THE CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION TO JEALOUSY:
CROSS-CULTURAL AGGRESSION IN SEXUAL
JEALOUSY SITUATIONS*

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This study explores the cultural contribution to emotional responses. Specifically, it examines the contribution of social structures to the severity of aggression in sexual jealousy situations. It is hypothesized that the aggression in jealousy situations is correlated with the cultural importance attached to being married, the limitations placed on nonmarital and extramarital sexual gratification, the emphasis on private ownership of property, and the requirement of personal descendants. The social structures and behavioral patterns that are associated with these variables were rated in 92 preindustrial societies and correlated with the aggressiveness of the responses of men and women in jealousy situations. Stepwise multiple regression analyses on the male data revealed that the social structures and behavioral patterns that are associated with pair-bonding, sexual gratification, and property accounted for 29 percent of the variance of the responses in jealousy situations. The contribution of the behavioral patterns that are associated with personal descendants was negligible. None of the variance of the female responses was accounted for by the cultural variables. The latter finding was attributed to the limited options that are available to women for coping with unfaithful men.

Attempts to explain jealousy have been made with a sociobiological perspective (Daly, Wilson, and Weghorst 1982), a psychoanalytical per-

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spective (e.g., Freud 1953), and a psychological perspective (e.g., White 1981). It is the concern of the present study to provide empirical support for the cultural perspective of jealousy outlined by Hupka (1977, 1981).

The formation and maintenance of a society require the resolution of numerous issues, such as selecting a system of government and an economic unit, (see, e.g., Aberle, et al. 1950, Carver 1974). Hupka has proposed that some of the solutions have greater implications than others for the significance, or meaning, that men and women have for each other. For example, the political system of the society, whether it is a government based on tribal chiefs or a legislature, has less of an impact on the roles that men and women play in each others' lives than the selection of an economic unit. Let us consider the Ammassalik Eskimo (Mirsky 1937). The nuclear family was the economic unit for the Ammassalik. It had to be completely self-sufficient. The family produced everything that it needed, including food, clothing, shelter, and utensils. Consequently, men and women eagerly sought mates, especially skilled mates, and, understandably, they responded fiercely to interlopers. An Ammassalik seldom survived through a long harsh winter without the assistance of a competent mate. An interloper in such a situation was literally a potential threat to one's survival.

The use of the nuclear family as the economic unit, coupled with the requirement that the husband and wife be the suppliers of all of their needs, led the Ammassalik to place a high value on having a mate and preventing the loss of the mate to an interloper. Thus, the choices made in the organization of the society had psychological consequences for its members. Namely, they defined what was valued and had to be protected.

It follows, according to Hupka, that the appraisal of threat (Lazarus 1966) in jealousy situations is a product of socialization. It is the outcome of the choices that have been made in the organization of societies with respect to those fundamental issues of social life that contribute to the significance that men and women have for each other, such as selecting an economic unit (e.g., the nuclear family or the clan), providing for the sick and elderly (e.g., as the responsibility of either the progeny or the government), the vesting of property (e.g., in the individual or in the clan), and making the rules that regulate propagation and sexual behavior.

These issues have to be solved in every society. According to the cultural perspective of jealousy, the solutions simultaneously create goals, needs, and values, which the members of the society seek to attain and satisfy. If the nuclear family is the economic unit, then each of the members of that society will seek a mate. If the mate also is necessary for sexual satisfaction and survival in old age, then they will be even more prone to feel threatened by the overtures of interlopers. An assumption of this approach to jealousy is that the distress shown by individuals is in direct proportion to the number of goals or needs that their mates satisfy by virtue of their roles in the society. When the roles of marriage partners are minimal in a particular culture, their philandering does not engender
much distress. Thus, the conditions that influence individuals to evaluate as a threat the overtures of rivals (or the interest of their mates in the rivals) are intrinsic to the organization of human beings into social units. A comparison of the Toda and Apache cultures illustrates some of these assumptions of the cultural perspective of jealousy.

