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!Kung Women: Contrasts in Sexual Egalitarianism in Foraging and Sedentary Contexts

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Most members of the Harvard !Kung Bushman Study Project who have thought about the subject of !Kung women's status agree that !Kung society may be the least sexist of any we have experienced. This impression contradicts some popularly held stereotypes about relations between the sexes in hunting and gathering societies. Because sex is one of the few bases for the differentiation of social and economic roles in societies of this type, it has probably been attributed more weight than it deserves. The men are commonly depicted in rather romantic terms, striving with their brothers to bring home the precious meat while their women humbly provide the dull, tasteless vegetable food in the course of routine, tedious foraging. Contrary evidence is now emerging from several researchers that men and women of band-level societies have many overlapping activities and spheres of influence (Gale, 1970). The distinction between male and female roles is substantially less rigid than previously supposed,

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though there is variation among band-level peoples in the degree of autonomy and influence that women enjoy.

This paper describes relations between the sexes for two groups of !Kung: those living a traditional hunting and gathering life at /Du/da and those who have recently adopted a settled way of life in the !Kangwa Valley and who are now living by agriculture, animal husbandry, and a small amount of gathering.

The point to be developed at some length is that in the hunting and gathering context, women have a great deal of autonomy and influence. Some of the contexts in which this egalitarianism is expressed will be described in detail, and certain features of the foraging life which promote egalitarianism will be isolated. They are: women's subsistence contribution and the control women retain over the food they have gathered; the requisites of foraging in the Kalahari which entail a similar degree of mobility for both sexes; the lack of rigidity in sex-typing of many adult activities, including domestic chores and aspects of child socialization; the cultural sanction against physical expression of aggression; the small group size; and the nature of the settlement pattern.

Features of sedentary life that appear to be related to a decrease in women's autonomy and influence are: increasing rigidity in sex-typing of adult work; more permanent attachment of the individual to a particular place and group of people; dissimilar childhood socialization for boys and girls; decrease in the mobility of women as contrasted with men; changing nature of women's subsistence contribution; richer material inventory with implications for women's work; tendency for men to have greater access to and control over such important resources as domestic animals, knowledge of Bantu language and culture, wage work; male entrance into extra-village politics; settlement pattern; and increasing household privacy.

Background to !Kung Research

The !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert are one of the better described primitive cultures, with the literature steadily increasing in the last twenty years. The work of Lorna Marshall, John Marshall, and Elizabeth Marshall Thomas gives a background to !Kung social organization and economy. The publications of the Marshall family concern primarily !Kung living in South-West Africa in the Nyae nyae area.

Since the early 1960s other researchers have entered the field of !Kung studies, in particular members of the Harvard !Kung Bushman Study Project. This team worked in western Botswana with populations of !Kung who overlap with the !Kung of South-West Africa first studied by the Marshall expedition. Members of the Harvard research team have focused on more narrow, specialized topics. Some of their publications have already appeared, and many others are currently in preparation (see Biesele, Draper, Howell, Katz, Konner, Lee, Lee and DeVore, Shostak, and Yellen).

Ethnographic Background to the !Kung: Traditional Population

The !Kung are a hunting and gathering people living today mostly on the western edge of the Kalahari sand system in what is now southern Angola, Botswana, and South-West Africa. The great majority of !Kung-speaking people have abandoned their traditional hunting and gathering way of life and are now living in sedentary and semi-squatter status in or near the villages of Bantu pastoralists and European ranchers. A minority of !Kung, amounting to a few thousand, are still living by traditional hunting and gathering techniques. It is to these bush-living peoples and a few groups of very recently settled !Kung, that this paper refers.

The bush-living peoples subsist primarily on wild vegetable foods and game meat. They are semi-nomadic, moving their camps at irregular intervals of from several days to several weeks. The average size of individual groups (also referred to

as bands or camps) is about thirty-five people, though the numbers range from seventeen to sixty-five people. Season and the availability of water are the chief factors affecting group size. During the rainy season (October to March), group censuses are lower due to the fact that water and bush foods are widely available in most regions of the !Kung range. Smaller numbers of people in the form of two- and three-family groups spread out over the bush. As the dry season approaches, the small, temporary water pans dry up and the people begin to regroup and fall back on the remaining water sources that continue throughout the dry season. As there are relatively few water sources in the heart of the drought, as many as two or three different camps may be found within one to three miles of the same water hole.

The rules governing the composition of these bands are extremely flexible. It appears there is no such thing as "band membership." Close relatives move together over much of the year, though individuals and segments of large kin groups frequently make temporary and amicable separations to go live some miles distant with other relatives and affines.

Material technology is extremely simple. Men hunt with small bows and arrows (tipped with poison) and metal-pointed spears. Women's tools include a simple digging stick, wooden mortar and pestle, and leather kaross which doubles as clothing and carrying bag. Both sexes use leather carrying bags, hafted adzes, and net slings made from handwoven vegetable fiber. Clothing, particularly among the bush people, consists of leather garments; in addition, various cloth garments are worn, especially by the settled !Kung, but also by the peoples of the bush.

Settled Population

As stated before, the great majority of !Kung-speaking peoples are settled around the villages of technologically more advanced peoples and have been there for as many as three generations. Among other !Kung, sedentarization is much more recent. In the case of the Mahopa people, in the

!Kangwa area of Botswana, !Kung commitment to settled life is perhaps fifteen to twenty years old. I observed these people and the people of /Du/da for two years in 1968 and 1969.

About fifty !Kung lived in three separate villages around the permanent water hole at Mahopa. Bantu-speaking pastoralists also lived at Mahopa and watered their herds of cattle, horses, donkeys, and goats at the Mahopa well. These Bantu were chiefly of the Herero tribe and, like the !Kung, lived in about six villages, whose total population consisted of perhaps fifty people. Some !Kung lived in the Herero villages, but my research and remarks here do not refer to them.

The Mahopa people whom I describe lived in villages composed only of !Kung. The decision of the !Kung to avoid close proximity with the Herero is conscious, for relations between the two groups are not entirely amicable—Bantu of the area have a superior attitude and often (according to the !Kung) do not treat !Kung people fairly. Bantu see the !Kung as irresponsible, poor workers who are prone to killing occasional steers from Bantu herds.

