Mortuary practices on children

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MORTUARY PRACTICES
ON CHILDREN

by

Stephanie J. Fox

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of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Anthropology

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ABSTRACT

This study is a reevaluation of past theories that recommend the use of mortuary practices to determine rank within cultures as applied to children. A comparative study of 40 cultures worldwide, 30 egalitarian and 10 stratified groups for contrast, is conducted using the Human Relation Area Files (HRAF) for ethnographic examples of mortuary practices. Funerary and mourning rituals performed for both children and adults are studied to see how the deceased's social position affects mortuary treatment. Thirteen of the 26 egalitarian cultures that yielded information have funerary and mourning rituals that are the same or very similar for both adults and children. With thirteen remaining egalitarian cultures the data indicates that once a child has been initiated into the community, treatment upon death is similar to that of adults. The treatment of a dead child is determined by other variables independent of rank, such as grief, initiation into the group, or religious beliefs. The parents, family, or even the entire group's emotional commitment to the child, which may entail a personal attachment, since the child represents the continuation of the group, is sufficient to grant a child the same treatment as an adult.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

"The diversity of cultural reaction [to death] is a measure of the universal impact of death. But it is not a random reaction; always it is meaningful and expressive" (Huntington and Metcalf 1979:1). With the onset of New Archaeology and the methodology of studying process in the 1960's, new theoretical approaches to studying social organization and cultural change developed. Chapman and Randsborg (1981:3) pointed out that "the early history of archaeology was very much the history of burial studies." Burials have always been an integral part of studying archaeology.

Children in Archaeology

The study of children in archaeology has been important in demographic studies with respect to the issues of mortality, health, and nutrition of past populations. A recent study of a medieval Nubian cemetery by Van Geren, et. al. (1995) led to the discovery of mummified subadult remains in the cemetery. These remains, however, were not evaluated other than for subadult stress. Childhood anemia, growth patterns, disease, and causes of death were discussed in the article, yet this would have been an excellent case to look at rank and the treatment of the children. Porotic hyperostosis and cribra orbitalia
have been investigated by a number of researchers, such as Patty Stuart-Macadam (1987, 1992). James Hummert (1983) looked at the children found in a medieval cemetery in Kulubnarti in the Batn el Hajar of the Sudan for dietary stress and growth patterns. Philip Walker has addressed the problem of child abuse through skeletal remains. Walker (1996 and in press) looked at the skeletal remains of prehistoric Native Americans and Early Europeans to ascertain if the battered-child syndrome existed in the past or if it is a recent problem. The cemetery sites could provide for study of the status of children. In addition to articles written about demographic issues, articles regarding the determination of age and sex of children from the physical remains also are in abundance, and could provide for such study.

A recent issue of *Archaeology* magazine contains two very interesting articles, the first by David and Noelle Soren (1995) and the second by Anne Kinney (1995), that discuss children in archaeology. While the first focuses on health issues, it does touch on the burial customs of children. Kinney's article contains information that suggests a religious reason for mortuary practices involving children; it will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

David and Noelle Soren discuss the 1989 excavation of the 5th Century AD Lugnano grave site in Italy. They discovered the remains of 25 children and 22 fetuses. Prior to the 4th century A.D., Romans believed that a child who died before nine days old should receive burial without ceremony and no mourning, so they were often buried under the house (Soren and Soren 1995:42). After the 4th century AD, Romans decided that all children should receive a proper burial.
This is not the main focus of the article, however. Soren and Soren use the remains to show that an epidemic, most likely malaria, swept through the area, killing infants and causing women to miscarry (Soren and Soren 1995:44). What is important to this thesis is that children and fetuses were receiving mortuary treatment the same as adults. In addition to the children and fetuses, sacrifices were being buried with them. Puppies were sacrificed as a folk cure. One infant was buried with a raven’s talon, which was used at the time to ward of evil. And toads, believed to have curing properties, were also found (Soren and Soren 1995:44-45).

Aside from the issues of health and demography, not much has been done to look at children in the archaeological record, especially their status. The articles in Archaeology magazine show a recent interest in children’s issues. These go beyond the fantastic, such as children in stratified societies with an extremely high rank, an example being King Tutankhamen, the boy king of Egypt. The importance of children in demographic studies, and the fact that they were mentioned in the theories discussed here about rank, poses an interesting question: why have they been neglected in the actual research of status?

The Concept of Rank in Mortuary Practices

The purpose of this thesis is to look at ethnographic studies of burial practices with particular emphasis on children to see if the rank of an individual can be determined by burial evidence in the archaeological record. According to Brown (1981:26), the importance of rank, archaeologically, is to measure the size and social complexity of the group, and the appearance of “hereditary
inequality" can be associated with increased stratification and more complex social systems. However, the expression of rank may vary so much that interpretations may be contradictory or may be so vague that the expression is not obvious in the archaeological record (Brown 1981:25).

Rank, or status, is the role or social position an individual holds within the community and can develop in two contexts. First, rank occurs in complex or stratified societies with centralized authority, and secondly, in simple, or egalitarian groups, where there is no centralized authority. So, "the presence of social ranking does not presuppose such centralized leadership" (Brown 1981:26). The rank of an individual in a complex stratified society is predetermined, and there are a limited number of status positions; in other words rank is inherited (Fried 1968:466). Inherited rank does not mean the individual cannot acquire certain ranks in addition to the inherited one. In contrast, individuals in egalitarian societies are differentiated from each other by attributes that do not give the individual a favored economic position (Fried 1968:465). The possibility for a social rank, in egalitarian societies, is present for any individual; rank, therefore, is solely acquired, not inherited, and determined by the individual's age, sex, charisma, and/or abilities, and not defined by the political or social structure. In this thesis, age will be focused on as a determinate of rank, in addition to charisma and special abilities that allow an individual to earn rank.

Brown (1981:26) suggests that rank emerges from competition, such as feasting or displays of material goods. These efforts receive the "tangible reward
through enhanced personal prestige and beneficial redistribution of valuable resources" (Brown 1981:26). In complex ranking systems, where there is centralized authority, only the leading family receives without effort privileges that are not accessible to the group (Brown 1981:26).

Rank is visible in the archaeological record through the treatment of the deceased, via the preparation of the body, the burial facility, or the quantity and quality of grave goods. In stratified societies, people in power, such as kings, regardless of age, may be buried with much more elaborate and expensive grave goods; sometimes people are even sacrificed and buried with them. In egalitarian societies individuals may be buried with the tools of their trade. A great hunter may be buried with his bow. The hunters of the Jivaro, in South America, who are successful enough to make a shrunken head, are usually buried with it (Tessman 1959:167). Often, children are buried with toys, other possessions, or food; is this because they have a high rank, or is there some other motive operating in their mortuary ritual?

The Theoretical Perspectives of the Past

As the normative view in anthropology developed, mortuary practices became less important than previously thought (Chapman and Randsborg 1981:4). The normative position was that behavioral patterns produce spatial consistencies that develop into a culture. In Disposal of the Dead, Kroeber (1927:314-315) stated that "mortuary practices may be accepted as partaking of the nature of fashions, they will tend to discredit certain interpretations based on them." Fortunately, there were a few archaeologists who believed mortuary
practices had great importance to understanding social organization. Though Childe (1957) thought the study of mortuary practice belonged with the study of religions and ideology, in *The Dawn of European Civilization* (1927), he examined the interrelationships between people and cultures and inferred social distinctions of rank based on grave good distribution. In contrast, Arthur Saxe (1970:1) looked at mortuary practices within a social system from a processual point of view; in other words, he searched for consistencies in the process that resulted in a particular mortuary practice. Saxe's cross-cultural comparisons of three groups (the Kapauku Papuans, the Ashanti, and the Bontoc Igorot) looked at the organization of mortuary practices, and demonstrated that different social persona (combined attributes such as age, sex, and skills) were represented by different definable corpse disposal types. The New Archaeologists went a step further. Lewis Binford (1971) believed that research of disposal practices and grave artifact distribution from ethnographic and archaeological contexts should yield information on social organization. Joseph Tainter (1978) expanded on Binford's ideas by adding energy expenditure to the formula and testing 103 ethnographic cases. Tainter (1978:125) suggested that where grave associations are not possible, the energy expended in the treatment of the dead could be used to determine the rank of the deceased. Energy expenditure is determined by looking at the complexity of the body treatment, the construction and placement of the interment facility, and the extent and duration of mourning ritual (Tainter 1978:126-128). The greater the energy expended, the higher the rank of the deceased.
Perhaps the most controversial arguments were those of Binford (1971) written in response to Kroeber's 1927 article, *Disposal of the Dead*, and historical particularists, who focused on the collection of data and traits within the context of the given culture without an analytical or comparative model. Binford suggested that mortuary practices were the key to developing a systematic approach and theoretical basis that archaeologists could use. This theoretical basis would enable archaeologists to build a relationship between the material remains of a culture and other elements of the total cultural system. Binford concluded that mortuary practices were not representative of diffusion from one culture to another, as historical particularists explained change, or fashion, as Kroeber maintained. Instead, Binford asserted mortuary practices must be analyzed as variation within society and that the "form and structure which characterize the mortuary practices of any society" are directly related to "the form and complexity of the organizational characteristics of the society itself" (Binford 1971:23).