The Todas of India showed very little, if any, distress in the typical sexual jealousy situation when they were observed by Rivers (1906) at the turn of the century. The Apache Indians of North America, on the other hand, were easily distressed, at least such was the case four decades ago, when Goodwin (1942) reported on them. The following comparison is based on the reports of Rivers and Goodwin.

The individual Toda did not require a mate in order to survive, to be recognized as an adult, or to have guilt-free, recreational sex. In addition, the Toda culture did not value personal offspring or material possessions. Specifically, the Todas had a clan economy; therefore, everyone was assured of survival through the cooperative efforts of the clan. Companionship was easily available in such a large group. Marriage was not necessary in order to function effectively as an adult. The prevailing form of marriage was fraternal polyandry. When a woman married, she also became the wife of her husband’s brothers, even those not yet born. An obvious consequence of such a custom was that pair-bonding was not a highly prized goal for the Todas.

In a polyandrous society, such as that of the Todas, it is difficult to determine the father of a child. Consequently, the Todas had a casual approach to personal progeny. Males had little interest in knowing whether the children they were raising were their own.

The Toda cultural customs did not encourage the development of a strong sense of personal property rights in the individual. Ownership of property was vested in the family, and even ornaments and household utensils, which were manufactured by individuals on the basis of need, were shared by all.

The Todas had few restrictions on sexual intercourse before or after marriage. It was socially sanctioned for an older woman to invite a young man to have recreational sex. Mates could have lovers after marriage. Consequently, the Todas did not perceive sexual gratification as something to be fought for and then to be guarded cautiously against interlopers.2

Converse conditions prevailed for the Apache Indians. Matrimony was the key to survival, to recognition as an adult, to personal offspring, and to guilt-free, recreational sex. Moreover, great stress was placed on personal control of material possessions. The Apache was expected to marry. The marriage ceremony represented entrance into adulthood, and it enabled the individual to participate in the tribal government. Each husband and wife, as an economic unit, had to be self-sufficient. Personal progeny were instruments for gaining prestige, and they ensured security in old age. Daughters attracted marriage gifts, and the parents received portions of game and booty from their husbands, an arrangement that
increased in importance as the aging fathers were less capable of hunting.

Coitus was restricted to married couples. The Apache disapproved of premarital and extramarital sexual intercourse for both genders. Hence, sexual pleasure was a reward, something to be earned after a long period of deprivation in youth and to be jealously guarded thereafter against all intruders.

The Apache child learned the concept of personal ownership of property early in life. Permission was required before the property of a sibling could be used. Parents even sought permission from their children, as young as eight years of age, before selling any of their possessions. It was unlikely that a father would interfere when his son decided to kill a horse for meat, even if he had just received it as a gift from his father. As a result of such socialization, the Apache adult acquired a strong sense of personal ownership and an inclination to prevent loss of possessions.

The comparison of the Toda and Apache cultures illustrates the variables that have been identified in the cultural approach to sexual jealousy as the major determinants of cross-cultural differences in the severity of responding to extramarital affairs. It can be hypothesized that the level of aggression of the jealous mate is positively correlated with the extent to which the social structures or cultural customs (a) require pair-bonding for economic survival, companionship, and recognition of the individual as a competent adult member of the society; (b) stress the need for personal descendants; (c) emphasize private ownership of property; and (d) restrict nonmarital and extramarital sexual intercourse.

In sum, the motives that people have for responding to interlopers stem from learning the importance that mates have for individuals. Without a culture that gives substance to male-female relationships, there is no basis or motive for abhorring interlopers. Their actions would have no repercussions for a cuckolded individual. The unrestricted sexual activity would not differ from other biological functions, such as eating and drinking. The extent to which responding in jealousy situations is learned is actually the extent to which it is a social construction, rather than a form of behavior that is under the control of our genetic inheritance (Averill 1980).

