

# Forager Facts

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## Summary and Introduction

We are economists with a long-standing interest in evolutionary psychology, who recently came to appreciate the rich collections of relevant data cultural anthropologists have spent decades collecting on the social environments of a wide range of human societies. While we found some systematic collections of these observations, we could not find a systematic summary of the social environment of the subsample of societies that most resemble the social environment where most human psychology seems to have evolved: small bands of nomadic foragers.

This short paper therefore represents our attempt to create such a summary. Using an existing dataset aggregated from diverse ethnographies, we collect statistics on the social environment of the studied cultures which most closely resemble our hunter-gatherer ancestors.

Compared with relatively modern societies, nomadic foragers had similar levels of food and disease, and less murder and suicide. They did not fight over land or resources, and they enforced justice directly and personally. They avoided class divisions like rich vs. poor, shared food more, and their leaders had no formal powers.

Polygamy, premarital sex, and extramarital sex were all widespread, divorce was easy, and men and women were generally considered equal. Kids were taught to be more generous, trusting, and honest, and were never punished physically.

## Criteria

We draw from an aggregated dataset, the Standard Cross-Cultural Codes (SCCC), composed of over 2,000 variables covering 186 societies from around the globe. Each variable originates from one of several dozen studies that were compiled and edited by Douglas R. White, Michael Burton, William Divale, Patrick Gray, Andrey Korotayev, and Daria Khalturina.

Ideally, we would prefer a database on dozens of societies that perfectly preserved the social environment of our distant hunter-gatherers ancestors. Alas, this is not possible. Even relatively isolated societies are in substantial contact with more modern societies, and we cannot exclude the possibility that their ancestors were once refugees from such societies. Furthermore, the marginal places where such isolated folks now reside are clearly not representative of the places our distant ancestors lived; such folks can now only live in places for which modern societies have little use.

As a substitute, we have constructed a subsample of the 186 SCCC societies, a subsample of the societies with the fewest “deviations” from our best guess about the lives of our distant nomadic forager ancestors. Most of our deviation criteria deal with a society’s level of technological advancement, though other variables, including diet and mobility, were also considered.

To construct our sample of civilizations, we first remove all societies that did not get 80% or more of their food from hunting or gathering (v858: coding three or more). We drew “subsistence type” from D. White, 1984, after Karen and Jeffrey Paige (1981), excluding

societies which engaged in farming, herding, fishing, and so forth. This left 19 societies of varying closeness to our ideal hunter-gatherers of our distant past. Some societies, for example, had suspicious features, such as fixed settlements, currency, animal husbandry, socio-economic integration with a larger political body, and so on. We used the following 18 criteria to remove such societies from the dataset. Each criteria entry below describes the title of the variable, the number of the variable (as defined by the SCCC), the variable values that indicated unfitness for the study, and a brief description of those eliminated values:

1. Import Food Acquisition (v2: three or more), getting food from local market or better
2. Land Transport (v13: two or more), using pack animals or better
3. Water Transport (v15: five or more), using a sail powered craft or better
4. Money (v17: four or more), foreign or domestic money
5. Credit Source (v18: three or more), external money lending specialists
6. Fixity of Settlement (v61: two or more), fixed at any point
7. Large or impressive structures (v66: two or more), any such structures
8. Political autonomy (v81: three or less), tribute paid or more dependent
9. Level of sovereignty (v83: two or more), any “state” at all
10. Technological specialization (v153: two or more), pottery or more advanced
11. Animal husbandry (v244: two or more), any sort of animal husbandry
12. Subsistence economy (v246: four or more), pastoral or more advanced
13. Inheritance of land property (v278: two or more), any inheritance of this property
14. Taxes paid to community (v784: two or less), any taxes in any form
15. Trade and markets (v1007: four or more), a marketplace or anything more established
16. Labor (v1009, five or more), migrant wage labor or more advanced
17. Population density (v1130, four), 5 people per square mile or more
18. Sources of wealth (v1722, two-five, or eight), wealth from land or cattle

In the table below, groups that met a criterion for inclusions were made blank and groups for which there was no data for a criterion are indicated with a question mark but treated as blank. This is to retain as large as a sample size as reasonably possible.