According to Binford, Saxe, Tainter, Hertz, Rothschild, and others, many factors determine what happens to a body after death, and rank or social position is a key one. How the body is treated, the form and place of disposal, the type and quantity of grave goods associated with the body, the position and orientation of the body, what mourning rituals and ceremonies are performed, their duration, and attendance are dependent on the rank of the deceased. Therefore, these are some of the variables that will be studied for children and
adults to look at treatment and the correlation to rank as suggested by past theories.

Since the past theoretical positions maintained that rank is in part determined by age, the implication is that children in egalitarian societies do not have a high rank and that this should be reflected in the mortuary practice. By using the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF), a system of ethnographic records of cultures across the world, a test of these models can be conducted to see to what extent rank determines the type of disposal practiced. It is possible, however, the theoretical position that rank determines mortuary treatment highlights only factors such as social position, while ignoring others, such as emotion and grief, in particular. Mourning lengths, styles of mourning, and participants in the mourning ritual may be looked at in the HRAF, in addition to disposal methods, to see if there is something more to the determination of disposal. One problem with using HRAF is that it relies solely on what the ethnographer felt was important to record. This could mean that the mortuary practices on children may be left out not because children have a low rank, but because the ethnographer did not feel it was important to mention.

*Mortuary Practices on Children*

While theories stating that mortuary practices are determined by rank may have valid application to adult burials, the thesis here is that children's mortuary treatments have different motivations other than rank. The mortuary treatment of children is guided by the emotional responses of parents and family or by religious belief. The importance of children to the community does not come
from any economic or group survival contributions since they make no contributions as children. Future contributions and the fact the child is related to parents and close kin is enough to warrant special treatment when they are lost.

Interpretations of child burials could become skewed due to the problems that models based on rank can cause. Armed with an awareness of the potential problems of these models, archaeologists might not assign high ranks to children with elaborate burials or low rank to children with sparse ones without a more thorough investigation. Child burials, in addition to adult burials, should be studied carefully, with an understanding of the many different motives that may be involved in determining the mortuary treatment of deceased individuals.
To understand mortuary practices and how they pertain to children, one must understand the theoretical approaches to studying these practices in the anthropological literature and in the archaeological record. People such as Robert Hertz, Lewis Binford, Arthur Saxe, and Nan Rothschild have written about mortuary practices and how they pertain to rank and social persona.

Death and Mortuary Practices as Social or Political Phenomena

Mortuary practices can be analyzed through many social dimensions. The most common is mortuary practices as a social or political issue. Binford's theories are the most prominent with regard to mortuary practices and political complexity. He maintained there are two important factors of the social situation to assess in order to understand the social circumstance represented by the burial. First, he used Goodenough's concept of a social persona. The social persona is constructed of social identities. Each individual "has many identities at once: identities of age, sex, marital condition, occupation, skill, and other personal and social attributes" (Goodenough 1990:328). Social identities are also dependent upon whom an individual is interacting with, e.g., mother, brother, priest, employee (Goodenough 1990:328). The social persona is a
combination of social identities held during life. Therefore, social persona consists of rank and is necessary to consider at the time of death for ascertaining the mortuary ritual used, and it is assumed that the social persona will be present in the archaeological record. The next factor to consider, according to Binford, is the size and make-up of the social unit that distinguishes the rank order and, therefore, implies responsibilities to the dead. This suggests there are correlations between the rank held by the deceased and the number of individuals who have a duty-status relationship with the deceased (Binford 1971:17). Binford also asserted that “the facets of the social persona symbolically recognized in the mortuary ritual would shift with the levels of corporate participation in the ritual, and hence vary directly with the relative rank of the social position which the deceased occupied in life” (Binford 1971:17). The size of the group will be very important. The larger the size of the group, the more individuals there are to participate. The principle category for burial looked at in this work for social persona is age.

From the idea of the social persona or rank of an individual, Binford put forth two propositions, which he looked at in relation to 40 non-state societies in the Human Relations Area Files. The first proposition was that, while the development of ritual may have been different, form and function may be similar in complexity to the complexity of the society’s ranking structure; the complexity of the mortuary ritual and the degree of differential treatment of people reflect different ranks (Binford 1971:18). For testing this proposition, Binford divided the 40 societies into four groups: hunter-gatherers, shifting agriculturists,
pastoralists, and settled agriculturists. He was unable to conduct direct testing, but came up with generalizations. First, he stated “hunters and gatherers should exhibit more egalitarian systems of status grading, while among settled agriculturists we might expect more incidences of ranked or stratified non-egalitarian systems of status grading” (Binford 1971:19-20). From this he predicted that among hunter and gatherer groups identities such as those of age and sex should be the criteria for differential treatment in mortuary practices. Further, settled agricultural groups would use criteria of social position independent of sex and age identities for differential treatment (Binford 1971:20). This led to the second proposition, that in a society with the least amount of social complexity, “the major dimensions which serve for status differentiation are based on the personal qualities of the individuals involved: age, sex, and differential capacities for performance of cultural tasks” (Binford 1971:18). Again, this is social persona or rank. Conversely, highly complex societies define rank by abstract characteristics that are culturally constructed and limited to a portion of the society (Binford 1971:18).

With social persona and organization, and the addition of the size of the community, Binford argued in the first proposition that the extent of the ritual is based on the amount of status relationships there are between the deceased and their survivors. While the second proposition showed the form the mortuary ritual would take. Binford stated that, “given this argument, it is proposed that in egalitarian societies, very young individuals should have very low rank and, hence, share duty-status relations with a very limited number of people” (Binford
1971:21). Older individuals have a higher status and many status relationships with more individuals than children do. "We can therefore predict that age differences may be discriminated in mortuary ritual by differential placement of burial sites within the life space of the community. The choice of placement would vary with status to the degree that the performance of the ritual involves members of the community at large in the ritual activity and thereby disrupts their daily activities" (Binford 1971:21).

Binford constructed a very tidy formula for ascertaining human behavior from burial evidence. He is correct in his criticisms of Kroeber and claims that there is something to be learned from mortuary practices. There is a logic to the practices. They are not just a sign of the times. So, the generalizations from the 40 culture study certainly seem justified. The problem here is that human psychology is not tidy. There may be many motives for even one seemingly small behavior. Binford's model allows a very plausible explanation of a singular motivation, rank of the individual, to treat a body in a given manner. However, while rank is obviously an important factor, to look solely at rank obscures any other motivations, such as religious beliefs or emotion, that may exist for a specific type of treatment to be employed on an individual.

Arthur Saxe also used Goodenough's definition of social persona. His twist on the same theme was that infants have fewer identities than those individuals who are older (Saxe 1971:8). Saxe stated that, given "infants buried with the accouterment of social personae larger that some elders, a principle of social ranking by birth is probably indicated. In egalitarian societies, such a
combination of age and accouterments would be 'ungrammatical,' i.e., syntactically impossible," (Saxe 1971:8). So, that "the fullest social personae represented at death will correlate with age at death," (Saxe 1971:8).

Basically, this point of view is the same as Binford's, but focusing on the accouterments or grave goods, not location. Saxe's comparison of three cultures demonstrated that social persona plays a major role in determining mortuary practices. If, however, there are more motives, such as those dealing with emotion, it may be possible to find infants with grave goods "grammatically" incorrect for their rank, or age. Another possible problem is that there are groups that have no grave goods whatsoever, and, therefore, nothing to gauge rank.

Nan A. Rothschild (1990) also addressed the issue of rank through age, though she focused primarily on the individual's sex, with regard to rank and how it manifests in mortuary practice. She claimed the treatment an individual receives is a reflection of the societies structure and the position held during life (Rothschild 1990:2). Her first hypothesis was that an analytical model of mortuary practices and their variability can lead to determining rank, and that, with increasing political complexity, more positions, or ranks, are constructed by the society and recognized in the archaeological record (Rothschild 1990:3-4). The next hypothesis held that "as a society becomes more complex, status and role become more rigidly defined. Status definition will occur along an increasing number of dimensions among which are age and sex" (Rothschild 1990:5). The more complex a society, the more ranks are noticeable and identifiable in mortuary treatment.
Rothschild's first and to some degree her second proposition are, also, very similar to Binford's and have the same implications and problems. The interesting question here is whether or not the treatment of children does become more diverse as cultures become more politically complex and have more ranks within age groups. Or, if the mortuary treatment of children can be related to religious beliefs or grief and not only just socio-political gain.

The socio-political reasoning for determining the treatment of the deceased would be reflected in archaeological record if those individuals who contributed to the groups social or political coherence, such as chiefs or great men, gained the most or best treatment. According to Binford, this would be apparent in the location or placement of he deceased in relation to others of the group. Saxe would have the associated grave goods, either amount or value, as the indicator of someone of high status. There would be noticeably different ranks suggested in the archaeological record, according to Rothschild, the more complex the society became.