**METHOD**

**The Human Relations Area Files (HRAF)**

A description of the HRAF and an explanation of its uses are available elsewhere (Barry 1980) and need not be repeated here. The files consist of ethnographic materials on over 300 societies throughout the world. For this study, we used a representative sample of 150 societies. Information on the social structures and behavioral patterns in relation to all four of the
variables (i.e., pair-bonding, progeny, property, and sexual gratification) and responses in jealousy situations was available in 92 societies for males. In that sample, information on female responses in sexual jealousy situations was available in 45 societies.

All of the societies, except two, either are in the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample of 186 societies of Murdock and White (1969) or are, by their recommendation, suitable substitutes. Murdock and White categorized the geographical locations of the societies into six major regions of the world and categorized each society according to its type of subsistence economy. The distribution of the societies in our sample, according to those categories, is listed in Table 1.

Social Structure Scales

Pair-bonding.

The four Social Structures scales and the scale for assessing the Responses in Jealousy Situations are listed in Appendix A. Some of the scale items overlap with published scales (see Broude and Greene 1976; Minturn, Grosse, and Haider 1969). The scales are divided into two parts. The first part lists the customs that are pertinent to the hypothesis. The purpose of the Pair-bonding scale was to determine how important, in any particular culture, it was to be married. Consequently, the first part of the scale contains items that assess the importance of marriage, such as its necessity for economic survival and for acceptance as an adult or the ease of entering and leaving matrimony.

Each item was rated on a 9-point scale, with anchors at 1 (not applicable or infrequent) and 9 (highly applicable or frequent).4 Information was not available in the HRAF on every scale item for each culture. In order to prevent variability in the rating scores, due to the availability or unavailability of information, a mean rating score was computed for each of the

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<th>Location</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Advanced agriculture</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circum-Mediterranean</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Horticulture</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Eurasia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Simple or shifting cultivation</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Domestic animals</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Hunting</td>
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four Social Structures scales and the Responses in Jealousy Situations scale for every culture.

However, the mean frequency/applicability rating was not sufficient to test the hypothesis of this study, because the identical frequency rating could be based on a different combination of items in another culture. In other words, the frequency rating did not enable a comparative evaluation of the importance of pair-bonding. For this reason, a system of weighting the mean frequency rating was developed. Items at similar levels of importance or severity in the first part of the scale were combined and ranked. For example, with respect to pair-bonding, the lowest weight was assigned when pair-bonding was easily entered and terminated, and the highest weight when pair-bonding was necessary for economic survival or was required for acceptance as an adult. The basis for these weights was the assumption that, commensurate with the increase in importance of pair-bonding in a culture, there is an increase in the motive to protect the marriage against intruders.

The score used in the data analysis was the product of multiplying the mean frequency rating of the first part of the scale by the appropriate weight. When two weights were applicable, the multiplier was the mean of the two weights. Occasionally there was no information in the HRAF on the manner in which a particular culture dealt with the conditions described by all of the weights. In that case, the weight was selected for whatever information was provided. It was assumed that the other conditions were not applicable. The weights (in parentheses) and the conditions to which they apply are listed in Appendix A.

**Progeny.**

The purpose of the Progeny scale was to determine the extent to which children were instrumental in the achievement of their parents' goals, such as status and the security of having caretakers in old age. The underlying assumption was that distress in jealousy situations increases in proportion to the economic value of personal descendants. Although a female, by virtue of giving birth, can have offspring, nevertheless, she may be distressed in jealousy situations for fear that a philandering mate may be unwilling or unable to support them financially. This situation could reduce her chance of having sufficient offspring for her old age security (cf. Daly, Wilson, and Weghorst 1982).

**Property.**

This scale was used to determine the importance that is placed on private ownership of property and on the severity of punishment for theft. The assumption guiding the selection of the items and the determination of the weights, borrowed from Davis (1936), was that the greater the
emphasis on private ownership, the greater the likelihood is that individuals are protective of their property and, through generalization, the more likely it is that they have similar protective sentiments toward their mates.6

**Sexual Gratification.**

The purpose of the Sexual Gratification scale was to determine the extent to which sexual activity was restricted to matrimony. The assumption underlying the selection of the items and the ranking of the weights was that the individual is more likely to be distressed in jealousy situations if sexual gratification is available only with the mate. Sexual gratification in such a circumstance takes on the connotation of a reward or incentive for marriage. If guilt-free sexual gratification is available only with the mate, it is likely that the individual will be motivated to prevent the intrusion of interlopers.