Deviation from Ideal Sample																			
<i>Society</i>	<i>Import Food Acq</i>	<i>Land transport</i>	<i>Water transport</i>	<i>Money</i>	<i>Credit source</i>	<i>Fixity of settlement</i>	<i>Large structures</i>	<i>Political autonomy</i>	<i>Level of sovereignty</i>	<i>Technological spec</i>	<i>Animal husbandry</i>	<i>Subsistence economy</i>	<i>Inheritance of land prop</i>	<i>Taxes paid to comm.</i>	<i>Trade and markets</i>	<i>Labor</i>	<i>Population density</i>	<i>Sources of wealth</i>	<i>Total Deviations</i>
Andamanese	?					X				X		X			?	?			<b>3</b>
Aranda	?														?	?			<b>0</b>
Aweikoma	?							X		X					?	?			<b>2</b>
Botocudo	?														?	?		?	<b>0</b>
Copper Eskimo	?	X				X				X								?	<b>3</b>

Hadza	?															?	?		?	0
Kung Bushmen	?																X			1
Lengua	?	X								X						?	?		?	2
Mbuti																				0
Micmac	X					X									?		?	?	?	2
Montagnais	X					X							X			?	?			3
Paiute (North.)	?					X											X		?	2
Pomo (Eastern)						X	X										?	?		2
Semang						X											?	?		1
Shavante	?					X								X						2
Siriono	?					X				X							?	?		2
Slave	X	X	X	X	X	X											?	?	?	6
Tiwi																				0
Vedda				X		X				X			X			?	?			4

### Modern Comparisons

Some variables deserve some context since they are based on the opinion of the ethnographer. To better contextualize the differences between the hunter-gatherer world and the world of modern society, we consider a handful of more recent civilizations. (There are no societies very similar to our own included in these studies, and the most recent year of focus is 1965.)

Each of these modern societies have either motorized water or land transport; a medium of exchange; permanent settlement; some sort of large or impressive structures; smiths, weavers, and potters; a population density of at least 100 people per square mile<sup>1</sup> and a total population of at least one million people. They are (with the year of focus) Uttar Pradesh (1945), Balinese (1958), Japanese (1950), Siamese (1955), Chinese (1936), Javanese (1954), Turks (1950), and Russians (1955).

### Weak and Strong Foragers

To find good exemplars of forager societies, all societies with more than one “modern trait” were excluded. This brings the total sample to seven (parenthetical notes indication the year of focus): Aranda (1896), Botocudo (1884), Hadza (1930), Kung Bushmen (1950), Mbuti (1950), Semang (1925), and Tiwi (1929). These groups form the “weak” forager dataset.

It is possible that the small amount of “give” allowed in the constraints taints the same in some significant but unforeseen way. Since a sample with an even higher standard of similarity with hunter-gatherers is still notably large at five (with zero total deviations instead of one or less), we construct general information about these groups in pursuit of forming a more accurate (if more limited) picture. This “strict” forager dataset—groups with no modern indicators—total five: Aranda, Botocudo, Hadza, Mbuti, and Tiwi. When discussing results we describe this strict sample, unless data is insufficient to provide an accurate picture. When conclusion for the weak

<sup>1</sup> Technically the United States has a population density of less than this, though this includes large unpopulated areas of the deserts in the west and the tundra of Alaska. For similar reasons, Canada and Australia have low population densities though they contain high population areas. Bearing this in mind, both the Turks and Russians stayed in the modern sample though they failed the density test.

and strict conflict, we focus on the strict sample but mention the weak sample in case the difference is due to a smaller sample size.

Parenthetical citations indicate the variable number (which begins with a “v”) followed by the number of observations and if the data set is from the weak (w), strict (s), or modern (m) sample. For example, “v1719 N=5w” indicates that the information came from variable 1719, with five observations from the weak dataset. We mention modern samples only when we feel as though an explicit point of comparison is important to understanding the data.

### **Strict Foragers at a Glance**

Before diving into the data, it is a good idea to briefly review the groups with zero deviations from the hunter-gatherers we seek to understand. The five groups are spread throughout the world: one located in Brazil, two in Africa, and two in Australia. With the exception of the Aranda in central Australia, the groups live in a tropical climate with an average of 1,334 mm of rain a year (1,122 mm if you include the Aranda) and average annual temperature of all societies is 23.2 C (73.8 F) (v189 N=5s, v188 N=5s). The size of the local community can be as large as 100 people but is generally between 10 and 50 individuals (v1756 N=3s). Population density is about 1 person per 1-5 square miles with the Botocudo having less than one person per five square miles (v64 N=5s).