*Death as Economics Chaos*

When each member of a group can contribute to the success of all, mortuary treatment may reflect an economic issue. In this view, the most successful individual should receive the highest rank and therefore the most treatment. Robert Hertz (1960:78) explained that "when a man dies, society loses in him much more than a unit; it is stricken in the very principle of its life." This means that each individual has a specific function in the community, which acts as an organism. When a person dies, a piece of the organism has died and
the community no longer functions properly. The rank of an individual is
determined by their function in the society, therefore, “the emotion aroused by
death varies extremely in intensity according to the social status of the
deceased, and may even in certain cases be entirely lacking” (Hertz 1960:76). If
a chief dies, the group may be near panic due to his great importance. When an
unknown person, a child, or a slave dies, the death is an unremarkable event
that can be overlooked, and there will be no emotion or ritual (Hertz 1960:76).
From an economic perspective, since children do not contribute to the
community in any significant way, the death of a child would cause a social
reaction so insignificant that it is finished almost immediately, as if no one really
died (Hertz 1960:84). Since the community has placed no reliance on the child,
if the child dies the community loses nothing.

Death, Hertz continued, is an initiation into a new, invisible community, as
well as a separation from the visible community, or a change in rank. In the case
of children, this would imply that no long drawn out process is necessary since
children are not part of the group. There would be no need to call on the
supernatural to carry out the transition from the living world to the spirit world,
because the child has not really been separated from it (Hertz 1960:84).

Here again, Hertz has developed a plausible argument. When a chief
dies, of course, the ramifications are powerfully felt throughout the entire
community and the disruption may be great. While most people,
understandably, may not react to the death of a complete stranger, since there is
no emotional attachment, the loss of a child does inspire grief to those in the
family with an emotional attachment. To say there is no attachment between the child and the community, due to the inability of the child to contribute, is reasonable, but a contrasting view may be that each child has value to the biological continuity of the group.

People do become emotionally attached to children. This makes it seem highly unlikely the event would be completely overlooked for any reason. One way to look at the role of children within the group is through the initiation a child completes to become part of the group. Baptism is one such initiation. In Haiti, for example, the child becomes part of the society with all of the honors that entails once they are baptized. For some groups, such as the Pygmy of Africa, once the child is named it is part of the group. The Yanomamo of Brazil simply believe that a child under three is part of the mother, but once it turns three it is part of the group (Becher 1960:69). The name, or baptism, or age becomes an essential part of the social persona. The reason the loss of a child is painful may not be related to the length of time the child was in the society, but to the emotional commitments of the family to the child, since children also contribute to the community by providing the foundation for biological continuity. Therefore, in smaller groups, mortuary treatment should be more noticeable.

The archaeological representation of Hertz's theory would be essentially the same as Binford's or any of the others. The reason behind it would be altered to highlight those that benefited to the economy of the group, such as a great hunter.
An important issue that Hertz touches on is the idea of liminality, the corpse as a transition, that is a process or passage form one social role to the next (Huntington and Metcalf 1979:11-12). Part of this liminal period is the mourning ritual. He thinks that since the child is not yet a full member of the group and still a member of the spirit realm there is no liminal period. However, depending on the spiritual beliefs of the group there may be a liminal period for children that is equal to, or possibly even greater than the adults of the group. If a child is born with a soul, and is separated from the spiritual world because of this, a transition back to the world of spirits may be necessary.

The following four sections offer possible motivations for the treatment of the deceased other than rank.

Death as a Disruption of Biological Continuity

Biological continuity of a group is studied through demographics. Mortality, morbidity, fertility rates, and health status are all issues that map out a groups progress and success or failure to continue. This is one aspect where children are important, since with high children mortality and low fertility rates the group would cease to exist. The study of children, therefore, has particularly taken place in this realm. John Brown (1981:29) suggested that “if the loss of children to a community or lineage can be argued to be critical to the future of a heritable claim, then children can be expected to be singled out for elaborate treatment when the birth rate is low or the family circle is narrow.”
Family planning has been an important problem for people and groups probably since the Paleolithic (Spuhler 19:205). If the size of the group becomes too large, the local environment may no longer be able to support the group. Abortion and infanticide are measures people may take to keep a population balance. If there are enough local resources, then people may want to have children. If those children die, then the group size may diminish, again causing a problem. This time, however, the problem is that the group becomes too small to continue. The size of the group is, perhaps, a factor in understanding the treatment of children. Small groups have the possibility of no longer continuing if their children die. In effect, they are not just mourning the loss of a child, but another link in the existence of the group.

Jeffrey Quilter offers an interesting view that is not centered on rank for the site of Paloma Peru. Twenty-eight percent of the individuals in the cemetery, the largest segment, are infants and fetuses (Quilter 1989:20). These "infants received particular attention in burial ceremony" with the greatest number of "special grave goods" (Quilter 1989:66). He points out that in societies with high infant mortality, such as Paloma, the young have no true social identity and are not considered truly human yet, which helps justify infanticide to keep the population in balance. Yet, the treatment and number fetuses and infants at Paloma suggests children "may be more desirable than ever as families calculated their strategies for survival" (Quilter 1989:67).

Quilter's suggestions fit a model of biological continuity where every individual becomes important for the survival of the group. This may be due to
changing resources, such as the case in Paloma, or simply because the group is small. The key factor is the need for the group to continue.

*Death as a Grief Phenomenon*

The consideration of emotions, particularly grief, is important when studying mortuary practices. Status may be a key factor in the determination of how an individual is treated after death, but, status is only one motive. Humans are very complex and behave as a result of many motives. The issue of emotions has been prevalent in studying anthropology in recent years, surrounding the question of whether or not emotions are universals or culturally determined. Grief is the only emotion of concern in this thesis, whether or not a mourners grief may influence behaviors that in turn influence the archaeological record.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes has long been the champion for those who claim emotions are culturally constructed. In her work, *Death Without Weeping* (1992), she maintains that grief is culturally defined and that the mothers of the Alto do Cruzeiro of Brazil, a large, poor barrio of a major city, do not experience grief for the passing of their infants and children under a year of age. If she is correct, then grief should not play any part in the treatment of the children of Alto do Cruzeiro, and possibly other parts of the world. Marilyn K. Nations and L. A. Rebhun (1988) looked at medical systems, healers, maternal sentiment, religion, and fatalism and disagree with Scheper-Hughes, however, and claim that these mothers do experience grief at the loss of any child and that the apparent absence of grief is caused by display rules which are culturally constructed.
In *Death Without Weeping*, Scheper-Hughes (1992:403) begins her argument by pointing out the survival of the group is more important than the survival of any one child. This position forces a mother to favor older, healthy children over a younger, or sicker child, this choice determines which child gets the most nutritious food or the medical care, hoping this “best bet” will survive since they all cannot (Scheper-Hughes 1992:407). Infant mortality is high; women at age thirty have had an average of 6.6 pregnancies and only 3.1 survived. At age fifty, the survival rate does not change much; the woman will have been pregnant an average 12.4 times and only 3.4 survive, so that the average family is roughly at three children (Scheper-Hughes 1992:311).

Scheper-Hughes (1992:410) claims that with the high infant mortality rate, over half of deaths are children under 5, women believe children are replaceable, otherwise they would not allow themselves to become pregnant. These infants are then temporary attachments, looked at with wariness, that tend to disappoint; and their views are related to the mother’s absence of mourning. The fear of abandonment or loss keeps the “baby at bay” (Scheper-Hughes 1992:411). The tendency of Western cultures to anthropomorphize the fetus and then the infant, through naming and baptism, are not practiced at Alto do Cruzeiro, minimizing the infants individuality (Scheper-Hughes 1992:411-415). The child is somehow less human than its older siblings. Once the child has passed its first year, the child is no longer sub-human, and the loss is deeply grieved (Scheper-Hughes 1992:440). From colonial times to present, the death of an infant in Brazil can also be viewed as a blessing. The death of a child of three or four days is
handled with a wake as a joyous occasion since the child is an innocent or a "little angle" (Scheper-Hughes 1992:417). On the Alto do Cruzeiro the wake is brief, though, without joy or grief because they occur every other day (Scheper-Hughes 1992:417).

According to Scheper-Hughes (1992:425) the absence of mourning is not because of a prescribed set of display rules but the true absence of the emotion. She describes pity felt by the mothers over the loss of a child, "and just as there is no immediate display of grief or mourning in many Alto mothers, I have found no evidence of 'delayed' or 'displaced' grief in the days weeks, and months following the death" of a child (Scheper-Hughes 1992:425). While Scheper-Hughes (1992) agrees that the culture defends against the "psychological ravings of grief," it is so effective that there is no facade, she fully believes that the women of Alto do Cruzeiro actually feel no pain or grief.

The discussion provided by Scheper-Hughes shows what evidence might be found in the archaeological record. Children under 7 are buried in a cardboard coffin painted sky blue (Scheper-Hughes 1992:289). The children are clothed and flowers are the only grave good left with them. The mourning ritual is only conducted by children who follow a procession to the grave, sometimes adults do follow also, but never the mother (Scheper-Hughes 1992:419). The coffin is placed in a shallow unmarked grave for six months. Then the remains are exhumed and placed in the well that is the bone depository (adults are exhumed and moved after a year) to make room for more dead (Scheper-Hughes 1992:249).
Nations and Rebhun (1988:146) disagree with Scheper-Hughes' view that mothers are passive and bond later with their children. They claim that "emotional reactions to events vary, in addition, the expression of particular emotions varies according to societal norms of behavior", or display rules (Nations and Rebhun 1988:157). Behavior of the Alto mothers is then culturally mandated, or a norm. The grief is experienced and hidden by the facade of indifference.