**Responses in Jealousy Situations**

Romantic jealousy, the jealousy aroused in dating relationships or pair-bonding, also referred to as sexual jealousy, is defined as the cognition, physiological experience, and behavior that are elicited by the appraisal of any threat (Arnold 1960, Lazarus 1966) caused by the potential or suspected involvement of a loved one or mate with an interloper. This jealousy may also be aroused in reaction to the actual or imagined affair. Assuming that the capability to experience jealousy is a product of the human genetic pool, then the physiological experience of jealousy is likely to be similar across cultures, regardless of cross-culturally different motives for its arousal.

The differentiation among the antecedent conditions for the arousal of jealousy (i.e., anticipation of, or reaction to, a tryst) has implications for cross-cultural research on jealousy. Jealousy is aroused by the threat of losing to an interloper the benefits that have been gained by establishing a romantic relationship with someone. But the benefits that are gained by creating the relationship differ vastly across societies. As discussed in detail by Hupka (forthcoming), such benefits can be financial security, political alliances, and so on. Although the motives for seeking and maintaining pair-bonding thus may vary considerably across cultures, nevertheless, interlopers are likely to arouse similar experiences of jealousy in response to the prospect of losing, for example, the economic or political power that has been forged by the pair-bonding.

Different conditions prevail in response to liaisons—the focus of the present study. Jealousy may indeed be aroused here too. However, many concomitant cognitions, emotions, and behavior may also be elicited (see,
e.g., Barr and Hupka 1984, Bryson 1976, Pines and Aronson 1983), which may differ from society to society because of the differences in the repercussions of the affair to the cuckolded partner. For example, in societies where the husband is expected to defend the honor of the family, an extramarital affair by his wife may require him to kill her for having sullied that honor. Driven by his love of honor, he jealously guards it against infractions.

In addition to such variability in repercussions across societies for the cuckolded partner, with the attendant different profiles of cognitions, emotions, and behavior, there is also the issue of the profiles changing over time within a society, as the cuckolded partner adjusts to the transgression. The total process, from the initial moment of shock through the phases of recrimination, anguish, accommodation, and eventual recovery, may last for weeks or months, with concomitant changes in cognitions, emotions, and behavior.

It stretches the emotion of jealousy beyond usefulness to claim that it represents such complexity. Instead, Hupka (forthcoming) has proposed that the total sum of the reactions to affairs be characterized as a jealousy grieving process. Jealousy, because the triggering antecedent stimulus is the violation of a sexual norm in a dating or pair-bonding context; grieving, because the process involves damage to, or a loss of, a valued benefit that was acquired when entering pair-bonding; and process, because no emotions, which are thought of as transitory states, can account for the sequence of changing cognitions, emotions, and behavior that takes place as the cuckolded individual discovers and then copes with the affront. Rather than being an emotion, the jealousy grieving process is postulated to be a distinct psychological process, one that involves a succession of sundry cognitive and emotional reactions. Such a process differs across and within societies.

Accordingly, the responses listed in the Responses in Jealousy Situations scale in Appendix A span the range from no visible reaction to the killing of the unfaithful mate and/or the interloper. The weights for the responses were ranked according to the increasing severity of the reactions to the infidelity. The ranking was based on Judeo-Christian values and may not be in agreement with the appraisal of responses in other cultures. Due to the observation that almost every society sanctioned the execution of the adulterous mate or interloper, the condition "death of the offenders" in the Weight C category was applied to the cultures in which it was the only, or the predominant, response to adultery.