The Aranda lived in the deserts of central Australia, ranging from the flat lands to the MacDonnell mountain ranges. They made camp near water sources, relying on lean-tos made of shrubbery for shelter. The local flora was mostly small trees and shrubs; the fauna ranged from kangaroos to a large variety of birds (including emus, ducks, and turkeys). Men hunted the fauna while women gathered local vegetation and small animals including seeds, tubers, ants, lizards, mussels, and snails. The Aranda were highly mobile and wandered the desert within an ancestral territory. Each band also maintained a small permanent settlement with huts about six feet in diameter and made of branches. The main camp was divided into four sections (north, south, east, and west, one for each section of the tribe) with subsections for men and women. Until the early 1900s, there were about 2,000 Aranda until most were killed by tuberculosis. (Malone)

The Botocudo lived in the forests of eastern Brazil, hunting and foraging for food. They lived in hovels about four feet high and constructed of branches stuck to the ground. They were completely nomadic and roamed the forest in bands of ten to twenty families. They ate roots, berries, frogs, lizards, honey, snakes, and larger game which they hunted with bows and arrows. They also made canoes by burning out the inside of a tree. There's much evidence to suggest that they were cannibals and used the heads of their devoured victims for targeting practice. (Keane 1884) Blood feuds, not only between tribes but within them, were common and were primarily motivated by revenge for previous acts of violence. No one would remember the original cause for the feud. They choose their leader based on his supernaturally power. (Nimuendajú 1946)

The Hadza live in the savanna of northern Tanzania and number about 300-400. Men hunt local game and collect honey while women collect tubers, berries, and fruit. They organize themselves into bands of about twenty-five individuals, though mobility between bands is quite high. This high mobility is partially due to the fact that men and women are free to choose their own mates and so men will travel from band to band until a woman reciprocates his interest in her and he stays. Successful hunters have an easier time attracting a mate and in some cases, have more than one wife. However, this success at hunting does not translate into status within the band as a whole. Polygamy is rare among the Hadza but only 20% stay married to the same

person their whole life. The Hadza rarely marry outside of their ethnic group and they tend to know everyone in their mating pool before they select a mate. (Marlowe 2004)

The Mbuti live in the Ituri Forest of the Democratic Republic of Congo and number 20,000 to 40,000. Ethnologists divide them into two main groups, based their form of hunting: with bows and arrows and with nets. They regularly trade with the *bakbala*, or local agriculturalists who provide them with tobacco, grown foods, and limited manufactured items in exchange for forest products. This relationship has maintained for “many years” according to the 1978 source and it is unknown if it overlaps with our year of focus of 1950. The trading, however, is irregular and the Mbuti are able to avoid the *bakbala*’s attempts at control by constantly changing their allegiances. From Hart 1978, page 331:

They cleverly alternate trade with begging; gifts with thievery; wage labor with demands made on religious grounds. The *bakbala* cannot know where the Mbuti’s allegiance stands, or keep track of what they owe to whom. In this confused state of flux, the Mbuti preserve their independence, but continue to derive material advantages from the village.

While it is unclear how dependent the Mbuti are on the *bakbala*, there is little controversy that the Mbuti would continue to thrive if their trading would cease (Hart 1978). Exactly how much these trading relations taint our sample is unknown, but it appears that the Mbuti use the trade goods to simply make their life a little easier and have not significantly shifted their lifestyle. This is captured in that the Mbuti unquestionably fulfill all our requirements (unquestionable in the sense that they had no missing data points for the criteria variables).

The Tiwi occupy the Melville and Bathurst Islands of Northern Australia. Numbering just over 1,000 individuals during the year of focus, they are separated into nine factions. During the year of focus, missionaries from a local Catholic mission encouraged the Tiwi to adopt monogamy. Failure to comply meant an end to European goods, including foods, clothes, and tobacco. These pressures, however, were countered by Japanese pearl-hunters. The sailors, desiring prostitutes, would trade European goods to bed a local woman. While multiple wives unset the flow of goods from missionaries, it emboldened them from sailors (assuming he was willing to rent them out, a practice forbidden by Tiwi custom; Hart 1954). This was the main political issue of the day among the Tiwi and we mention it here to underline that the trading and political tension does not fundamentally taint our sample. Like the Mbuti, the Tiwi unambiguously fulfill all our requirements for being in the strict forager sample.