The subsistence practices of the recently settled !Kung are mixed. The women continue to gather bush food, but not with the effort or regularity of the women of the traditional groups. Hunting by Mahopa men has virtually ceased. The people keep small herds of goats and plant small gardens of sorghum, squash, melons, and corn. For the most part, the Mahopa !Kung do not own their own cattle (at least, they did not during my fieldwork). Some !Kung women receive milk in payment for regular chores they do for nearby Herero women.

In the first discussion of !Kung women my remarks will pertain to women of the bush-living groups, unless otherwise specified. Description of the women's life in the settled Mahopa villages of the !Kangwa area will be handled second. The traditional, or bush-living !Kung lived in the /Du/da area, which straddles the border of Botswana and South-West Africa and stretches over a north-south distance of about seventy miles.

Self-Esteem Derived from Subsistence Contribution

Women are the primary providers of vegetable food, and they contribute something on the order of 60 to 80 percent of the daily food intake by weight (Lee, 1965). All !Kung agree that meat is the most desirable, most prestigious food, but the hunters cannot always provide it. Without question, women derive self-esteem from the regular daily contribution they make to the family's food.

A common sight in the late afternoon is clusters of children standing on the edge of camp, scanning the bush with shaded eyes to see if the returning women are visible. When the slow-moving file of women is finally discerned in the distance, the children leap and exclaim. As the women draw closer, the children speculate as to which figure is whose mother and what the women are carrying in their karosses.

Often when women return in the evening they bring information as well as bush food. Women are skilled in reading the signs of the bush, and they take careful note of animal tracks, their age, and the direction of movement. On several occasions I have accompanied gathering expeditions in which, when the group was about thirty to forty minutes out of camp, one of the women discovered the fresh tracks of several large antelope. This find caused a stir of excitement in the group. Quickly the women dispatched one of the older children to deliver the report to the men in camp. In general, the men take advantage of women's reconnaissance and query them routinely on the evidence of game movements, the location of water, and the like.

A stereotype of the female foraging role in hunting and gathering societies (in contrast with men's work, which is social in character) is that the work is individualized, repetitious, and boring (Service, 1966: 12). Descriptions of the work of gathering leave the reader with the impression that the job is uninteresting and unchallenging—that anyone who can walk and bend over can collect wild bush food. This stereotype is distinctly inappropriate to !Kung female work, and it promotes a condescending attitude toward what

women's work is all about. Successful gathering over the years requires the ability to discriminate among hundreds of edible and inedible species of plants at various stages in their life cycle. This ability requires more than mere brute strength. The stereotype further ignores the role women play in gathering information about the "state of the bush"—presence of temporary water, evidence of recent game movements, etc. On a given day, !Kung hunters consciously avoid working the same area in which women are foraging, knowing that movements of the women may disturb the game, but also knowing that the women can be questioned at the end of the day (Yellen, personal communication).

!Kung women impress one as self-contained people with a high sense of self-esteem. There are exceptions—women who seem forlorn and weary—but for the most part, !Kung women are vivacious and self-confident. Small groups of women forage in the Kalahari at distances of eight to ten miles from home with no thought that they need the protection of the men or of the men's weapons should they encounter any of the several large predators that also inhabit the Kalahari (for instance, hyena, wild dog, leopard, lion, and cheetah). It is unusual, but not exceptional, for a lone woman to spend the day gathering. In the times I observed at the /Du/da camps, the solitary foragers were either postmenopausal women or young, unmarried women who were still without children. Women with children or adolescent, unmarried girls usually gather bush food in the company of two or more other women. The !Kung themselves claim that lovers (as well as married couples) sometimes arrange to meet privately in the bush. !Kung sleeping arrangements may promote these tactics, for at night whole families sleep outdoors together gathered around individual campfires and within a few feet of other families sleeping at their own fires.

Control by Women Over Gathered Food

Not only do women contribute equally, if not more than men, to the food supply; they also retain control over the food they have gathered after they return to the village. This is even more true of the vegetable food of women than of the meat brought in by the men. Lorna Marshall and Richard B. Lee have described how the distribution of meat is circumscribed by social rules as well as by the spontaneous demands of fellow camp members. With the exception of small game kills, a hunter has little effective control over the meat he brings into the camp. In contrast, the gatherer determines the distribution of vegetable food, at least when it concerns anyone outside her immediate family. An example may help to illustrate this point. One late afternoon I watched N!uhka return from an unusually long gathering trip. Her kaross was bulging with food, and her face showed fatigue from the weight and from dust, heat, and thirst. She walked stolidly through camp to her own hut. When she reached her hearthside, still stooping with the load, she reached to her shoulder, where the kaross was knotted. Wearily she gave the knot one practiced yank. The bush food spilled out of the kaross, clattering and thumping onto the sand behind her. She had not even squatted before releasing the burden. At the sound, several people looked up, but only briefly. No one greeted her or came over to look at the day's collection. N!uhka sat down at her hut, reached inside for an ostrich-egg shell, and slowly drank water from it for several minutes, sitting with her elbows on her knees and staring blankly ahead. Fifteen minutes later her grown daughter and a younger son joined her. The daughter, without talking, blew the coals back to life and started a fire. By then N!uhka had regained her strength, the listlessness had gone, and she picked up a wooden poke and began raking some of the freshly picked ǂndǂdwa bean pods into the hot ashes for roasting. This done, she began gathering up the bush food she had dropped earlier. Most of it she heaped into the rear of her own hut, but she also made two additional small piles. Calling next

door to her twelve-year-old grandnephew, she said, "Take this to your grandmother" (her brother's wife), and she motioned for him to take one of the heaps of bean pods. Later, when her daughter rose to return to her own fire, N!uhka had her take away the second pile for her own use. It is common for women to make these individual gifts, but it is not mandatory. Food that is brought in by women may also be redistributed during a family meal when other people visit at the fire and are served along with family members.

The fact that !Kung women retain control over their own production is, of course, related to the simplicity of !Kung economy, technology, rules of ownership, and social organization. In more complex societies, there are kin groups, lineages, or other corporate units that control essential resources. Even in the relatively rare cases (matrilineages) where women nominally own the land and household property, it is usually men who control the production and distribution of resources. The gathering work of !Kung women can be done by women alone. They do not need to ask permission to use certain lands; they do not need the assistance of men in order to carry out their work, as in the case of many agricultural societies where men must do the initial heavy work of clearing fields, building fences, and the like, before the less strenuous work of women can begin.

