange, while the reverse did not hold. 1 = little or no market exchange; 2 = market exchange but primarily with few external traders; 3 = market exchange with many external agents (a = significant amount of food obtained through exchange); 4 = external market exchange plus some internal market exchange as well; 5 = considerable internal and external market exchange.

7. Taxation or tribute. 0 = political leader had no special rights to part of foraging produce of others; 1 = political leader had special rights to part of foraging produce of others, which can either be redistributed or kept for personal use.

8. Possession of land. A composite variable running from 0 through 4. Calculated by recoding column 14 (recoded so that 0 = no territoriality; 1 = territory claimed by tribal; 2 = territory claimed by

subtribal group, such as band; 3 = territory claimed by small or large family group) and column 15 (recoded so that 0 = private ownership by nuclear families or individuals of land non-existent, unimportant, or not critical; 0.5 = private ownership of large areas or formal land claims; 1 = all or important parts of land privately owned). These two recoded variables are then summed.

9. Food storage. 1 = no storage or short-term storage (for several days) or storage only of luxury foods; 2 = food storage in one season to last over other seasons for nourishment purposes; 3 = food storage covering more than a year's nourishment needs (surplus could be used for other purposes such as ceremonial use).

10. Slave holding. 1 = no slaves at focus date (an 'a' indicates slavery in the past); 2 = presence of slaves, but usually held only by elite; 3 = presence of slaves and all could hold. If male war captives were treated well (for instance, among the Abipone) so that they would not flee, or if female war captives given to men in the society but were not treated differently than other wives, I code these cases as 1.5. In some cases, such as the Yukaghir, it proved difficult to determine the extent of slavery and how far back in the past it was given up. For the analysis in the text, I counted those foraging societies that practiced slavery in the past as "slave-holding" because of the way in property rights were structured, even if a particular type of property was no longer recognized. It turned out that this decision had no impact on the results.

11. Property in intangibles, especially curing techniques. 1 = knowledge widely shared; 2 = knowledge specialized but economically unimportant to owner; 3 = knowledge specialized and constituted an important source of income. In some cases it was reported that curers were paid or given a present, but the amount of the payment was unclear. In this case, I had to make a guess about the extent from the context of the activity.

12. Extent of bridewealth. 1 = none, small gifts, mutual exchange of gifts, or a substitute form of

compensation such as bride service; 2 = some, but not significant wealth involved; 3 = significant wealth involved.

13. Inheritance of movable property. 1 = very little; most movable property destroyed or buried with corpse; 2 = some property inherited, some destroyed or buried; 3 = significant share of movable property inherited.

14. Territoriality and predominant unit of land holding. 0 = no significant territoriality; 1 = territory claimed by tribe as a whole; 2 = territory claimed by subgroups of tribe larger than the band; 3 = territory claimed by band or local group; 4 = territory claimed by extended family, gens, or clan; 5 = territory claimed by small families or individuals.

15. Importance of private land holding by individuals or families. 1 = private land either non-existent, unimportant, or casual; 2 = particular (non-critical) areas or sites held private, such as individual trees; 3 = large areas held privately, but also some large community land; 4 = most land divided privately (individuals or families).

16. Political centralization. A composite variable running from 0 through 4 equally weighting the political leader's relative wealth; the power of the political leader (leader was weak and operated through influence, weak and worked with a council, strong but worked with a council, strong and ruled alone); the formal nature of political leadership (leadership was informal, leader selected in semi-formal or formal process, or leadership inherited); and extent of power (strictly local, over several local groups, or over tribe).

17. Social differentiation of free individuals (i. e., excluding slaves). 1 = general egalitarianism; 2 = individuals or families ranked; 3 = at least two distinct classes with considerable inheritance of status. There were no societies with castes.

18. Fixity of residence/nomadism. The basic distinction is between societies with and without permanent homes. Among the former, some societies roamed the entire year (= 1), while others had a “stationary encampment” for some months and then roamed the remainder of the year (= 2). Among groups with this fission-fusion pattern, it is often possible to distinguish those societies where the whole group roamed and came together (= 2a), those where the stationary encampment was larger than the roaming group (= 2b), and those where the stationary encampment was smaller than the roaming group (= 2c). In some cases no information was available on this matter (= 2d). Among societies having a permanent home, it is often possible to distinguish between those who were nomadic during part of the year (= 3), those who moved between 2 or more permanent homes (= 4), and those with a single permanent home from which they seldom moved away.(= 5a if community periodically moved; = 5b if remained in same location for many years).