Nations and Rebhun (1988:158) further point out that Brazilians openly and animatedly talk about "positive" emotions such as happiness. Painful emotions, however, are discussed in the same indifferent manner used by Alto mothers who lost an infant. To Nations and Rebhun, this suggests the indifference expressed does not mean the absence of grief, but the presence of grief. The "blankness of these women is evidence of the depth of their loss," if they were truly indifferent they would be as open to discussing their loss as any other emotion (Nations and Rebhun 1988:160). Nations and Rebhun conclude by stating that stoicism is a facade over deep sorrow and the mothers are "comforted by an elaborate set of religious, ethnomedical, and folkloric beliefs" (Nations and Rebhun 1988:89).

An interesting twist on the study of emotions is the Darwinian explanation for grief given by Robert Wright in *The Moral Animal*. Wright (1994:174) proposes that parental devotion would peak at adolescence, which, coincidentally, is when the individuals reproductive potential is at its peak. One might expect that this is when the most amount of grief would be experienced by
the parent. He claims that parents “grieve more over the death of and adolescent than of a three-month-old” (Wright 1994:175). Wright (1994:175) discusses a 1989 Canadian study in which adults were asked to calculate the age at which they would experience the greatest amount of grief over the death of a child. The answers were then graphed and compared to a curve of reproductive potential from Canadian demographic data, showing a strong correlation. The study went a step further and compared the curve to the reproductive potential of the !Kung; this analysis yielded an almost perfect correlation (Wright 1994:175-176).

Death and Mortuary Practices as Religious Expression

An article in a recent issue of Archaeology focused on spiritual beliefs and the treatment of deceased infants of ancient China. Anne B. Kinney (1995) looked at the texts of the Qin, Han, and Ming dynasties focusing on passages that deal with children. Sixteenth century texts reveal that there is little or no account of burial practices or mourning ritual other than “ritual texts [which] dictate that a baby’s death should occasion little or no mourning” (Kinney 1995:49). She also notes that mourning for infants was under one month and there was little weeping for children under three. Rich families did not even bury their deceased children, and those who were poor would wrap the infant in reeds and placed them in shallow graves that were exposed within days (Kinney 1995:52) Infanticide occurred when the family felt that raising the child would prove harmful for the families economic security (Kinney 1995:50). There were no repercussions for infanticide, though it became illegal in 374 A. D under
Christian rule; even then abandonment was not punished (Kinney 1995:50). Archaeologically, there are urn burials in China during Neolithic times, but the texts suggest the children were not always buried. The texts speak of innocents that were ghosts and could cause the death of infants. If a mother continued to have infants that died before they could walk, the next child that died should be wrapped in white rushes and buried in the wild with offerings. Toys may be found with the infant, and Kinney suggests these are not a last indulgence in the child but an offering to keep the infant’s spirit from disturbing the living (Kinney 1995:52). Certainly this offers a religious motive for the treatment of children that does not follow the theories of rank.

**Death as a Rite of Passage**

The idea that death is a rite of passage precludes the notion of rank. If death is a transition and carried out with ritual to signify change, everyone, of all ages, should receive treatment to signify the changed status. The concept of death as a rite of passage was introduced by Van Gennep (1960), who surveyed the funeral rites of cultures all around the world, and was expanded by Victor Turner (1969), Hertz (1960) even touched upon the subject. Death as a rite of passage may be extended beyond the deceased to the survivors of the deceased through mourning ritual, and the rituals for funerals and mourning may be incorporated.

Van Gennep (1960) thought that rituals of passage, for any individual, involved the passage form one state to another in three stages: separation, liminality (transition), and reincorporation. Rituals could take place for many
reasons; examples are initiations of individuals into the group, marriages, or funerals. Van Gennep (1960:146) pointed out that people might assume that the initial stage of separation, death, would be the most complex part of the process. Due to his extensive survey, however, Van Gennep discovered that separation is the shortest and least complex part of the rite of passage. Transition is an elaborate and complex process that may take a long time. The transition may involve the preparation of the body, the body lying instate for days or even months, or even the commemoration of the deceased after the individual was buried (Van Gennep 1960:146). The most elaborate and important stage of the ritual is the reincorporation of the deceased into the world of spirits. The importance of the last stage of the ritual reflects the religious beliefs of the group.

Mourning ritual may often be a counterpart to the funerary ritual, particularly with regard to the reincorporation of the deceased's soul (Van Gennep 1960:147). Here again, there are the three stages of separation from the deceased, the transition, and the reincorporation of the group as a whole unit again.

Turner (1969:95) expanded on Van Gennep's ideas by pointing out that during the liminal period, the "liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial." Liminality is an ambiguous state that can be expressed by many symbols and is ritualized. Hertz touched on the idea of liminality, as mentioned previously. Hertz felt that if a child is considered part of the spirit world, then there would be no need for the most important stage of the
ritual, reincorporation of the soul into the spirit world. Therefore, the mortuary practices would not be extensive. This is perhaps an important reason for understanding the religious beliefs of a group to understand how individuals are treated at death.

The Case of the Chinchorros

The Chinchorro of Arica, Chile do not fit the past models, such as Binford and Saxe, for the treatment of the dead as social, political, or economic. In Beyond Death, Bernardo Arriaza (1995:59) discusses archaeological sites where children were mummified and buried next to adults as early as 5050 B.C. Arriaza (1995:59) also discusses the Camarones site where Schiappacasse and Niemeyer found children that were artificially mummified next to adults who had been naturally mummified. This could suggest that the treatment was applied to children prior to the use on adults; however, this has not yet been confirmed. Around 3,000 B.C., fetuses were treated the same as adults; treatment was not differentiated by age, sex, or social status (Arriaza 1995:144). The fact that such effort was put into the treatment of children suggests the Chinchorros actually gave “more emphasis to those who never achieved their potential” (Arriaza 1995:60). This suggestion contradicts Hertz’s model. Even though there was a preponderance of artificially mummified subadult mummies, caution is necessary since this does not indicate a higher rank for children than adults, simply a high infant mortality rate (Arriaza 1995:135). And, hopefully this thesis might shed light on the problem of the Chinchorro’s mortuary practices on children.
Demographically the size of the group was small, about 22-44 people (Arriaza 1995:66). Infant mortality was high which cause people to have more children in order for some to survive. Infanticide was probably not represented by the fetuses or infants that were mummified. Why kill someone only to have to turn around and perform elaborate body preparation and mourning ritual. Since the group was small, each person born was of value to the group’s survival. So, the infants potential to the group was great and highly valuable. This potential value would be translated to the mortuary practices performed on the young.

Here is a representation in the archaeological record where, at older sites, the individuals with the most in the way of treatment were children who were potentially valuable to the group but were unable to contribute because their life was cut short. The disruption to the continuity of the group and the grief felt because of the loss may have been great enough to cause the Chinchorros to treat the corpses of children with as much respect as an elder member of the group.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The first three theories discussed in Chapter 2 maintain that rank in egalitarian societies determines the treatment of the deceased individual. Further, they assume that children have low rank, due to few social relationships and contributions to the survival of the group. This low rank should be reflected by meager treatment for children and more elaborate treatment for adults. The question then becomes: is there really a difference in the mortuary practices for adults and children? And, how do we measure this difference?

Research Design

For this thesis, a survey of 40 cultures, 30 egalitarian and 10 stratified, was conducted to test the theoretical position that rank determines mortuary practices, particularly that of deceased children. The survey material was taken from the HRAF, Human Relations Area Files, which contains the research of ethnographers for cultures all over the world. The information on each culture in the HRAF is divided into sections that are about specific aspects of the culture, and the information can be looked up by a coded numbering system. The particular areas researched were funerals, mourning, and infanticide. The decision to use the HRAF was made because the system makes available a lot
of information that is already correlated and that would be useful for this preliminary look at mortuary practices. Also, Binford used the HRAF for his research on mortuary practices presented in Chapter 2.

The cultures in the HRAF are divided by continent and region into: Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania, Russia, and South America. In order to test the hypothesis world wide, several cultures were needed from each of these regions. The initial intent was to look at a balance of egalitarian cultures from each area. To define egalitarian societies, Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas* (1967) was used to determine social complexity. Murdock also divided the world into regions similar to the HRAF. For each culture, Murdock listed a number of classifications. Of importance here were the columns for class stratification and caste stratification. No cultures were included as egalitarian if they were listed as having castes, complex stratification, elite stratification, or wealth distinctions. Only cultures that had "an absence of significant class distinctions among free men" (Murdock 1967:57-58) and an absence of a caste system were called egalitarian under Murdock's system. Two cultures that Murdock classified as dual stratification (the Tlingit and Lozi) were included as egalitarian here since they have been described as gaining and maintaining rank through acquisition and personal attributes by the authors in the HRAF (Knapp and Childe 101:1869; de Laguna 1954:464; and Gluckman 86-87:1959). It is important to mention here that cultures are not static and can change relatively quickly. Many of these cultures have undoubtedly changed. The change came, more often than not, through contact with the Western
world and were possibly changing even as the ethnographies were written, so today these cultures may be very different.