Similar Absenteeism for Men and Women

A similarity in the gathering work of women and the hunting work of men is that both activities take adults out of the camp, sometimes all day for several days each week. The pattern of both sexes being about equally absent from the dwelling place is not typical of most middle-range, agriculturally based tribal societies. In these latter groups one finds an arrangement whereby women, much more than men, stay at home during child tending, domestic chores, food preparation and the like, while the men are occupied with activities that take them outside the household and keep them away for many hours during the day. Frequent (daily)

male absence may result in viewing men as a scarce commodity with higher value than women, who are constantly present in the household. If men in this sense are a scarce commodity, their homecoming must have greater significance to those who stay at home, and their influence even in routine domestic affairs may be heightened simply because others are less habituated to their presence. Among the !Kung a case could be argued for the equal, or nearly equal, scarcity value of men and women. Both leave the village regularly, and the return of both is eagerly anticipated—as illustrated earlier in this paper with reference to women.

It seems likely that !Kung men and women have similar knowledge of the larger hunting and gathering territory within which their kin and affines range. Both men and women range out from the camp in the course of their subsistence work, and they are equally affected by group moves in search of bush food, game, and water. More recently, however, /Du/da men have gained larger knowledge of the "outside" world, for some young men have spent months, and even years, doing wage work at such towns as Ghanzi, Gobabis, and Windhoek. Women are less likely to have had these experiences. Henry Harpending (1972 and in press) has collected demographic data on the !Kung of the !Kangwa and /Du/da areas which shows that the space occupied over a lifetime does not differ for the two sexes. For example, the distribution of distances between birthplaces of mates and birthplaces of parents and offspring are almost identical for the two sexes, both currently and for marriages that took place prior to substantial Bantu contact in these areas.

The absence of warfare or raiding, either among !Kung themselves or between !Kung and neighboring Bantu, undoubtedly facilitates the freedom of movement of the women. If threat of enemy attack were a recurrent fact of life, many features of !Kung social organization undoubtedly would change, particularly in the area of political leadership, but probably in the area of sex egalitarianism as well. (See Murdock, 1949:205 for a discussion of conditions, including warfare, that increase status discrepancy between the sexes.)

Sexual Division of Labor

When asked, !Kung will state that there is men's work and women's work, and that they conceive of most individual jobs as sex-typed, at least in principle. In practice, adults of both sexes seem surprisingly willing to do the work of the opposite sex. It often appeared to me that men, more than women, were willing to cross sex lines.

One afternoon while visiting in one of the /Du/da camps, I came across Kxau, a rather sober middle-aged man, industriously at work building his own hut. Building huts is predominantly women's work, and I had never seen such a thing. It happened that Kxau's wife was away visiting at another settlement many miles distant, or she would have made the hut. However, Kxau's daughter, an unmarried girl about seventeen years old, was in camp, and even she did not offer to make the hut or help him once he had started. Kxau proceeded to build the structure methodically and without embarrassment. I deliberately stayed in the vicinity to observe the reaction of other people. No one commented or joked with him about how his women were lazy.

Gathering is women's work, but there are times when men also gather (Draper, in preparation). Some married couples collected mongongo nuts together, but in my observation, the couples most likely to do this were elderly couples and a young couple who had been married for several years but had no children. Water collection is normally considered to be women's work, particularly when the water source is close to camp, perhaps fifteen to twenty minutes' walk. However, when the people are camped several miles from water, men participate regularly in carrying water back to camp. In the months of August, September, and October of 1969, I observed two of the /Du/da camps where water was three miles distant. In this situation men and women both worked at bringing in water. Only on the occasions when several of the men were absent from camp for several nights on hunting trips did their wives collect water daily for the remaining members of the family.

I mentioned earlier that men seem more willing (or accustomed) than women to do work normally associated with the opposite sex. Gathering and water-collecting are outstanding examples of female tasks that frequently involve men. While there are undoubtedly sound economic and evolutionary reasons for the male monopoly on hunting (Judith K. Brown, 1970b), there is one aspect of male hunting tasks that could easily absorb female help but typically does not. I refer here to the job of carrying the meat back to camp from the kill site.

A common pattern among the hunters of /Du/da was for a group of three or four hunters to stay out three or more nights in a row. Frequently by the fourth or fifth day one of their number would appear back in camp with the news that an antelope had been killed and that volunteers were needed to carry in the meat. On such occasions the remainder of the original hunting party stayed with the carcass, cutting the meat into biltong and allowing it to dry and lose much of its weight and volume. Always the helpers recruited were men. Often, but not necessarily, they were young males in late adolescence who had not yet begun serious hunting. I personally never knew of a woman (or women) assisting in such a venture, and never heard of any woman having done it.

The !Kung recognize no taboo against women being present at a kill site. On the contrary, when one or two hunters have killed a large animal some distance from camp, one of the hunters will return to camp and bring back his own and the other hunter's family to camp temporarily by the slain animal. Quite possibly the !Kung could verbalize their feelings about why it would be inappropriate to ask women to carry butchered meat. Unfortunately, while I was in the field it never occurred to me to ask; such blind spots are apparently an unavoidable hazard of fieldwork. Professor Cora DuBois warned me of this problem a few months before I began my work in the Kalahari: "Beware that the scale of custom will form over your eyes and you will no longer see."

Child-Rearing Practices and Sexual Equality

As children grow up there are few experiences which set one sex apart from the other. Living in such small groups, !Kung children have relatively few playmates to choose from.* Play groups, when they do form, include children of both sexes and of widely differing ages. This habit of playing in heterogeneous play groups probably minimizes any underlying, biologically based sex differences in style—differences which in other societies may be magnified and intensified by the opportunity of playing in same-sex, same-age play groups.

The child nurse is a regular feature of many African agricultural societies. The custom of assigning child-tending responsibility to an older child (usually a girl) in a family is one example of sex-role typing which can begin at an early age. This responsibility shapes and limits the behavior of girls in ways not true for boys, who are usually passed over for this chore. The training a girl receives as an infant caretaker doubtless has benefits for her eventual role performance and more immediately for the family economy, since she frees the mother from routine child care and allows her to resume subsistence production. However, the typical nine-year-old who is saddled with carrying and supervising a toddler cannot range as widely or explore as freely and independently as her brothers. She must stay closer to home, be more careful, more nurturant, more obedient, and more sensitive to the wishes of others. Habits formed in this way have social value, but my point is that such girls receive more training in these behaviors and that they form part of the complex of passivity and nurturance which characterizes adult female behavior in many cultures.**

* The average size of camps in the /Du/da area was thirty-four persons of whom an average of twelve were children ranging from new-born to fourteen years of age.