## Food, Health, and Property

**Table 1: Food**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Variable Number</i>	<i>Weak Forager</i>		<i>Strict Forager</i>		<i>Modern</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>
Supply	678	1.60	5	1.67	3	1.40	5
Famine (occurrence)	1265	2.60	5	2.33	3	2.86	7
Famine (severity)	1267	2.67	3	2.50	2	3.00	3
Famine (recurrence)	1269	1.67	3	1.50	2	2.60	5

*678: 1-constant, 4-starvation; 1265, 1267: 1-v. low, 4-v. high; 1269: 1-low, 3-high*

Food supplies are generally constant, though the Aranda encounters periodic or chronic hunger (v678 N=3s) and “seldom” (occurrence uncommon) variations in food supply (v1719 N=3s). Occurrence of short-term starvations range from low to high, though it leans to the low end (v1262 N=4s). Occurrence of seasonal starvation ranges is either very low or moderate (v1263 N=4s). Occurrence of famine ranges from very low to very high, favoring the lower end (v1265 N=3s). When famine occurs, it is either very low or very high in intensity (v1267 N=3w), favoring the high end. It’s worth noting that the society with the most famine problems—the Aranda—also has by far the lowest annual precipitation: 275 mm or 1.7 standard deviations below the mean. This is also the society which experiences chronic or periodic hunger.

Land shortages (v1720 N=4w) do not occur save in one case which was due to invasion. There is no class stratification (v270 N=5s) nor slavery (v274 N=5s). Most of the time, private property is present (v704 N=3s). Most societies have no rich though one has a few (v1721 N=3s), and they derive their wealth from means of production other than cattle or land (v1722 N=3s). No society has any poor or dispossessed people (v1723 N=3s, v1724 N=3s). All land has communal rights only (v1726 N=3s). Societies either have no marketplace or a market for bulk goods (v1007 N=2s).

Sharing of food is always common, occurring within the local community or within the ethnic group (v1718 N=3s), though the kin groups rarely exists outside of the local community (v1755 N=2s; v1755 N=4w).

Average pathogen stress is the combined intensity of seven different diseases (leishmasias, trypanosomes, malaria, schistosomes, filariae, spirochetes, and leprosy), ranging from 7 (none of the diseases are present) to 21 (all of them not only present, but serious). Foragers has an average stress level of 14.2 compared to 13.38 for modern societies (v1260 N=5s, N=8m).

## Crime and Violence

**Table 2: Crime**

<i>Variable</i>		<i>Variable Number</i>	<i>Weak Forager</i>		<i>Strict Forager</i>		<i>Modern</i>	
			<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>
By Individual	Homicide	1665	1.00	4	1.00	2	4.25	4
	Assault	1666	4.00	4	7.00	2	5.40	5
	Theft	1667	3.67	3	9.00	1	4.60	5
	Trespass	1668	1.00	2	1.00	1	4.00	2
	Suicide	1669	1.00	2	1.00	1	4.00	4
By Group	Homicide	1675	1.00	3	1.00	1	—	0
	Assault	1676	5.17	6	7.25	4	7.25	4
	Theft	1677	5.67	6	8.00	4	7.75	4
	Trespass	1678	5.20	5	6.25	4	8.00	3

*1665-1678: 1-low, 9-high*

By individuals, homicide rates (v1665 N=4w), trespass rates (v1668 N=2w), and suicide rates (v1669 N=2w) are low while assault rates (v1666 N=4w) and theft rates (v1667 N=3w), range from very high to very low (though both favor the lower rates). By groups, homicide (v1675 N=3w) rates remain the same as for individuals. Assault (v1676 N=4s), theft (v1677 N=4s), and trespass (v1678 N=4s) rates by groups are quite variable, with very high rates

showing up with notable frequency. Trespass by group increases, homicide by group falls, theft by group increases, and assault by group remains the same, compared to crimes by individuals.