The list of egalitarian cultures was compared to the studies available on cultures in the HRAF at the UNLV library that examined relevant variables. In most cases there were not many cultures to choose from; Europe and the Middle East had studies on no egalitarian cultures available, and Russia had only one. In order to include some material from these areas of the world, certain stratified cultures were included. The eight parts of the world were represented by at least one and at most nine cultures. However, due to examining only selected cultures with studies available at the UNLV library, the sampling cannot be considered random, and representativeness may be compromised.

Materials

The thirty egalitarian and ten stratified societies chosen for study are shown in Tables 1 and 2, respectively, and vary in size. No distinctions on social organization were made beyond egalitarian versus stratified to keep the comparisons simple and understandable, though the amount of organization certainly varies. Generalizations become difficult to make and the data muddied when the complication of degree of organization is added. The anthropological community does agree that the categories of egalitarian versus non-egalitarian, or stratified, are valid, with the understanding that cultures change and may even vacillate with degree somewhat, if the situation causes the necessity (e.g. bands uniting into tribes for war).
Table 1. Egalitarian Cultures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Country/Region</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aniu</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Batchelor, Hitchcock, Landor, Munro and Sellsman, Pilсудski, Sellesmen, Takakura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aranda</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Basedow, Chewings, Schulze, Spencer and Gillen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carib</td>
<td>Guiana</td>
<td>Adams, Gillin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caraja</td>
<td>Mato Grosso</td>
<td>Cook, Ehrenreich, Lipkind, F. Krause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crow</td>
<td>West Central U. S.</td>
<td>Denig, Lowie, Morgan, Wildschut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorobo</td>
<td>Kenya, Africa</td>
<td>Huntingford, Wayland, Merker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilyak</td>
<td>Southeast Siberia</td>
<td>Schrenk, Shemberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopi</td>
<td>Southwest U. S.</td>
<td>Beaglehole, Bradfield, Courlander, Dennis, Earle, Ellis, Hieb, Simpson Stephen Waters, Whiting, Wyckoff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iban</td>
<td>Borneo</td>
<td>Freeman, Gomez, S. Howell, Lowe, Roth, Sandin, Sutlive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jivaro</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Harmer, Karsten, Stirling, Tessmann, Vigna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IKung</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Fourie, N. Howell, Kaufman, Lebzelter, Marshall, Schepera, Shostak, Silberhaur, Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lozi</td>
<td>Zambia, Africa</td>
<td>Gluckman, Jensen, Turner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miao</td>
<td>Greater China</td>
<td>Bernatzik, Ch'en, Clarke, Credner, Graham, Ling and Yih-fu, Mickey, Morese, Wang, Wu Che Lin, et al.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ona</td>
<td>Patagonia</td>
<td>Gusinde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paez</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Hernández de Alba, Nachtigall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pygmy</td>
<td>Zaire, Africa</td>
<td>Turnbull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminole</td>
<td>Southeast U. S.</td>
<td>Buswell, Capron, Garbarino, Howard and Lena, MacCauley, Sattler, Skinner, Spoehr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senoi</td>
<td>Malaya</td>
<td>Dentan, Howell, Werner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmanians</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Roth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiv</td>
<td>Nigeria, Africa</td>
<td>Bohannan and Bohannan, East</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiwi</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Basedow, Hart, Hart and Pilling, Mountford</td>
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<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>de Laguna, Emmons, Irvin, Jonaitis, L. Jones, Knapp and Childe, A. Krause, Oberg, Olsen</td>
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<td>Turkana</td>
<td>Kenya, Africa</td>
<td>Best, Brainard, Davis, Emley, Gulliver, Johnston, Njeru</td>
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<td>Ute</td>
<td>Southwest U. S.</td>
<td>Densmore, Hawley, Jefferson, et al., J. Jones, Jorgenson, Lang, Opler, Reagan, Smith, Stewart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vedda</td>
<td>Ceylon</td>
<td>Bailey, Seligmann and Seligmann, Spittel</td>
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<td>Washo</td>
<td>Southwest U. S.</td>
<td>Barrett, D’Azevedo, Freed, Lowie, Price</td>
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<td>Winnebago</td>
<td>East Central U. S.</td>
<td>Radin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wogo</td>
<td>New Guinea</td>
<td>Hogbin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yahgan</td>
<td>Patagonia</td>
<td>Cooper, Gusinde, von Lothrop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yanamamo</td>
<td>Amazonia</td>
<td>Barker, Becher, Chagnon, Wilbert</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

There is much more information about some particular cultures and certain areas than there is about others. This is simply because these cultures and areas received more attention than others by ethnographers.
Table 2. Stratified Societies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Country/Region</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burmese</td>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>Brandt, Orr, Scott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fang</td>
<td>Cameroon, Africa</td>
<td>Alexander and Binet, Trezenem, Trilles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Sanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Scott</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Ennew, MacKinnon, Vallee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Hispaniola</td>
<td>Courlander, Herskovitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inca</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Cobo, Garcilago de la Vega, Polo de Ondegardo, Poma</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>de Ayala, Rowe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Gulick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nupe</td>
<td>Nigeria, Africa</td>
<td>Forde, Nadel, Temple</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Irish</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Arensberg, Brown, Evans, Messenger, O’Suilleabhan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Westropp</td>
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<td>West Tibetans</td>
<td>Tibet</td>
<td>Cunningham, Douglas, Hebert and Hebert, Peter,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ramsay, Ribbach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variables

The variables chosen for study in this thesis were initially based on the variables that Binford used to investigate rank of the deceased, but the list was somewhat expanded. Binford’s (1971) variables concerning the treatment of the body, the facility in which the body was placed, and the inclusion of grave goods provided an excellent beginning place; here they were somewhat modified. In all, 19 variables were looked for, though not all proved to be useful. Definitions of these the 19 variables follow.

To compare adult treatment to treatment of children, eight variables pertaining to mortuary practices were investigated.

Body Disposal. This variable describes the manner in which the body was disposed, such as cremation or burial. Body disposal proved to be the most useful variable and provides the basis for evaluation in the Discussion and Results chapters.

Body Preparation. The techniques done to the body after death and prior to disposal range from washing and dressing to mummification.
Form. This is the position in which the body is placed for disposition. The body may be extended on its back or side, or tied into a sitting or flexed position. Also noted is if a coffin was used.

Orientation. The body may be placed aligned in a particular direction for ideological reasons.

Location. This refers to the actual location of the grave, pyre, or cemetery relative to the community.

Grave Goods. Those items that are place within the grave, on top of it, or burned with the body are noted. Binford separates this variable; however, here only one category is used to note the presence or absence of goods and what they might be.

Time Until Disposition. This variable is how long from time of death until actual disposal of the body.

Secondary Treatment. Sometimes there is additional treatment of the body after the initial treatment. Bones might be exhumed and re-interred elsewhere, or ashes might be collected for ceremony.

Four of the variables studied related to the community’s reaction to the event. Descriptions of these, which have also been studied in relation to rank of the deceased, follow.

Funeral Attendance. How many people and in some cases who attend the funeral is included.

Fear of the Dead. A fear of corpses or spirits was noted.
Purification After Burial. This is whether there was a ceremony held to purify mourners or corpse handlers after the funeral.

Camp Abandonment or Destruction. Sometimes the camp would be moved or parts destroyed after the funeral.

To investigate the role of grief in the treatment of the deceased, 6 mourning rituals were also used as variables. One important thing to note is that mourning ritual does not mean actual emotions felt. Each culture may have display rules for grieving, and these may mask the true emotions felt by individuals, either hiding actual grief felt or demonstrating grief when there is none. For the purposes of this thesis, only the displayed mourning is investigated, because it is recorded in the HRAF. Perhaps further study looking at the private expressions of grief would be a fruitful endeavor.

Mourning Intensity. Intensity is gauged from actual displayed behaviors of mourning. It varies from a very strong reaction (involving self-mutilation) to moderate (lamenting and wailing) to mild (where there is some weeping) to very mild (displays of happiness and joking) to the absence of displayed grief.

Length of Mourning. This is the duration of required mourning. The actual length of grieving required may be longer or shorter for specific individuals.

Mourning Participation. Which individuals are required or feel compelled to mourn?

Feasting. In some cases feasting is part of the mourning or funerary ritual.
**Feast Attendance.** What community members, and how many, are at the feast.

**Secondary Feasting.** This is noted if another feast or series of feasts is held in honor of the deceased.

**Infanticide.** Infanticide is the last variable considered; it does not easily fit in one of the treatment, reaction, or grief categories. In some cases the manner or reasons are noted. The disposal of unwanted children contrasts to the treatment of wanted children, and may reflect attachment or membership in the community.

**Problems with Using the HRAF**

There are two main problems with using the HRAF as a source: reliability and representativeness. The question of the reliability of any of the studies in the HRAF develops, since it is difficult to know how long the ethnographer was in the field, how well he or she spoke the language, etc. Also, the ethnographies may or may not have been influenced by publishing conventions of the time.