** See Barry, Bacon, and Child, 1957, and Whiting and Whiting, 1973 for further discussion of cross-cultural regularity and variability in sex differences in nurturance training.

!Kung do not use child nurses of either sex on a routine basis; this fact follows from the long birth intervals and the pattern of adult subsistence work. The average birth interval is approximately four years (Howell, in press). !Kung mothers can and do give lengthy, intensive care to each child because no new infant arrives to absorb her attention. Such mothers are comparatively unpressured and do not need to delegate the bulk of child-tending responsibility to another caretaker. Naturally, older children interact with younger children and in the process give help, protection, and attention to them. But one or more older children are rarely, if ever, the sole caretakers of younger charges for an appreciable length of time.

The rhythm of adult work also makes the role of child nurse unnecessary. !Kung adults work about three days per week, and they vary their time of being in and out of the camp, with the result that on any given day one-third to one-half of the adults are in camp. They can easily supervise their own children and those whose parents are absent. Older children are helpful in amusing and monitoring younger children, but they do so spontaneously (and erratically), and not because they are indoctrinated with a sense of responsibility for the welfare of a particular child or children.

A reflection of !Kung women's effectiveness in family life is the fact that a mother deals directly with her children when they are in need of correction. A different type of maternal strategy is common in cultures where women's status is clearly subordinate to that of the fathers and husbands. David Landy's study (1959) of rural Puerto Rican socialization techniques, Robert A. and Barbara LeVine's study (1963) of East African Gussi child training practices, and the L. Minturn and John T. Hitchcock study (1963) of child rearing among the Rajputs of Khalapur are particularly good examples of how a mother's ability to control her children is undermined by male superordinance, particularly when accompanied by patrilineal structures and patrilocal residence rules. Such mothers will hold up the father as the ultimate disciplinarian in an attempt to underscore their own

power. !Kung women do not resort to the threat, "I'll tell your father . . . !"

Among the !Kung, both parents correct the children, but women tend to do this more often because they are usually physically closer to the children at any given time than the men. When such situations arise, a mother does not seek to intimidate the children with the father's wrath. In this milieu children are not trained to respect and fear male authority. In fact, for reasons which will be elaborated later, authoritarian behavior is avoided by adults of *both* sexes. The typical strategy used by !Kung parents is to interrupt the misbehavior, carry the child away, and try to interest him or her in some inoffensive activity.

This way of disciplining children has important consequences in terms of behaviors that carry over into adulthood. Since parents do not use physical punishment, and aggressive postures are avoided by adults and devalued by the society at large, children have relatively little opportunity to observe or imitate overtly aggressive behavior. This carries over into relations between adult men and women in the society. Evidence from various sources is mounting in support of the notion that human males (and males of nonhuman species) are innately more aggressive than their female counterparts (Bandura *et al.*, 1961; Hamburg and Lunde, 1966; Kagan and Moss, 1962; Sears *et al.*, 1957 and 1965). But among the !Kung there is an extremely low cultural tolerance for aggressive behavior by anyone, male or female. In societies where aggressiveness and dominance are valued, these behaviors accrue disproportionately to males, and the females are common targets, resulting in a lowering of their status. !Kung women are not caught by this dimension of sex-role complementarity. They customarily maintain a mild manner, but so do their men.

Relations of Men with Children

A further example of the equality between the sexes and the amount of overlap in their activities is the relationship

between men and their children. In cultures where men have markedly superordinant status, women and children are expected to show deference to the male head of the family by staying away from him, observing routine formalities. !Kung fathers, in contrast, are intimately involved with their children and have a great deal of social interaction with them. The relation between fathers and young children is relaxed and without stylized respect or deference from the children. In fact, the lack of tact with which some children treated their parents was at first quite shocking to me.

As an example, I can relate an incident in which Kxau was trying to get his youngest son, Kashe, to bring him something from the other side of camp. Kxau was sitting at one edge of the village clearing with another man older than himself. Kxau repeatedly shouted to his son to bring him his tobacco from inside the family hut. The boy ignored his father's shouts, though !Kung camps are small, and the boy clearly could hear his father. Finally Kxau bellowed out his command, glaring across at his son and the other youngsters sitting there. Kashe looked up briefly and yelled back, "Do it yourself, old man." A few minutes later Kxau did do it himself, and Kashe received no reprimand.

Most fathers appear ill-at-ease when they hold very young infants, although by the time a child is nine or ten months old it is common to see the father playing with the child and holding it close to his face, blowing on its neck, and laughing. In the late afternoon and evening in a !Kung camp one often sees a father walking among the huts with a two- or three-year-old boy perched on his shoulder. The father ambles along, accepting an offer of a smoke at one hut, then moving on to squat elsewhere while watching a kinsman scraping a hide or mending a tool. At such times the father is mindful of the boy at his shoulder but pays him no special attention, aside from now and then steadying the child's balance.

There are certain aspects of child care that men unanimously eschew. Most prefer not to remove mucous from the runny nose of a child. Most adults of both sexes have a rather high tolerance for this sight, but occasionally a man will see

his child with an especially unwholesome-looking smear on his upper lip, and will call out to his wife, "Ugh! Get rid of that snot." Men are also loath to clean up feces left by children. Usually the mother or an older child will scoop up the offending mess with a handful of leaves. If, however, a child's defecation has gone unnoticed by all except the father, he will call out to his wife to remove it.

Effect of Group Size and Settlement Pattern on Relations Between the Sexes

!Kung camps are typically quite small; the average camp size at /Du/da was thirty-four with a range of seventeen to sixty-five. The small group size is related to the low order of specialization of sex roles. Given the rather small numbers of able-bodied adults who manage group life and subsistence in these camps, the lack of opposition (or specialization) of the sexes is highly practical. Especially in the rainy seasons when local group size falls to about fifteen people, it is useful and necessary for adults to be relatively interchangeable in function.

Observing the way people group themselves during leisure hours in a !Kung camp gives one a feeling for the tone of informal heterosexual interaction. Men and women (children, too) sit together in small clusters—talking, joking, cracking and eating nuts, passing around tobacco. Individuals pass among these groups without causing a rift in the ambiance, without attracting attention. In general, the sexes mix freely and unselfconsciously without the diffidence one might expect to see if they thought they were in some way intruding.