19. Average size of most significant local group. The population codes are: 1 = < 50; 2 = 50 - 99; 3 = 100 - 149; 4 = 150 - 199; 5 = 200 - 249; 6 = over 250. Unfortunately, for certain societies, the estimates by others of “size of community” for certain societies vary enormously with each other (an extreme example is the Tehuelche, see Cooper 1946: 144 ff). It seems likely that for nomadic societies exhibiting an annual fission-fusion pattern of residence, the community population data may refer to the society during different phases of this process. Because anthropologists differ in their definitions of “tribe,” “band,” “camp,” and “local group,” it is necessary to specify my concepts more concretely. I define the “local group” as the agglomeration of people whose members spend the most time together; “band” as the grouping which combine the local groups for at least several months of the year (the band and the local group may be coterminous); and “tribe” as a group of bands with a sense of social identity. My “community size” variable refers only to the local group. For those nomadic societies exhibiting a fission-fusion pattern

(coded 2 in column 18), I append an 'a' to designate that the larger assemblage was the local group and a 'b' when the smaller assemblage was the "local group." For other cases, this ambiguity does not arise.

20. Contact with the West. This coding refers only to the pinpointed year, since contact with the West varied greatly over time. 1 = relatively little contact with white traders, missionaries, or officials 2 = sufficient contact with white traders, missionaries, or officials to have an important impact on the economy.

21. Presence of gambling. 0 = none or little; 2 = some; 3 = considerable. In many cases the ethnographies did not mention gambling. Sometimes, however, games in general were described in detail and if gambling was not mentioned, so we can be fairly sure (= B) that it did not occur. Sometimes, gambling was not mentioned, and it also did not seem consistent with the rest of the daily life described in the ethnographies, in which case I guessed that gambling did not occur and gave this coding a rating of C. In some cases (coded 1.5), gambling occurred among some groups of the society but not others; in other cases (coded 2.5), gambling occurred but its importance is difficult to judge.

22. Presence of potlatch. "Potlatch" covers those ceremonies in which large quantities of property are given away or destroyed by the owner to demonstrate the owners wealth and thus prestige. 1 = not present; 2 = present but property given away and not destroyed; 3 = property either given away or destroyed. Many of the sample societies held feasts, dances, or other ceremonies in which gifts were given; coding problems arise in deciding how extensive and institutionalized such gift giving was.

23. Rights in women. 1 = women have sole right to choose own husband; 2 = family has dominant rights in selecting a woman's husband; 3 = men in the family use their rights in determining a woman's husband to obtain a spouse for themselves. Overall I am uncertain about these codings, because it not clear in the original sources whether, and to what degree, a women could refuse to enter into the marriage arranged for her.

24. Transportation of stored food. 1 = no storage or stored food carried on back; 1a = no storage, although transportation was available; 2 = use of horses, sleds, or boats to transport stored foods; 2a = food storage occurred but transportation was not necessary since the group was settled in a single location or the distance between permanent homes was not very great.

25. Demand-sharing. 1 = yes, if an article was requested in some way, it was usually handed over. This could occur in the form either of direct asking, considerable scrounging, or tolerated theft. 2 = demand-sharing occurred only for certain goods, for instance, food; 3 = demand reciprocity - if an article was requested, the recipient gave a gift before asking; 4 = only the chief or leader required to honor requests; 5 = no demand-sharing. This variable was difficult to code, in major part because most ethnologists did not directly record such information and it was necessary to read between the lines.

26. Cultural complexity. This variable was calculated from estimates of societal scale (or complexity) by Robert Carneiro (1970 and unpublished data), who takes into account many hundreds of cultural traits, and the less complete calculations by Murdock and Provost (1973), who take into account ten traits. The starting point was the unpublished sixth edition of Carneiro's calculations, which he generously supplied me. In this list I interpolated results from Carneiro's published fourth edition (1970) and fifth edition (reported as variable 22 in Pryor 1977: 337). Altogether, the combined Carneiro samples include 72 of the 186 societies in the SCCS. Fortunately, the Carneiro and Murdock-Provost scales are highly correlated: when both are transformed into logarithms (which reduces problems of curvature of the scales), the correlation coefficient is 0.93. The Murdock-Provost values, therefore, could be interpolated into the Carneiro scale.

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