There are a number of cultures in the sample with information provided by individuals who are recognizable in the anthropological community as people with enough skill in the ethnographic process and with the local language to provide an accurate ethnography, such as Bohannan, Lowie, and Turnbull. The authors used are listed in Tables 1 and 2. Other information may come from other individuals, such as missionaries, and may or may not be accurate, depending on the amount of time these individuals spent in the field. Most of the ethnographic information for the funerary process; however, was written in
“cookbook” format. A list of events were described as the ethnographer observed the ritual. In most of the cases examined here, it was easy to detect if only one event was seen that might not have been an accurate representation of “typical” funerary practices. The inclusion of practices specified as deviant, or non-typical, suggest that the ethnographer had a good understanding of the situation.

The representativeness issue arises to question whether the sample chosen here is really representative of the world or certain areas. The question of representativeness of the 40 cultures particularly relates to sample size: are these 40 cultures really representative of most humans around the world, or is the sample skewed? The difficulty in finding enough egalitarian groups around the world was a major problem here. Certainly there were enough for most continents and regions, except Europe, the Middle East, and Russia. Perhaps it is best to look at those three regions for contrast, since they are represented by stratified societies. The cultures chosen, however, should be enough to suggest a pattern, especially, as this thesis is a preliminary investigation of the questions at hand.

Expected results were that the mortuary treatment of children is not guided by their rank. Grief and emotion, as well as importance to the group’s continuity, may be the primary motivations for the treatment of children. This work is to determine if the arguments posed by Binford and the others regarding children are accurate, that rank is a key factor. If archaeologists are aware of problems that models of rank can cause in the interpretation of child burials, they
may not automatically assign a high rank to children with an elaborate burial or low rank to children with a simple burial. Caution should be used when studying ancient burials of children, as well as adults, and the researcher should be aware of the many motives (e.g., grief, the concept of biological continuity, or a rite of passage) that could determine the treatment of the deceased.
Chapter 4

RESULTS

The results of searching the HRAF for data on some of the variables were scanty, particularly for orientation of the corpse, camp abandonment, feasting, and mourning attendance. Fortunately, the variables that were the most important, body disposition and preparation, had the most information.

Body Disposal. On the death of an adult, there were 28 cultures that practice burial, 8 that practice cremation, 3 leave corpses out, and one, the Inca, practice mummification. Seven groups, the Aranda, Burmese, Carib, Fang, Lebanese, Lozi, and Utes, had no mention of children whatsoever. Of the 33 cultures with data on children, 18 practice disposal the same for children as adults, and 15 had different disposal for children. The Vedda had no mention of children under six, but were included with the 18 because everyone over six is treated the same.

Body Preparation. For thirty-five cultures mention was made of the type of preparation that occurred for adults, and ten had mention of preparation for children. Preparation ranged from washing and dressing (practiced by most cultures) to opening the eyes or allowing the corpse to decompose. Five cultures had no preparation of deceased children.
Form. Twenty-six cultures were noted as using a particular form of placement of the body, and of these, 17 cultures had mention for children. Two cultures had data about form for children only. There were 15 groups that extended the corpses in the grave, and 7 that placed the corpse in a sitting or fetal position. Eight cultures used coffins for adults and 3 of these used an urn, cairn, or basket for children.

Orientation. Twenty-two of the cultures orient their corpses in some sort of direction, such as facing east or west, for adults. Only five of these cultures had data in the HRAF on orientation for children, so this variable did not yield much information and was not included in the tables of the discussion in the following chapter.

Location. Thirteen of the groups used cemeteries, seven placed the corpse in or very near the house of the deceased, and twelve groups disposed of the dead someplace near to the village but in a different location that was not a cemetery. Of the groups mentioning children, eleven placed them in the same location as adults and ten placed them in a different place.

Grave Goods. Adults are buried with some sort of grave goods in 30 groups. Only seven groups had mention of children buried with grave goods, generally toys, flowers, or food. These results are interesting since grave goods are often used as indicators of rank.

Time Until Disposition. Twenty-nine groups specify the time from death until an adult body is disposed. Only ten had mention of time until children are disposed. The Burmese wait a week for disposal of the wealthy. The Tiwi wait
until the head falls off for the highly respected or a month for unnamed children. West Tibetans and the Yanomamo wait up to a month for adults. The rest are immediate to twenty-four hours after death for adults and children both. Here, again, the amount of information was negligible and this information was not included in the discussion chapter.

_Funerary Attendance, Fear of the Dead, and Purification After Burial._ These are three of the four variables investigated for the community's reaction to the death of an individual. Information here was negligible and was not used in the discussion.

_Camp Abandonment or Destruction._ Nineteen groups destroy the hut or abandon the area at the death of an adult. Only 7 groups had mention of the state of the camp after a child's death, and only !Kung and Vedda leave the camp at the death of a child. Hereafter, camp abandonment will be considered along with mortuary practices.

_Mourning Intensity and Length._ There is information on the intensity of mourning for all but the Vedda for adults, and twenty-nine mention the length of mourning required after the death of an adult. The Senoi are the only group without a mourning requirement. Fifteen groups have information on some requirement for children, six have no requirement, and only nine groups had mention for the length. Nineteen groups have a requirement for who mourns adults, and only eight have discussion about who mourns for children. Fourteen groups require mourning by all of the group for adults and six for children, the other three with discussion about mourning for children only require it of the
parents or close kin. Since there were so few with information concerning the participants mourning the death of children, this was not included in the discussion.

*Feasting.* There was data on only fifteen groups discussing feasting, and only five of these have feasting for children, Greeks, the Nupe, the Rural Irish, the Senoi, and the Tlingit. There was even less information about feasting attendance and secondary feasting. No information on feasting was included in the discussion chapter.

*Infanticide.* Infanticide is practiced in 28 of the cultures surveyed.
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

As already mentioned, the arguments presented in Chapter 2 pertaining to past theories on rank all have one important point in common; treatment of the deceased is based on rank. This point may be further substantiated by the results of the survey conducted here so far as adults are concerned. There is no doubt that the treatment of adults is based largely on rank. The question is whether or not this applies to children.

*Mortuary Practice*

One way to look at the data collected is to first divide the 40 cultures into two groups determined by the method of corpse disposal, comparing children to adults, since disposal has the most information. The first group is made up of the 18 cultures that dispose the corpses of adults and children in the same manner. The second group is made up of the 15 cultures that dispose of adult corpses differently than they dispose the corpses of children. There are 7 remaining cultures for which there is no mention of treatment of children at any age in the HRAF, only the treatment of adults; three of these are stratified. This does not mean there is differential or similar treatment of children, however. The omissions may simply be on the part of observers.
Beyond the disposal of the corpse, the observations on variables for the treatment of the corpses are presented for the two major groups in the tables and discussion which follows. The variables looked at here that are useful are body preparation (BP), form, location (Loc), grave goods (GG), and camp destruction or abandonment (CD).

Eighteen (45%) of the cultures surveyed had the same type of disposition for children and adults. (Note all percentages given in the text are of all 40 cultures in the survey unless stated otherwise). This means that if adults were buried, children were also buried; if adults were left out, children were left out, etc. Table 3 shows that, if the disposal was the same, the rest of the treatment variables for both adults and children were generally the same.

Table 3. The similarities and differences of those cultures with the same disposition of adult and child corpses. A dash (-) indicates there was no information. (S) stands for stratified groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Loc</th>
<th>GG</th>
<th>CD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ainu</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crow</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorobo</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece (S)</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti (S)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Scot (S)</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jivaro</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miao</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nupe (S)</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ona</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paez</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Irish (S)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senoi</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmainian</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiv</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnebago</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nine of the cultures (22.5%) in Table 3 use similar body preparation for children and adults, including the Jívaro who have all of the other variables as different except for disposition. The Miao, Ona, Senoi, and Tiv are the only four groups where the preparation of the body is slightly different for deceased children compared to adults, but the differences were not enough to be useful in determining rank. The Miao, for example, wrap the child’s hand in a red cloth. If found in the archaeological record, this could suggest something differential. Someone could see the child as an individual with high rank or the group as a stratified society.

More telling than body preparation were the variables of form and location of the burial. Eleven of these cultures (27.5%) performed the same treatment for form and location, and, where data was available, seven of the eleven had the presence of grave goods (although not necessarily the same kind of grave goods) for adults and children. Of the remaining 7, three groups, the Haitians, Jívaro, and the Rural Irish show two treatments (form and location) as different between adults and children with no information about grave goods. The Jívaro is the only one of the three that is egalitarian. Nine of the cultures (22.5%) listed in Table 3 have no mention for grave goods for children and a couple of these cases also have no mention for adults. Seven of the cultures (17.5%) have the presence or absence of grave goods the same for adults and children. This suggests that the presence of grave goods is not a good indicator of the rank of children (only the Paez and Senoi have a difference in the presence of grave goods for adults and children) as determined by other mortuary practices.
Interestingly, the Ainu (who have different location and camp destruction), Haitians, Jivaro, and Rural Irish all make a distinction between individuals who are initiated into the group and those who are not. The Haitians and the Rural Irish distinguish between children who are baptized, and the Ainu treat children after they have been weaned. As for the rest, almost all individuals are treated the same. Once initiated into the group, regardless of the age at initiation for each culture, treatment performed at the death of a child changes to treatment that is the same as adults. This is a point that will have even more importance when we look at the groups with different disposal for adults and children. Note that Haiti and Rural Irish are both stratified societies and are two of the four groups where treatments for form and location are different for adults and children; this leaves only two of the 13 egalitarian groups with different form and location. Greece, the Highland Scots, and the Nupe, are also complex stratified societies; however, their treatment is the same across the board.