If there were a prominent opposition between the sexes, one would expect some expression of this in the organization and use of space within the !Kung camps. However, there are no rules and definitions that limit a person's access to various parts of the village space on the basis of sex. The overall small size of the settled area almost removes this type of symbolism from the realm of possibility.

To an outsider, particularly a Westerner, the small size of

!Kung camps and the intimate, close living characteristic of them can seem stifling.* Essentially, thirty to forty people share what amounts to (by our standards) a large room. The individual grass scherms, one to each married couple, ring an elliptical village space. The huts are often placed only a few feet apart and look a mere forty to fifty feet across the cleared, central space into the hearth and doorway of the hut on the opposite side of the circle. Daily life goes on in this small, open space. Everything is visible with a glance; in many camps conversations can be carried on in normal tones of voice by people sitting at opposite ends of the village. In this setting it is easy to see why the sexes rub elbows without embarrassment. In other societies, where sex roles and the prerogatives which attach to them are more exclusively defined, one generally finds architectural features used to help people manage their interaction and/or avoidance: walls, fences, separate sleeping and/or eating arrangements, designated spaces allocated to only one sex, etc.

In summary, many of the basic organizing features of this hunting and gathering group contribute to a relaxed and egalitarian relationship between men and women. The female subsistence role is essential to group survival and satisfying to the women. The foregoing remarks have illustrated a framework within which egalitarian relations are a natural or logical outcome. There are other issues bearing on the question of women's influence and control which are not answered here. Decision-making is one such issue. Leadership and authority are difficult problems to research in band-level societies generally, and in this one in particular. Still, the question of whether women or men more often influence group or family decisions is an empirical one, albeit one on which I have no data. Other areas that bear on the topic of women's influence and power are marital relations, access to extramarital relations, the influence of young women in determining the selection of their first husbands, changes in

* For further discussion of living density of !Kung camps, see Draper, 1973.

women's influence over their life cycles, etc.* So far as I know, these issues have yet to be researched in a systematic way among the !Kung.

The Sedentary !Kung of Mahopa

As stated earlier, my fieldwork was conducted in two areas of northwestern Botswana: the /Du/da area and the !Kangwa area. The second area was the locus of research similar to that conducted on the social life of the bush-living !Kung at /Du/da. Within the !Kangwa area (about seventy miles from the /Du/da water hole) I worked at Mahopa, one of several permanent water sources in the !Kangwa Valley. Around Mahopa are various settlements, of which three were the focus of my study. The three settlements were composed almost exclusively of !Kung. (Of about fifty persons living there, only one was non-!Kung—a middle-aged Tswana man married to a !Kung woman.)

The Mahopa "well" forms a small pan, or pool of standing water, in the rainy season; but in the dry season it shrinks to a muddy, clay-ringed ditch. This ditch is dug out periodically during the dry season to ensure seepage of an adequate amount of water to supply the approximately one hundred human residents of the Mahopa area and the various domestic animals owned by !Kung and non-!Kung alike. Mahopa is like other settlements of the !Kangwa area such as !Goshi, !Ubi, !Kangwa, and !Xabi in these respects: it has the only permanent water source in its immediate environs, and it hosts a mixed population of !Kung and Bantu-speaking pastoralists of the Tswana and Herero tribes. At all of these water holes a variety of villages are found, some having non-!Kung only, some having !Kung only, some having a mixture of both.

During my fieldwork at Mahopa I deliberately avoided those villages in which both !Kung and Bantu lived. I was concerned with observing the effects of sedentism on a pattern of life which I had observed in the bush. I was not

* Some of these issues are discussed by Shostak, in press.

directly interested in the nature of !Kung-Bantu interaction. It goes without saying that in some respects (especially goat herding and crop planting) the local pastoralists were a model for the subsistence practices of the sedentary !Kung.

The additional question—whether or not Bantu sex-role ideals influence the changes in !Kung sex roles, especially in the direction away from egalitarianism—will not be answered in this discussion. Adequate handling of this topic would require greater knowledge of (particularly) Herero social organization and the dynamics of !Kung-Bantu acculturation than I possess. It remains, however, an important research question, both for the full description of !Kung sedentarization and for understanding general factors that accompany or produce shifts in status relations between the sexes. I will confine myself here to dealing with the sedentary !Kung and some of the changes in the relations between the sexes which appear to follow from the shift from nomadism to sedentism.

The Effect of Sedentism on Sex Egalitarianism

Stated most simply, my strong impression is that the sexual egalitarianism of the bush setting is being undermined in the sedentary !Kung villages. One obvious manifestation of status inequality is that at Mahopa sex roles are more rigidly defined, and at the same time women's work is seen as "unworthy" of men. In the bush setting, although adult roles are sex-typed to some extent—particularly with respect to the exclusive male hunting, and the fact that gathering is primarily done by women—men do not lose face when they do work typically done by women, such as gathering. But in the sedentary villages of Mahopa there is definitely a feeling that it is unmanly for a man to do the jobs that should be done by women. The following example is offered as an illustration of this and of how the community brings social pressure on women (not, in this case, men) to conform.

At the largest of the three Mahopa villages lived a wife, !Uku, about sixteen years of age, and her husband /Gau, about thirty. Like many first marriages of !Kung women, this

union was not happy and had not been for some time. The primary source of discontent was the wife's refusal to do the normal domestic chores expected of her. Her husband ranted publicly, claiming that she refused to collect water for their household. !Uku in those days was looking sullen; she avoided her husband and refused to sleep with him. This kind of marital standoff was not unusual among any of the !Kung I knew. !Kung brides are notorious for being labile, uncooperative, and petulant. Young husbands, though usually five to ten years older than their wives, can also be fractious and emotionally ill-equipped to make a first marriage last. !Kung have an expression which invariably crops up when one or both partners to a young marriage sabotage domestic life. They say "*Debi !oa kxwia //wa*," which translates literally: "Children spoil marriage."

The atypical feature of the Mahopa couple's difficulty was that the husband made a continuing issue of it. He berated his wife's behavior loudly in public and enlisted her relatives to "shame" her into good behavior, etc. Though I never observed a precisely parallel episode in the bush, my prediction is that such a husband would have grumbled quietly, shrugged his shoulders, and either collected the water himself or tried to drink the water of friends and relatives. He also might have waited until his wife complained that he never provided her with meat and then reminded her that he could not spend all day hunting and still have to supply his own water.