When violence occurs, resource acquisition is never a motive for it (v1727 N=3w) while in modern societies, it's a motive for violent conflict (v1727 N=2m). Revenge can be forbidden, prescribed, or neither forbidden nor prescribed, but when it is prescribed, compensation is never seen as an equal substitute (v1774 N=3s). In all societies, the person wronged is the person who punishes the guilty: it is never a third party (v700 N=3s). In all of the societies, people will usually change communities if there's a substantial dispute (v785 N=2w).

**Table 3: Warfare**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Variable Number</i>	<i>Weak Forager</i>		<i>Strict Forager</i>		<i>Modern</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>
Frequency (Overall)	679	1.20	5	1.33	3	1.20	5
Frequency (Internal)	773	3.00	4	2.50	2	4.00	1
Frequency (External)	774	4.00	4	4.00	2	4.00	1
Frequency (Internal)	891	2.40	5	2.25	4	2.63	8
Frequency (External, Defense)	892	2.80	5	2.75	4	2.14	7
Frequency (External, Offense)	893	2.67	6	2.60	5	2.25	8
Frequency (Overall)	1648	6.00	5	9.33	3	12.33	6
Frequency (Internal)	1649	5.60	5	8.67	3	10.14	7
Frequency (External)	1650	2.00	4	3.00	2	12.00	6
Casualty Rate	901	2.00	3	2.00	2	1.00	4
Prestige in being a warrior	903	2.00	4	1.67	3	1.75	8

679: 1-absent/occasional/periodic, 2-frequent/endemic; 773-774: 1-Frequent (at least yearly), 4-Rare/never; 891-893: 1-low, 3-high; 901: 1-high, 2-low; 903: 1-high 3-none; 1648-1650: 1-absent, 17-constant (for 1648, 18 is the highest, not 17)

The data sources disagree about how common warfare is compared to modern societies. While foragers tend to have less conflict between communities of the same ethnic group (internal warfare) compared to modern societies (the one exception to this has only one observation for the modern sample), the frequency of external warfare is ambiguous, though the slightly larger sample size of 891-893 suggests that more weight should be placed on it, shifting in favor of slightly more external warfare (conflict with other societies). The casualty rate in conflicts is always low compared to modern societies (v901 N=3w N=4m), consistently suffering less than

30% casualties. Though they might fight more often compared to modern societies, not as many suffer from death or injury.

Courage in boys is either strongly emphasized or not emphasized (never moderately emphasized) (v1765 N=2s). For modern societies it is moderately emphasized (v1765 N=1m). If a society has warriors, they enjoy either no prestige or a high level of prestige, favoring the latter which is the same story in modern societies (v1773 N=3s N=3m). Ritual warfare is absent in all of the observed groups as it is in modern societies (v573 N=3s N=1m). Societies are either judged as being unpacified or pacified within the last 25 years of the study, but never partially pacified while modern societies are all unpacified (v1654 N=3s N=7m). In external warfare, the defeated are sometimes driven from their territory though the victors don't use their territory. (v1656 N=2s). Modern societies usually use the conquered territory (v1654 N=3m).

Intraethnic violence ranges from being permanent to being rare while it is slightly less common in modern societies (v1776 N=3s N=4m). Violence towards individuals in the same community or ethnic group is either accepted or rejected but never appreciated, similar to modern societies (v1768 N=2s N=3m, v1769 N=2s). Most societies have no intraethnic violence and where it occurs has a highly ritualized regimentation; modern societies have either no such violence or no regimentation for such violence (v1775 N=4w N=2m). The intensity of the violence is always low, if it occurs at all (v1777 N=3s) and its frequency is rare or occasional, never permanent nor often (v1778 N=2s). Modern societies share a similar level of low frequency and low intensity violence in this area (v1777 N=3, v1778 N=3).

Loyalty to the ethnic group is always moderate while modern societies favor low rates of loyalty (v1771 N=3s N=4m). Hostility to other ethnic groups is usually negligible, though in one society it is extremely high; it's moderate in the modern era (v1772 N=3s N=1m). For hunter gatherers, violence to those outside the ethnic group is rejected (no data available for modern societies) (v1770 N=1s).

## **Politics**

In all forager societies, there is no executive (v85 N=5s), judiciary (v89 N=5s), police (v90 N=5s), or administrative hierarchy (v91 N=5s). No leader gains power through wealth distribution (v574 N=2s).