In the column of Table 3 for camp abandonment or destruction, only those groups where camp abandonment or destruction occurs and with information on both adults and children were included, since many had information about adults but none for children. The Ainu do not abandon camp for a child, as they would an adult, because the child protects the house. This, however, implies something special, though it may be seen in the archaeological record as an individual with a lesser degree of rank. The Jivaro do not abandon camp for children, either. The !Kung and Dorobo are the only groups that abandon camp for children just as they do for adults.
Only the Miao had a reference for the orientation of child burials, and that was the same for children as adults, therefore the variable was deleted from the tables. However, these variables seem to follow with the rest of the variables in Table 3 in that they remain consistent, children are most frequently treated the same as adults.

Table 4 contains information on the cultures that have disposal types that are different for adults and children. These 15 cultures (37.5%) tend to differ in their treatment of children versus adults on the other variables as well as on disposition. Only the Vedda and Wogeo fail to provide information on the variables presented in the table. For body preparation, six groups have different preparation for adults and children. Three of these prepare the bodies of children in a different manner than the adults. But, the Iban, Pygmy, and Tiwi do not prepare the bodies of deceased young under the initiate age at all.

**Table 4.** The similarities and differences of those cultures with different disposal of adult and child corpses. A dash(-) indicates no information was available. (S) stands for stratified groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BP</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Loc</th>
<th>GG</th>
<th>CD</th>
<th>Age Treatment Differs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caraja</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilyak</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Infant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to initiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iban</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to teeth cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inca (S)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Infant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pygmy</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to naming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminole</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to naming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to naming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkana</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Small baby &amp; stillborn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vedda</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washoe</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Infant and stillborn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Tibetan (S)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wogeo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Stillborn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahgan</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanomamo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Prior to 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Information for body preparation and camp abandonment are rarely mentioned for the children of the “different disposal” group. Those cultures that do have information seem to be consistent within the “different disposal” group as well. Again, the archaeological record may be deceiving. The Caraja prepare the body of children by covering it with resin and feathers, something a little more elaborate than what is done for adults. The Yahgan wrap the child in fox fur rather than the rags in which the adults are wrapped. This could imply a higher status of the child than most adults, even though that is not generally considered to be the case.

Nine (22.5%) of the forms (all of those known here) are different. While there are 6 groups in the table with no information regarding children, there are none that indicate the same form for children. Only one culture, the Iban, use the same location for children and adults. Again, there are 6 groups without information about location; however, there are 8 (20%) groups that place the body in a different location for children than adults.

Only three cultures, the Inca, Washoe, and Yahgan buried their children with some sort of grave goods. It is remarkable that there are only 3 groups with no information about the use of grave goods for the deceased. There are 9 (22.5%) groups that are different with respect to grave goods for adults and children, meaning there are no grave goods left with deceased children. The Pygmy and Turkana are the only two groups with information that specifies that there is no camp abandonment or destruction for children as there is for adults.
Even more striking here than on the groups with similar disposal is that there seems to be a definite age of importance in all but 2 of these cultures; this age humanizes or defines the child as part of the group. Unfortunately, 'child' was rarely defined by the ethnographers, but it is assumed child is from 2 or 3 (past infancy) to puberty.

![Disposition of children and adults](image)

**Figure 1.** Comparison of egalitarian and stratified societies as to whether the disposal is the same, different, or no child burials were mentioned in the HRAF surveyed. Note that the number of stratified cultures is 10 and egalitarian is 30.

Figure 1 shows combined information from Tables 3 and 4 divided into egalitarian versus stratified groups. For egalitarian societies, the percent of disposals that are the same and different are virtually identical, just over 40%, whereas the groups where no mention of children is made accounted for approximately 13%. Half of the stratified societies had the same disposal for adults and children. This too may seem inconsistent with the past theories, yet the sample size of stratified societies is too small for a test, and the main focus here is on egalitarian societies.

The results for body preparation, shown in Figure 2, were a little less revealing when looking at egalitarian as opposed to stratified cultures, since 7 of
the stratified did not mention body preparation for children. In egalitarian cultures with different body preparation, the difference may or may not be less energy expended for children, but simply different, such as the fox wrapping of

![Body Preparation for Children Compared to Adults](image)

**Figure 2.** Body preparation for children compared to adults where it was the same, different, none for children, or there was no mention of child burials.

the Yahgan child or the red cloth tied on the hand of a child of the Miao. The interesting number in the figure is the height of the column where there was no body preparation treatment for children. The egalitarian groups that have no treatment for children is 7.5% of the total groups in the survey.

![Form for Children Compared to Adults](image)

**Figure 3.** Percent of similar and different forms for children compared to adults.
Figure 3 compares the form of children compared to adults. For egalitarian groups that have information on form, there is the same percentage, approximately 27%, that have the same or different form for children and adults. While more of the stratified groups practice a different form for children.

Figure 4 compares location, in terms of same versus different, for adults and children. More egalitarian groups (30%) use the same location for children and adults. While more stratified groups use a different location for children.

![Location for Children Compared to Adults](image)

**Figure 4.** Percent of same and different locations for children compared to adults.

Twenty-one of the cultures (52.5%) in this survey, including 7 stratified (2 of which had no mention of children), have differential mortuary practices for individuals other than children. The variations run from the treatment of kings, priests, and respected men, to shaman, medicine men, and feared men, to the diseased, criminals, or strangers. Where the treatment of average adults is considered “normal” and the treatment of these individuals is “deviant,” the “deviant” treatment is different from that of children except for three cases: the Iban, Washoe, and Yahgan, all of which are in the “different disposal” group.
The Iban normally bury the dead; however, a child that dies prior to
teething is hung in a jar in a tree of the cemetery. An Iban witchdoctor is also
hung in the cemetery. The Washoe adult is cremated, but they have two types
of disposal for children. Infants are hung in a tree in a basket. Stillborn,
however, are buried in warmed ground, and the shaman is buried in the ground.
The Yahgan, like the Washoe, cremate adults, while children and medicine men
are buried. All three of these groups have disposal of children very similar to that
of very high ranking individuals of the group. This information would suggest
archaeologically that the children were of a higher rank, close to that of a
shaman or medicine men than regular adults. Or, it could suggest that these
men were of a lower rank than they generally have been considered to be.

_Mourning Ritual_

It is important to mention once again that the mourning ritual discussed
here is the ritual displayed according to the cultural definition of acceptable ways
of grieving, and not necessarily the actual emotion involved. This still may be
useful in understanding motivating factors for the treatment of deceased
children. When looking at the intensity and length of displayed mourning
response, keeping the disposal division also is useful.

There are twelve cultures (30%) here that have mourning rules with the
same mourning intensity for adults and children. The results shown in Table 5
have a striking resemblance to those of Table 3, where disposal and other types
of treatment were similar for adults and children. Only three cultures had no
Table 5. Mourning display rules of cultures with similar disposal of adult and child corpses. A dash(-) indicates no information was available. (S) stands for stratified groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Intensity &amp; Length for Adults</th>
<th>Intensity &amp; Length for Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ainu</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>3 days - yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crow</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>2-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorobo</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece (S)</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti (S)</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Scot (S)</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jivaro</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IKung</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miao</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>3 or 4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nupe (S)</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>8-40 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ona</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>One to 2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paez</td>
<td>Very mild</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Irish (S)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senoi</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmairanian</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiv</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>No set length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tlingit</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnebago</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>4 nights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

required length for mourning adults or children, two of which were stratified groups; it is possible that the initiation of a child into the group is a factor for mourning, as well as funerary treatment. There are 7 groups (17.5%) with similar range for the length of mourning. Four of the groups have different lengths for mourning, two have no length required for children. The remaining two (IKung and Winnebago) have a longer period of mourning for children.

Once again, the results shown in Table 6 are like those of Table 4. Only 4 cultures from the list with different disposition for children and adults had the same intensity of mourning for adults and children, and none had the same requirements for duration of mourning. In fact, in only one culture, the Hopi, was there even any mention of a grief period for children.

The information on those required to mourn for adult and child, as well as the information about feasting and who should attend are the most sketchy of all.
Table 6. Mourning display rules of cultures with different disposal of adult and child corpses. A dash(-) indicates no information was available. (S) stands for stratified groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Intensity &amp; length for adults</th>
<th>Intensity &amp; length for children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caraja</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilyak</td>
<td>Very mild</td>
<td>7 to 30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopi</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iban</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inca (S)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pygmy</td>
<td>Very mild</td>
<td>2 to 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminole</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Several days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkana</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vedda</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washoe</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Tibetan (S)</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wogeo</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Days -months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahgan</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanomamo</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the variables. But the information available suggests that these, too, follow the rest of the results. Those groups with similar disposal have similar requirements of mourning attendance and feasting and those with dissimilar disposal do not.

Mourning Intensity

Figure 5. Mourning intensity displayed for children compared to adults.