By the time I was living at Mahopa and knew of this marital problem, it appeared to me that the elders of the village were working harder at trying to keep the couple together than would be usual in the bush. In the bush concerned relatives will work to keep a young couple together up to a certain point, but if the individuals themselves feel mismatched, there are few, if any, arguments that will persuade them to stay together. When (as often happens) the young couple divorces, no one loses a great deal—no property of any economic weight has changed hands, etc. If both the exspouses (together with some of their respective kin) go their

separate ways, their departure causes no special disruption in the context of routinely shifting residence patterns.

At Mahopa there were larger political factors at work in the village that may have accounted for the pressure on the couple to get along. Both spouses were related in different ways to the most influential couple of the largest of the three villages. The wife, !Uku, was indirectly related as "niece" to the man who was spoken of as the "owner" of the village. !Uku's husband, /Gau, was the actual brother of the village "owner's" wife. This older, influential couple needed to attract stable, permanent residents to their village. They were extremely "progressive" in comparison with other !Kung of the !Kangwa area. Both had had many years of experience living in various Bantu cattle camps but were now striving to maintain a separate community of sedentary !Kung who could live by agriculture and animal husbandry. Their village needed personnel; /Gau and !Uku were, in theory, ideal recruits to the village on account of their age and kin connections.

What is important for us here is that certain influential persons had vested interests in the success of the marriage, and that the bulk of social criticism was directed at the wife, not the husband. In this sedentary situation, various persons stood to lose a good deal in the event of a divorce. From the point of view of the village "owner" and his wife, a divorce might result in both young people leaving the village. This would be undesirable for reasons already stated. From the point of view of !Uku's parents, who also lived in this village—if their daughter divorced the brother of the "landlady," then their own welcome in the village might become jeopardized.

Although social pressure was being brought to bear on !Uku, it appeared that these pressures were not having the desired effect. !Uku's mother told me privately that she was disgusted with her daughter, that she had tried to get her to change her ways, but that !Uku was obdurate and had even used insulting language to her. !Uku at this time seemed to go out of her way to irritate her husband, had seriously of-

fended her mother, and appeared quite regressive in her behavior. For example, although she was then sixteen years old, she spent hours each day playing dolls with three other girls, ten, nine, and seven years of age. From the bush-living groups I was well acquainted with five adolescent females (both married and unmarried, and approximately the age of !Uku), but I never observed any of them playing so continuously and with such absorption with children five or six years younger.

In the sedentary situation individuals have a different kind of commitment to the place and the persons with whom they are living. People have invested time and energy in building substantial housing, collecting a few goats, clearing and planting fields, and processing and storing the harvested food. It is not easy for an individual to leave these resources behind merely because he or she is at odds with someone else in the village. The couple just described were aware of what they had to lose; the head couple needed neighbors and village mates, not only for the purposes of economic cooperation but because they wanted the human company that would come of a stable settlement around them.

The unhappy marriage remained with no solution or even the hint of one during the time I observed it. Neither party to the marriage appeared ready to leave, so their plight festered and spread into the lives of other people in the village. It was not clear to me why the greatest criticism was leveled at the wife. At sixteen, she was at least fifteen years younger than her husband (a greater age difference than is usual for !Kung couples), and as a juvenile she may have been an easier target than her mature husband. /Gau was known for his hot temper and general unpredictability. The concerned parties may have felt uneasy about urging him to a compromise. Such a marriage in the bush setting would have had a different history. !Uku would have left her husband long before, in all likelihood to spend another year or two in casual flirtations before marrying again.

Childhood Practices and the Greater Separation of Adult Sex Roles

Previously I have stated that in the bush children of both sexes lead very similar lives. Girls and boys do equally little work within the village. For similar reasons both girls and boys are not encouraged to routinely accompany adults of the same sex on their respective food-getting rounds. Children sometimes accompany the women on gathering trips (particularly in the rainy season when the women do not have to carry drinking water for them), but up to about twelve years of age the children make little or no contribution to the collected food which their mothers carry home. Children do, however, pick their own food and eat it during the trek.

In the settled life children continue to have a great deal of leisure, but there is a shift in the adult attitude toward a child as a potential or real worker.* Boys, for example, are expected to help with the animal tending.** They do not herd the animals during the day, but at sundown they are expected to scout the outskirts of the village and to hasten the returning animals into their pens. In each of the three Mahopa villages there was one boy who was primarily responsible for herding chores. In the largest village there were other boys also available, and these youths were frequently asked to help with the herding. Girls were not expected to help in the animal tending, and they in fact made no regular contribution.

An important feature of the herding work of the boys was that it regularly took them out of the village, away from adults and out on their own. There was no comparable experience for girls. They tended to stay in or near the village, unless they were accompanying older women to the water hole to collect water. On such occasions they quickly walked

* The Barry, Child, and Bacon (1957) cross-cultural study reported this as a general attribute of societies with a high degree of accumulation of surplus.

** See Whiting and Whiting (1973) for a discussion of factors that affect the development of responsibility in boys.

the mile or more to the well, where they filled their buckets and then returned more or less promptly to the village. In contrast, the boys drove their animals to the water and then, their work done, they lingered at the water hole. Herero men also came to the well, driving animals to water. Herero and Tswana women frequently came to the well to wash clothing. !Kung boys hung around the fringes of this scene, listening and observing. Experiences like these are no doubt related to the superior knowledge of Bantu languages which !Kung men exhibit in comparison to !Kung women. Such experiences must foster for boys a better and earlier knowledge of the greater !Kangwa area and a more confident spirit when moving within it—or outside of it, for that matter.

Women and girls appear to inhabit more restricted space—that space being largely their own village or neighboring villages. The Mahopa women gather wild plant foods, but they do this infrequently and forage in an area much closer to the village and for shorter intervals as compared with the bush women.

Overall, the Mahopa women seem homebound, their hands are busier, and their time is taken up with domestic chores.* A number of factors enter into this change. Under settled conditions food preparation is more complicated, although the actual diet is probably less varied in comparison with that of the foragers. Grains and squash must be brought in from the fields and set up on racks to dry. Sorghum and corn are pounded into meal; squash and melons are peeled and then boiled before eating. Women do the greatest part of the cooking, and they also do most of the drying and storing.