There is no modern political organization—family heads acknowledge no higher authority (v699 N=3s). Oddly, the ethnographer describes full time bureaucrats who are unrelated to the government head are always present (v701 N=3s). People see their leader's power as somewhat or limited (v759 N=2s) and their leaders as either benevolent or neither benevolent nor malevolent (v760 N=2s). Leaders carefully cultivate support before acting (v761 N=2s) and none have a formal leadership position; power disappears when support diminishes (v762 N=2s).

## **Family**

Families are always polygamous though slightly more than half of the societies have mild amounts of polygamy (v67 N=5s; v79 N=5s). Polygamy is almost always socially preferred; in one case polygamy is rare, in two cases polygamy is socially preferred for men with leadership attributes, and in two cases it is socially preferred for all men (v860 N=5s). Co-wives either share a living space with each other (three societies) or one lives with the husband with the rest living in different communities (two societies); there is not a "middle ground" of the wives not living with the husband occupying different homes or rooms in the same community (v863 N=5s). The



husband never has a room apart from a wife or wives (v865 N=5s). Most societies have no stratified polygamy though two have higher rates of polygamy in a hereditary higher social class (v866 N=5s). This seems to conflict with our claim of no class stratification (v270 N=5s) but it is not clear from the ethnography if the social class is a formal stratification or is assumed from the fact that informal leaders tend to have many wives and tend to have sons who grow up to have many wives. Both societies with “stratified polygamy” witness leaders having more wives than “commoners” (along with one other society) which makes the informal stratification the most likely explanation given the evidence that informal rule appears to be the norm.

Two societies have multiple wives for skilled hunters while the others see no relation between hunting skill and number of wives (v867 N=5s). Most households are made up of a single family though in one group the households are made up of a married pair (v67 N=5s). On average, 35% of men have more than one wife, though the standard deviation is 29.7 (v871 N=5s). On average, 49.4% of women are in a polygamous marriage, and again the standard deviation is high at 36.38 (v872 N=5s). In modern societies, 3% of men have more than one wife and 7% of women are in a polygamous marriage (v871, v872 N=7m). The standard deviation is also high (6.5 and 12.7, respectively), mostly due to the Balinese who have 18% and 35%.

Females are expected to have premarital sex (v165 N=2s). Both males (v165 N=2s) and females (v166 N=3s) have premarital sex save in one group where female premarital sex is uncommon. Extramarital sex generally employs a double standard where it is acceptable for men but not for women save in one group where it is acceptable for both (v169 N=4). Extramarital sex among men is either universally or moderately practiced (v170 N=2s). Among women it is universally practiced; this is notably *not* observed in the one society where such practices are accepted for females, the Hadza (v171 N=1s). Wifesharing does not occur save in one society where it is only used for sexual gratification (v172 N=3s). Rape is accepted or ignored—the code does not distinguish which occurs (v173 N=1s). This is the observation for the one society where extramarital sex is allowed for both sexes. Unsurprisingly, rape occurs frequently here while in another society it is rare (v174 N=2s). No data on this subject is available for modern societies.

Post-partum sex taboo continues to range from just under two years to a month or less, with data slightly favoring the latter (v34 N=3s). Non-maternal relations for infants generally includes the mother as the primary caregiver (but is never exclusive) and in one case, she plays a small (but significant) role (v51 N=5s). In early childhood, her role is almost always the primary role and is never small (v52 N=5s). Infants principally spend time with other adult females, though in one case it is equally shared with both sexes (v56 N=4s). In childhood children spend time with other children, usually from both sexes though in one group the children spend time with the same sex (v56 N=3s). Neither males nor females need any grounds for divorce (v745 N=4w; v746 N=3w). Wife-beating is always present (v754 N=2s).

## **Children Rearing and Values**

Trust is strongly encouraged in children, more so than in modern societies (v1761 N=1s N=1m, v335 N=2s N=8m), and sharing is more encouraged than in modern societies, though the Aranda rarely encourages sharing (v1762 N=3s N=2m, v334 N=2s N=8m). Data on honesty is mixed, but the larger dataset suggests that hunter-gatherers encourage more honesty in their children compared to modern societies (v1763 N=1s N=2m, v336 N=2s N=8m). Caretakers have the highest measure of affection for their children while the modern societies possessed a

slightly lower value (v492 N=3w N=7m). Children are never punished physically while in modern societies they are physically punished in half the observations (v1766 N=3s N=4m).