**Procedure**

We determined the cultural contribution to the total variance of coping in jealousy situations by rating 92 societies on their attitudes toward pair-
bonding, progeny, property, and sexual gratification, using the scales listed in Appendix A. The scale for rating the Response in Jealousy Situations (see Appendix A) was used twice: to rate the reactions (1) to an adulterous wife and (2) to an adulterous husband. The second author rated each culture on the four Social Structures scales and the Responses in Jealousy Situations scale and selected the multiplier weights. Another individual independently rated a randomly selected sample of 22 percent of the cultures to determine the reliability of the ratings. The interrater reliability was between .93 and .98 on the five scales.

RESULTS

Stepwise multiple regression analyses were computed, with the weighted ratings of the Pair-bonding, Progeny, Property, and Sexual Gratification scales and the weighted ratings of the Responses in Jealousy Situations scale listed in Appendix B. The results of the regression analyses for males and females are summarized in Table 2.

What is the contribution of social structures to the cross-cultural variation in the severity of responding in sexual jealousy situations? The social structure of pair-bonding accounted for 18 percent of the variance of the responses of males to adultery. The behavioral patterns associated with sexual gratification and property contributed an additional 6 percent and 5 percent, respectively. The progeny variable accounted for only 1 percent of the variance. In summary, the cultural variables that had a positive correlation with male aggressiveness in jealousy situations were the behavioral patterns that are associated with pair-bonding, sexual gratification, and property. As can be seen in Table 2, none of the cultural structures

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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Male a</th>
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<th>Change</th>
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<td></td>
<td>R²</td>
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* based on 92 cultures

b based on 45 cultures

p<.01, two-tailed test
accounted for a significant amount of variance in how females respond in jealousy situations.

**DISCUSSION**

With the exception of the behavioral patterns that are associated with progeny, the male data support the cultural perspective of jealousy (Hupka 1977, 1981). This approach identifies the social structures that contribute to the degree of distress and aggression shown by men in sexual jealousy situations. The distress is conceptualized as a normal reaction to the social structures of the society. That is to say, the motive for the elicitation of jealousy and the jealousy grieving process is an inescapable outcome of social structures. Rare is the individual who functions successfully in a society without adopting, contributing to, and being affected by its values, customs, and socioeconomic features. Hence, restricting the stimulus for the arousal of jealousy and the jealousy grieving process solely to personality variables, such as feelings of inferiority, insecurity, selfishness, and egotism (see, e.g., Mead 1931), appears limited in focus and unduly judgmental from a cultural perspective.

**Male Jealousy**

Why are the behavioral patterns that are associated with progeny not relevant to how aggressive males become in jealousy situations? The most likely explanation for this finding is based on the reality that males cannot have children without females; consequently, the pair-bonding customs have more influence on the intensity of the jealousy reaction than the customs regarding children appear to have. Pair-bonding supersedes and includes the essence of the behavioral patterns that are associated with progeny. Stated differently, if children are highly desirable, let us say, because they take care of their parents in their old age, this consideration has the effect of increasing the importance of finding a mate and vigorously defending the relationship against the intrusion of interlopers.

*Is male jealousy genetically influenced?* Daly, Wilson, and Weghorst (1982) propose that the function of male sexual jealousy is to defend paternity confidence. They assert that males have evolved a psychological propensity to control the sexual activity of women in order to satisfy their need—stemming from evolution—for assurance that they are investing their resources in the raising of their own offspring and not the offspring sired by other males. These authors tie the motive for the arousal of male jealousy and the jealousy grieving process to remnants of human evolution.
The finding that the social structure of pair-bonding accounted for three times the amount of the variance that was contributed by the sexual gratification and property variables is in conflict with such an explanation. However, it is in agreement with the cultural perspective that the motive for the arousal of jealousy and the jealousy grieving process is a product of enculturation. Individuals learn what is valued in the society via its social structures, and they seek to acquire it and to avoid losing it to rivals. From such a perspective, the capacity to be angry and aggressive is genetically based in evolutionary history (see Hupka 1984, forthcoming), but the use of that capacity—whether in defense of honor, the sanctity of matrimony, sexual fidelity, or religion—is due to be acquisition of particular values.

