



WILEY

A · M · E · R · I · C · A · N
A N T H R O P O L O G I C A L
A S S O C I A T I O N

Is "Raw" or "Cooked" a Useful Analytic Tool?

Author(s): Arthur E. Hippler

Source: *American Anthropologist*, Oct., 1972, New Series, Vol. 74, No. 5 (Oct., 1972), pp. 1319-1320

Published by: Wiley on behalf of the American Anthropological Association

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/672987>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



American Anthropological Association and *Wiley* are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *American Anthropologist*

JSTOR

Eskimo female infanticide may well be related to the unusual "double bind" situation of Eskimo infant life (Hippler 1971a, 1971b). The extremely nurturant and permissive early child rearing practices of Eskimo mothers, combined with sporadic unpredictable teasing as a socialization technique, tends to produce an expansive "touchy" adult who fears the results of his expansiveness and aggression to the extent that he relies on a cultural prohibition against nearly all activities intrusive into another's life space. Thus, the much commented on apparent pleasantness of the smiling Eskimo masks his fear of the results of anger or aggression.

It would appear that it is (primarily) male initiated aggressiveness at the ambivalently perceived female, and jealousy of the infant, which determine the genesis of female infanticide. That female infanticide may function to maintain populations at an acceptable level is a reasonable notion, but such functional explanations do not delineate the dynamics of behavior any more than recourse to the abstraction "culture."

What would be most useful would be a careful delineation of the populations inhabiting areas where some degree of population control would have been aboriginally functional combined with a careful determination of the psychodynamics involved in the population control tactics. Such work might begin to provide a serious and tightly reasoned analysis of at least this aspect of human ecological activity and its symbolic expressive cultural components leading to a more integrated perspective of this form of human behavior.

References Cited

- Freeman, Milton R.
1971 A Social and Ecologic Analysis of Systematic Female Infanticide Among the Netsilik Eskimo. *American Anthropologist* 73:1011-1018.
- Briggs, Jean
1971 Never in Anger. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Hippler, Arthur E.
1971a Some Observations on Witchcraft: The Case of the Aivilik Eskimos. abs. anal. *Transcultural Psychiatric Research* 8:181-189.

1971b Shamans Curers and Personality. Suggestions Toward a Theoretical Model. abs. anal. *Transcultural Psychiatric Research* 8:190-193.

Is "Raw" or "Cooked" A Useful Analytic Tool?

ARTHUR E. HIPPLER
University of Alaska

Ingham's recent article (1971:1092-1099) on the Siriono suggests that "social exchange among the Siriono is a total social fact, but one that focuses on a peculiar relationship between men and women within a kinship idiom of parallel descent and matrilineal cross cousin marriage" (*Ibid.*:1092).

Precisely what this means is explained later (*Ibid.*:1098) where Ingham states "marriage among the Siriono might be understood as a unilateral exchange so practical and self sufficient that it engendered little additional transaction between social groups." Along the way, Ingham introduces ideas of "raw" vs. "cooked," ie., "natural" vs. "cultural," in what to me at least is a somewhat puzzling attempt to explain a phenomenon not clearly in need of this level of "explanation."

There might well be a more economical explanation for Siriono behavior in general, and one much closer to Holmberg's published data. Much is made of Siriono impoverishment, yet it would appear that the Siriono do not live in an area devoid of food. They do not, however, indicate the level of instrumental capacity necessary to exploit this environment. It would appear, on the other hand, from a careful reading of Holmberg that the Siriono nearly starve themselves rather than eat uncooked food or break certain eating taboos. This suggests very strongly a need to analyze the cultural and psychodynamic aspects of such a peculiar behavior.

Unfortunately Holmberg's child socialization data is not adequate to understand all the dimensions of this ambivalence concerning oral needs, but certain indications of the problem are striking. All of Holmberg's pictures (Holmberg 1969) show apparently healthy and well fed people. He notes their

gluttony (four people eating sixty pounds of peccary at a sitting (Holmberg 1969:89). He also notes food hoarding, even perhaps in vaginas (*Ibid.*:155). As sex objects, he suggests men prefer the young and fat; in fact the only perversion he noted was a man injuring a woman's breast (*Ibid.*:169), but he also notes that both men and women commonly bite each other's breasts in love making.

When we note that infants are sexually stimulated by and stimulating to the mother (*Ibid.*:202) even to the point of near intercourse, it is difficult *not* to observe that sexuality and orality are fused in the Siriono. This is abundantly and clearly shown in the continued demands for nurturance as a prelude to sexual activity and even in fights of men with men (*Ibid.*:95).

What seems really to be happening among the Siriono is that tremendous jealousy of the infant (the infant is painfully punished at birth and periodically afterward by depilation [*Ibid.*:182], older children tease the younger mercilessly [*Ibid.*:207 ff.]) is reflected in an adult preoccupation with nurturance, especially the giving and consuming of food.

If there were more detailed data on the socialization practices, and perhaps some projective test results, or even an extended section containing mythology a great deal of this uncertainty might well be resolved. Such is not the case, however. Nonetheless, among the data Holmberg does present are such items as people eating themselves to death for fear of loss of appetite in illness, a fear that illness enters through the nose or mouth (*Ibid.*:225 ff.), and that the last question asked of a dying hunter is that he direct the survivors to food, we may indeed suspect severe oral concerns. When we add to this the fact that the Siriono seem to "hoard women" (tend to hoard nurturance), punish children by refusing them food (*Ibid.*:204) and refuse children food since sometimes it is tabooed (*Ibid.*:206) it is difficult to relate this to social structural arrangements.

Social structural arrangements may indeed reflect psychic tensions, and in this Ingham has been admirably succinct. Still, Ingham's suggestions concerning "raw" and "cooked" as representatives of "uncivilized" and "civilized" do not seem compelling in

that they are not fundamentally related to basic psychic needs. That they might be, by virtue of identifying the grasping voraciousness of a child to his "raw" state is not discussed.

Instead, what Ingham offers is an unsupported assumption that "raw" and "cooked" reflect levels of concern with maleness and femaleness, hair and depilation, and affinal and consanguineal ties.

A possibly more fruitful analysis would have been one which attempted to relate in terms which are supported by clinical and cross-cultural evidence the relationship between the general psychodynamic social structural and cultural factors in Siriono life.

Such a criticism is not offered in a carping sense and my respect for Ingham's work remains high. I nonetheless cannot help but observe that approaches tied to such "sexy" notions as "raw" or "cooked" tend to be faddish rather than solidly grounded in the best knowledge available about the bases of human behavior and interaction.

As it stands, it is not clear what advance in our knowledge either of the Siriono, or indeed of social structural organization, is offered by Ingham's analysis.

References Cited

- Ingham, John M.
1971 Are the Siriono Raw or Cooked?
American Anthropologist
73:1092-1099.
- Holmberg, Allan R.
1969 *Nomads of the Long Bow*. Garden
City: Natural History Press.

Comment on Ackerman's "Marital Instability and Juvenile Delinquency"

STEFAN G. PERKOWSKI
SUNY, Buffalo

Ackerman's recent article concerning the Nez Perces of Idaho leaves much to be desired. The purpose of her article was the examination of the relationship between juvenile delinquency and four sociological factors: (1) marital instability, (2) loss of