The material inventory of the settled villagers is richer than that of the bush-living !Kung. People have more possessions and better facilities, and all of these things require more time and energy for maintenance. Housing, for example, is more substantial than in the bush. Round, mud-walled houses with

* Unfortunately, during the period of study I collected systematic information on adult work effort only at /Du/da and not at any of the settled !Kung villages.

thatched roofs are replacing the traditional grass scherms at Mahopa. More durable structures are a response to at least two changes. Once committed to settled life, it makes sense to build better and more permanent shelters. Also, the presence of domestic animals in and near the villages means that grass houses are either protected by barricades or they are literally eaten up. Most people believe it is easier to build the mud-dung earth houses and to close them with inedible doors, rather than being continually on the lookout against stock. These structures provide better shelter, but they also require more upkeep. The women periodically resurface the interior walls and lay new floors. The men do some domestic maintenance work, but it is more likely to be fencing, roof-thatching, and other nonroutine work. It appears that the Mahopa men are becoming peripheral to their households in ways that are completely uncharacteristic of the easy integration of bush-living men into their own households. More will be said about this later.

At Mahopa the work of adult women is becoming more specialized, time-consuming, and homebound, and these women are quite willing to integrate their daughters into this work. Girls have no regular chores to compare with the herding work of some of the boys, but their mothers give them frequent small tasks such as pounding grain, carrying away a troublesome toddler, fetching earth from termite hills to be used in making mud, etc. The little girls are usually on the premises and easy targets for their mothers' commands; little boys seem to be either gone from the village (on errands already described) or else visible but distant enough from the women so that their help cannot be enlisted conveniently.

Earlier in this paper I suggested that bush-living men and women are about equally absent from their respective households, due to the similarities in the location and frequency of their work. This is less true at Mahopa. Women are in the village a great deal. The greatest part of their work takes place there, and foraging occupies only a small part of their weekly work. Mahopa men are increasingly absent from the households as their women become more consistently pres-

ent. There are tasks and activities for men in the village which have already been described, though they are not routine. What work the men do often takes them away from the village. They water animals, and when the goats are giving birth to kids the men who own pregnant goats check on the grazing herd during the day to make sure the newborn are not lost or rejected by the mothers. During planting season the men clear the fields and erect brush fences around the gardens to keep out the animals. Some men leave home for several days at a time to do wage work for Bantu employers living at other settlements in the !Kangwa Valley.

It is difficult to specify precisely what effect this increasing male absenteeism had on family life or relations between the sexes. The activities of the sedentary men are different not only in form but in content from those of the women. They leave home more frequently, travel more widely, and have more frequent interaction with members of other (dominant) cultural groups. In their own villages the men carry an aura of authority and sophistication that sets them apart from the women and children. For example, occasionally some incident, such as a legal case pending before the Tswana headman at !Xabi, would attract attention in the !Kangwa area. In the afternoons I often saw a group of men composed of several !Kung and one or two Hereros sitting in a shady area of one of the !Kung villages. The men would be discussing the case, carrying on the talks in a Bantu language. Women never joined these groups, and even children seemed to give these sessions a wide berth.

What these episodes conveyed to me is that at Mahopa political affairs are the concern of men, not women. Why or how women have been "eased out" (at least in comparison with the influence they had in the bush) is not clear. The /Du/da people, so long as they remained in the bush, had only rare and fleeting contacts with members of different cultural groups. If one postulates that men are the natural political agents in intergroup contacts, then the /Du/da milieu would not elicit that potential of the male role. At Mahopa three cultural groups mixed. !Kung men, as already

described, were more sophisticated than the women, and on those occasions when !Kung became involved in extragroup events, the !Kung men came prominently to the fore.

Organization of Space and Privacy in the Bush Setting

To recapitulate, in the bush, village space is small, circular, open, and highly intimate. Everyone in the camp can see (and often hear) everyone else virtually all of the time, since there are no private places to which people can retire. Even at nightfall people remain in the visually open space, sleeping singly or with other family members around the fires located outside the family huts (Draper, 1973). Elsewhere (Draper, in press), I have suggested that !Kung egalitarianism and commitment to sharing are more than coincidentally associated. The intensity of social pressure, in combination with the absence of privacy, makes hoarding virtually impossible, at least for individuals who wish to remain within the group. I am suggesting that the nature of village space in the bush acts as a "lock" on other aspects of culture that are congruent but capable of sliding apart. While it is true that !Kung values oppose physical fighting and anger, ranking of individuals in terms of status, material wealth, and competition, the context in which social action occurs is such that the earliest and subtlest moves in these directions can be perceived immediately by the group. Various forms of negative reinforcement can be employed by anyone and everyone, and the effect is to discourage anti-social behavior, whatever form it may take.

Obviously a continuous socialization process is not unique to the !Kung. All of us experience our fellows shaping our behavior throughout our lives. What I would like to stress about the !Kung is that in this small, face-to-face society it is much more difficult to compartmentalize one's motives, feeling states, and (most of all) actions. In ways not true of our life, !Kung remain in continuous communication, though they may not be directly conscious of the exchanges of information that are occurring.

This potential for continuous socialization exists among

the !Kung; if it works in the ways I have suggested, it need have no single effect on sexual egalitarianism among hunter-gatherers. There is, for example, abundant literature on other band-level peoples (notably Australian aborigines), where similar technology, economy, and settlement patterns produce at least formally similar settings for social action without attendant equality in male and female statuses (A. Hamilton, 1970; Hiatt, 1970; Peterson, 1970; White, 1970; Hart and Pilling, 1960). In the !Kung case, a number of factors appear to be working directly and indirectly to insure high autonomy of females and immunity of females to subordination by males. Several of these factors have been isolated in the foregoing discussion in an attempt to "explain" sexual egalitarianism from *inside* the system—to show how sexual egalitarianism is a logical outcome given the realities of the !Kung life.