**Table 4: Honesty, Trust, Generosity, and Love**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Variable Number</i>	<i>Weak Forager</i>		<i>Strict Forager</i>		<i>Modern</i>	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>
Generosity	334	7.33	3	7.00	2	4.43	8
Trust	335	7.33	3	6.50	2	2.88	8
Honesty	336	7.33	3	6.00	2	2.88	8
Trust	1761	3.00	2	3.00	1	1.00	1
Sharing	1762	2.50	4	2.67	3	2.00	2
Honesty	1763	3.00	2	2.00	1	2.50	2
Love for Children	492	8.00	3	8.00	1	6.71	7

*334-335: 0-no inclination, 10-extremely strong inclination; 1761-1762: 1-rarely encouraged, 3-strongly encouraged; 1763: 1-not encouraged, 4-strongly encouraged; 492: 1-never, 8-almost always*

Infants sleep with either the mother and the father together or with the entire family and never with just one of the family members (v1710 N=3w). Adolescents sleep in a different dwelling entirely (v1711 N=2s).

All societies have an equal preference for boy and girls (v616 N=3s). There is no evidence of infanticide which “favors” on sex or the other (v617 N=3w). Most societies have no belief that women are inferior to men (v626 N=3s) and women always have a moderate degree of control over property (v628 N=3s) and usually control products of their own making (v660 N=3s). Similar to modern societies, hunter-gatherers put a medium to high value on a woman’s life (v630 N=3s N=4m) and a high to higher-medium value on her labor (v631 N=3s N=4m). Women have a high to a medium-high level of authority on domestic matters in both eras (v632 N=3s N=4m). The sex ratio is usually equal though one hunter-gatherer society has more males than females (v714 N=3s N=4m).

Attitudes concerning talking about sex is generally open; adults will talk about it openly with children or restrict such talk to a certain group of people (v159 N=2w). In modern societies, this is much more restrained with more than half (three out of five) of the sample never talking about sex, ever (v159 N=5m).

Just 20% of hunter-gatherer societies believe in the evil eye, compared to 37.5% in modern societies (v1189 N=5s N=8m).

## **Other**

Gossip ranges from being moderately to very important (v1805 N=3s). When present, it averages 3.60 for hunter-gatherers (from one to five, five being very important). For modern societies, it averages 3.86 (v1805 N=7m).

It is common for an adult to travel between communities during his/her lifetime while it is occasional in modern societies (v786 N=2s N=1m).

Change across all variables (agricultural, religious, family, education, behavior, health, technological, trade, transportation) averaged 18.00, compared to 14.38 for the modern sample (v1849 N=3s N=8m). This is an important reminder that despite our best efforts to identify exemplars of authentic hunter-gatherer societies, our data are far from ideal.

## Conclusion

Using data compiled in the Standard Cross-Cultural Codes, we've compiled some wide-ranging best guesses about the lives of our nomadic forager distant ancestors.

Such foragers have neither formal class stratification nor slavery. While private property is usually present, most forager societies have no rich, and none have any poor or dispossessed. Food sharing is always common.

Compared to the most "modern" societies in the larger sample (which are different from us today), disease stress is similar, suicide and murder are rare, conflict casualty rates are lower, and fewer believe in an evil eye. Violence is never over resources, and when enemies are driven from a territory no one uses that territory.

A person wronged always directly punishes the guilty; they never use a third party. If there is a substantial dispute, one side will likely leave the community. Leaders carefully cultivate support before acting, and none have a formal leadership position.

Polygamy is always allowed and usually socially preferred. Co-wives either live together or one lives with a husband while the rest live in entirely different bands. On average, about 35% of men have more than one wife, and 50% of women are in a polygamous marriage (vs. 3% and 7% in modern societies).

People are expected to have premarital sex, which is usually common. Extramarital sex is also usually common, though it is usually not acceptable for women. Adults talk about sex openly. While wife-beating exists, divorce is easy. Boys and girls are equally preferred, and women are considered equals of men.

Mothers are usually the main, but not only caregiver of kids. Relative to modern societies, kids are taught more to be generous, trusting, and honest. Parents more emphasize their love for kids, and kids are never punished physically. Adolescents sleep away from their parents.

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