For the most part, in both egalitarian and stratified groups, shown in Figure 5, the intensity of mourning required for children is the same as for adults. The primary differences for these groups would be who is required to mourn. Adults tend to have more people in the community mourn for them, while small
children are mourned by the close family. However, in small groups, most of the group may be considered family, and, therefore, the child would have the same number of people mourning their death. These conclusions are based on the scanty information in the HRAF survey about which members are required to or actually do mourn, but they fit the model that suggests treatment at death is determined by the disruption to the continuity of the group. The energy expended mourning children can be compared to the energy expended mourning adults. Of the egalitarian groups, sixteen (40%) have mourning intensity at the same level for adults and children. Seven (17.5%) of the stratified societies have the same level of intensity for children as adults.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Mourning Intensity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Number of cultures at various levels of mourning intensity for adults versus children for both levels of organization combined. The seven cultures with no mention of children are not included in this figure.

Figure 6 shows the number of cultures exhibiting various levels of mourning intensity for adults and children. Where no intensity was expressed, it was for groups where children were not yet initiated into the group. Once initiated, children received the same level of intensity of mourning as adults.
Figure 7. The length of mourning required for children compared to adults.

Figure 7 shows data on the few groups where there is information about the required mourning length for children. In egalitarian groups with the same disposal of adults and children, the mourning length for children is equal to or longer than the required mourning for adults. There are only 6 groups with same disposal, and only one culture in the groups with different disposal types, the Hopi, had information for the length of mourning for children. There is not information, however, for the required length of mourning for adults, so it may or may not be longer.

Infanticide and Abortion

Infanticide is an interesting issue that is important to address here. Infanticide is sometimes considered a type of population control. It keeps the group from becoming larger than the local environment can support. Yet, if each individual is valued, then why kill an infant? The most common reasons for infanticide are that the mother already has a child that is still suckling and cannot care for more than one infant at a time, or there is some abnormality of the child. The child that is killed is not considered part of the group, even less so than a
child that is not yet named or otherwise initiated into the group. Most often the fetus is aborted, the child is left to die, or the child is killed immediately after birth and disposed of with the placenta. In any case, the infant is not taken back to camp, and the birth is not celebrated.

Infanticide is prevalent in the egalitarian societies looked at here, as seen in Figure 8. Only three groups, the Ona, Paez, and Vedda (all egalitarian groups) practiced no infanticide. For two cultures, there was some dispute about whether infanticide was practiced or not; however, they were counted as groups that practice infanticide since there were descriptions of instances in the HRAF. The stratified societies in this survey had the least amount of information written regarding infanticide.

![Infanticide Graph]

Figure 8. Percentage of cultures where infanticide is practiced.

The death of an infant due to infanticide is not thought of or included as the actual death of a child; therefore, their death is ignored. For the most part these infants are not considered human or even thought to really exist. Many infants killed are twins born to groups with religious beliefs that twins are evil. If the infant is deformed in some way, it is often killed since it would not be able to
contribute to society, or would likely die anyway. Infanticide is also practiced by those involved in illicit affairs, or if the father is unloved, or if the child is simply unwanted. The Jivaro will crush with the foot the child who is deformed or the product of an illicit affair. The Lozi abandon or drown illegitimate children. The Caraja also drown the deformed or blind. Yanomamo and West Tibetans throw the remains in the river. Strangulation, suffocation, or being buried alive often happen. With infanticide, there is no treatment for the death.

Another form of infanticide is that of ritual sacrifice. The Tiv practice infanticide as ritual to set the land right. The Inca practice abortion; they also use children, usually the child of a chief so that the child has a high rank, as a sacrifice to the Sun god. Schobinger (1991:66) discusses the find of a 7 year old Incan boy that was mummified. Probably the son of a chief, the child was thought of as a deity connecting the chief to the Emperor, who is descended from the Sun god. The child was wrapped with blankets, covered with red pigment, clothed in a tunic, sandals, and ornamented with beaded necklaces. Besom (1991:66) also describes the mummified remains of a child with elaborate braids and paint, wearing elaborate jewelry, and buried with gold, silver, and copper figurines. Like the ancient Chinese, here is an example of religious beliefs dictating the elaborate treatment of children given to infanticide.

The suggestion that the children so treated have died as a result of infanticide begs the question; why kill a child to conserve energy and resources only to expend energy and resources for death rituals? The fact that infanticide
is so prevalent, as seen in Figure 8, emphasizes the fact that funerary treatment of children and the energy expended is a remarkable endeavor.
CONCLUSION

The results of the survey of the HRAF conducted here strongly suggest that the theoretical position of using mortuary practices as a tool to determine the rank of children is not as accurate as it can be for adults. When the stratified cultures are removed from the two disposal type groups (similar versus different for adults and children) there are 13 egalitarian cultures left in each. Half of the egalitarian cultures use mortuary practices that are the same for children and adults. These children are not being thrown out with the trash. The greatest influence of mortuary treatment of children seems to be initiation into the group. Of the remaining 50% of the egalitarian cultures, those with different disposal of deceased children versus adults, once the child is initiated into the community or once the child is beyond infancy, (in all but two of the groups) the children are treated the same as adults.

Certainly there are inferences about rank that can be made from mortuary evidence when looking at variables such as grave goods in relation to wealth, etc., especially for adults. The Iban, Washoe, and Yaghan have disposal of children similar to that of high ranking individuals. This similar disposal demonstrates that social status may not be as clear cut as we think, and may lead to error in the interpretation of data by archaeologists in the field.
The data of this survey simply did not fully support the theories that treatment of children is basically determined by rank. Clearly the data on the various cultures represented in this survey suggests there is more to mortuary practices than rank. For the most part, these are smaller groups wherein each individual is valued as a contributor for the survival of the group. And, perhaps as suggested by the case of the Chinchorros, when the lives of children are cut short, they receive treatment due to the loss of their potential contributions to the survival of the group.

The issue of mourning and grief was not as well documented in the available HRAF as expected, but enough information was found to show that grief is a plausible explanation for some treatment at death. If a child was considered part of the group, at birth or after initiation, the death was mourned. Scheper-Hughes (1991) gives an excellent example of this in the Alto do Cruzeiro; once a child there is named, grieving upon death would be acceptable. This is not to say that if the death was prior to initiation the parent felt nothing. Nations and Rebhun (1988) convincingly suggest that this is not the case. Clearly, once a child is initiated into the group, mourning follows along with funerary rites that are the same for everybody. Only one aspect of mourning fits with the rank determination theories, and that is regarding those who participate in the mourning ritual. Primarily, though not always, closest kin mourn and sometimes only the mother mourns the death of a child. Whether this shows that the loss is seen as a disruption of biological continuity to those closest to the child, or that the child does not contribute to the group so the group does not
mourn the loss, is unclear. Unfortunately, there was not sufficient information to clearly define age categories (other than infant and child) to determine if the Darwinian explanation of grief offered by Wright (1995) fits with these cultures.

Since the Chinchorro were the inspiration for the questions asked in this thesis, perhaps some speculation is necessary about why the Chinchorro children were treated so elaborately. The artificial mummification of fetuses and infants in this culture suggests that these children were important to the group in some way; perhaps they represented the future of the group. The possibility that artificial mummification began with infants and the practice spread to adults also suggests that this may have been the case, since they were honored differentially. The parents and relatives understood the importance of each individual's survival for the continuation of the group, resulting in an emotional attachment to the children and an early initiation into the group at birth or shortly thereafter. Once a child died, the loss that affected the survival of the group and the relative's grief would dictate the elaborate treatment they received. The mourning and funeral would be the symbol of the personal grief felt, as well as the group's loss of part of the future. Therefore, those individuals who were unable to grow up and add their share to the rest of the group were immortalized, through the mummification, in a way that would show they were necessary and loved and given the honor they were unable to attain themselves. In honoring the very young, the Chinchorros treatment of children, apparently, would employ a different model than the Darwinian view, where adolescents would be the most grieved for.
There are several implications as a result of this survey. Awareness, on the part of researchers, that there are many motives for behavior, and, therefore, there are many motives operating that influence the mortuary treatment of the deceased is necessary for accurate results of research. Grief or the importance of the continuation of the group probably have more influence than rank when deciding how to treat a deceased child. Another implication that arises from this survey is that the complex and not entirely rational processes people use may be compared to other theories used in the anthropological field, such as optimal foraging theory. Optimal foraging theory models assume rational behavior in that “natural selection has favored efficiency” (Jochim 1:130). As seen clearly here, there is nothing rational, in terms of efficiency, in the amount energy expended in the mortuary practices performed on children.

The results of this study suggest that emotions of grief and membership in the group are more compelling motivations behind the treatment of deceased children than rank. The size of the group, with a death affecting the survival or continuation of the group, also contributed to how the Chinchorro were treated. This hypothesis could be tested in further studies. The prediction would be that small groups should have a higher level of grief and more elaborate mortuary treatment for the young. Archaeologists should be aware that rank may not be the only motivation for mortuary treatment; grief or group size may have an influence. This knowledge would keep an archaeologists from making an assumption that may be incorrect.
The sample of cultures studied here was not a large one, yet it was the same size Binford used for his investigation of mortuary practices. Certainly, results based on a larger, more representative sample would not yield the same neat fifty-fifty split of egalitarian societies this survey did for groups that dispose children differently and the same as adults. But, the results here are sufficient to question mortuary theories. The findings offer a new point of investigation for the mortuary treatment on children that has been woefully neglected.
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