Looked at from the point of view of factors *outside* the normative system, another argument can be made for why an egalitarian, mutual interdependence prevails among these people. The nature and distribution of the resources used by the hunting and gathering !Kung probably have indirect consequences for potential competition between and within !Kung groups. Both vegetable and animal foods are thinly and unevenly distributed over the bush. This is particularly true of the large antelope, which move erratically and seldom in the large herds that are more typical in East Africa and Arctic North America. Under conditions as these, hunting success for a particular individual depends as much on luck as it does on skill. Among the !Kung, even the best hunters readily admit that there are times when game is unavailable or when conditions do not permit the stalk-and-close approach to game required by bow-and-arrow hunting. As a result, any individual man cannot count on success, and in this context sharing of meat is an essential form of social insurance—a way of distributing food to the have-nots against the time when their fortunes change. Not surprisingly, the rules about sharing meat constitute one of the most important values in !Kung culture. My guess is that in such a sys-

tem where males are continually leveled and divested of their ownership of the single most valued item (meat), the potential for male competition is largely removed. The strict sharing ethic, together with the values against interpersonal aggression described earlier, are checks on male agonistic behavior that leave the field open for female autonomy and influence.*

Organization of Space and Privacy in the Settled Villages

In the settled villages the organization of space and the notion of privacy have undergone some interesting changes. Instead of the circular, closed settlement pattern of the bush, the settled villages typically are arranged in an open crescent; individual households have moved farther apart; and household privacy is substantially increased, particularly for those people who have acquired more material wealth. With individual houses farther apart, the pattern of social usage of the village space is different. The average distance between interactive clusters of people also increases. In the settled village different activities are more typically separated in space, as contrasted with the bush setting where it is typical to find people carrying on a conversation and/or activity while sitting back-to-back with other people who are engaged in a wholly different enterprise.

At the time I was living at Mahopa a few families already lived in permanent mud-walled houses and some other families were in the process of building Bantu-style rondavels to replace their smaller grass scherms. Occupants of the completed rondavels build log fences around their houses; slender logs or poles are placed upright in the ground, reaching to a height of five to six feet, and spaced one to two inches apart. These fences encircle individual households and create an inner courtyard. Obviously, privacy is increased substantially

* Lee (1969) provides a fascinating description of how an anthropologist's pride in making a gift of meat to a !Kung village was deflated by the !Kung expertise in putting down boastfulness.

by the changed house type, settlement pattern, and fencing.

When I asked settled villagers why people erected the fences, the typical response was that it is a means of keeping domestic animals away from people's living quarters. Goats, in particular, can be a nuisance. They steal food, knock over pots, even come into houses in search of food. Their fresh dung attracts flies which are also bothersome. If domestic animals entail a new style of building, the solid, roomy houses, fences, and more linear placement of separate households also change the quality of social interaction in the villages. There are internal boundaries within the village space, which people recognize and manipulate in ways completely foreign to the bush setting. In the bush people can see each other and determine, on a variety of grounds,* whether it is appropriate or timely to initiate social interaction. In the Mahopa villages one heard such exchanges as "So-and-so, are you at home?" and "Shall I enter [your space]?"

There are differences in material wealth among the people of the settled villages that would not be tolerated in the bush. These differences are manifest in terms of household size and elaborateness of construction, unequal ownership of domestic animals, clothing, jewelry, and food reserves. The differences are not large in an absolute sense, but in comparison with the similar material wealth of individuals in the bush, the differences are impressive. Some !Kung live simply, still using grass scherms and owning few possessions; others are better off, though the men in particular seem to avoid some kinds of ostentation. For example, the two men who were the most influential males in their villages often dressed very simply and did not have the outward appearance of "big men."** Yet, if invited into their houses, one would see a remarkable collection of *things:* clothing, dishes, blankets,

* My impression while working in the field was that a student of proxemics would find a wealth of material in the area of nonverbal communication among the foraging groups of !Kung.

** Yet the middle-aged wives of these men often wore jewelry and clothing beyond the means of other women living in the settled villages.

bottles, trunks with locks, etc. As a guest in such a house one could sit on the floor, lean back against the cool, sound-deadening wall, and enjoy being *alone* with one's host while he or she made tea and murmured small talk.

Ranking of individuals in terms of prestige and differential wealth has begun in the settled villages. Men, more than women, are defined as the managers or owners of this property. One would hear, for example, such expressions as "Kxau's [a man's name] house" or "Kxau's village." Children are most often identified as being the child of the father rather than the child of the mother. Goats are also referred to as belonging to one or another adult male, though in fact a given man's herd generally includes several animals which in fact belong to his wife or other female relatives. These expressions can be heard in the bush setting, for individual ownership exists among the foragers as well, but the "owners" referred to are as likely to be women as men. At Mahopa this linguistic custom is being replaced by one in which the adult male stands as the symbol of his domestic group. It is a linguistic shorthand, but I believe it signifies changes in the relative importance attached to each sex.

Earlier I referred to the increasing peripheralization of males in the settled villages and the opposite centripetal moving of women to the local domestic sphere. As households and possessions become private, I believe women are becoming private as well. (Perhaps this is one reason the women can afford to be ostentatious of their wealth.) In contrast bush men and women are equally "public," mobile, and visible. I believe this exposure of women is a form of protection in the bush setting. For instance, residence choices of bush-living couples are such that over time the couples live about equally (often simultaneously) with the kin of both husband and wife (Lee, in press). (At present there is not even an ideal of patrilocal residence, so far as my own interviews could establish.) This means that the wife typically has several of her own close kin nearby. These people are already on the premises and can support her interests should they conflict with the interests of her husband or his close kin.

When husbands and wives argue, people are at hand to intervene if either spouse loses self-control. Wife-beating in these settings is extremely difficult to effect.

Once, during my work in Mahopa, I had a conversation with two middle-aged women who lived in the largest of the settled villages where I was camped. I often asked !Kung adults about the Herero, what they thought of them, how they perceived the differences between the groups, mainly because for reasons already stated I seldom visited the Herero settlements and knew little from direct observation about the pattern of life there. In one such conversation I asked Kxarun!a, a woman of about fifty, "Who do you think has the better life—a !Kung woman or a Herero woman?" She answered in a serious, thoughtful way, "The !Kung women are better off. Among the Herero if a man is angry with his wife he can put her in their house, bolt the door and beat her. No one can get in to separate them. They only hear her screams. When we !Kung fight, other people get in between." The other woman sitting with us agreed earnestly.

It would be unwise to attach too much significance to this remark. People are always accusing the people "over there" of various dread offenses ranging from wife-beating to much worse practices. Still, the remark chilled me and I remember deliberately not looking at the Bantu-style rondavels which were going up in the middle of the village where we sat.

In this paper I have pointed out differences in sexual egalitarianism in the hunting and gathering groups versus the settled groups of !Kung. I have discussed factors in the bush setting which favor high autonomy for females and freedom from subordination by males. Once the !Kung shift their subsistence to animal husbandry and crop planting, a number of changes occur in the area of sex roles. A major aspect of this change is the decrease in women's autonomy and influence relative to that of the men.