Although correlation does not establish causation, it is difficult to figure out why the intensity of responding in the jealousy grieving process should covary with pair-bonding if the motive for the elicitation of jealousy and the jealousy grieving process is driven by a product of evolution—an aspect of human nature—rather than by acquired values. One would expect a genetically-influenced predisposition to be relatively constant across cultures. In other words, the desire for personal offspring should be high across cultures; or if, as was proposed earlier, the behavioral patterns associated with progeny are subsumed in the pair-bonding scale, then pair-bonding should be highly valued across cultures. But, in agreement with the cultural perspective, we found that 77 percent of the low jealousy cultures also had low (i.e., 12 or less) weighted ratings on pair-bonding (and 66 percent had low ratings on progeny).

**Female Jealousy**

The social structure variables did not covary with the responses of females in jealousy situations, in contrast to those of males. The most likely explanation for this finding is that females have fewer options available to them, particularly the harsh ones (see Jealousy Weight C of Appendix A), for coping with male infidelity. When the weighted jealousy scale ratings were divided into thirds, to create categories of low, medium, and high severity of responses, we found that 58 percent of the cultures were in the high severity category with respect to male options, in comparison to only 18 percent for female options. The restricted range of options makes it more difficult statistically to detect variation in female responses due to systematic variation in the social structures. The difference in available options for males and females most likely follows from the treatment of females in many societies as the property of their parents and husbands.

An alternative explanation can be inferred from data provided by Sanday (1981). In a systematic analysis of the relationship between female...
economic and political power and the type of subsistence economy, she noted that women wield economic and political power in the majority of foraging societies, less so in advanced plant economies, and least of all in animal husbandry economies. Her analysis leads to the prediction that the hypothesized relationship in the present study between social structure and responses in jealousy situations holds only in societies with primitive plant economies and in foraging societies. However, this expectation was not supported by our data. We relied, as did Sanday, on Murdock’s and White’s (1969) identification of the subsistence economy of the societies. Two-thirds of our societies on which information was available for females had foraging or primitive plant economies. Yet, we found no relationship between social structure and the responses of females in jealousy situations.

The type of economy also appeared not to be related to the male jealousy responses. The medium (n=30) and high (n=53) jealousy societies had similar economies. The two predominant types of economies in the medium and high jealousy societies were advanced agriculture (36 percent, 30 percent, respectively) and simple or shifting cultivation (26 percent, 30 percent, respectively). The nine low jealousy societies were relatively equally distributed among the eight Murdock and White economy categories.

Daly, Wilson, and Weghorst (1982) argue that, in comparison to men, women are less concerned with sexual fidelity, because they are not susceptible to misdirected parental care. By virtue of giving birth to a child, a woman is assured of the reproductive success of her own genes. At first glance, our failure to find a systematic relationship between social structure and female responses to infidelity appears to support their argument that females place less significance on sexual fidelity than males do. However, as the description of the lowest multiplier weight of the jealousy response scale indicates, no distinction had to be made between males and females. Women did not like infidelity any better than the men did; they simply had fewer options for dealing with it. In a selective overview of the available cross-cultural information on female responses in jealousy situations, Hupka (1977, 1981) reported that divorce and desertion were frequently the only and/or the most common options for coping with unfaithful men. Thus, the lack of options, which may have been due to the failure of women to have economic and political power in many societies, is a more likely explanation of our findings.

Social Structure and the Jealous Personality

According to the cultural perspective, it may be perfectly normal to experience jealousy and the jealousy grieving process, depending on the
social structures of a society. Consequently, it is uninformative to label someone as a "jealous person." When the cultural setup is such that two individuals need each other in order to function effectively in the society or to take advantage of its benefits, it is likely that there will be clashes of goals. In jealousy situations, the adulterer, the interloper, and the cuckolded individual are all equally frustrated in the attainment of their goals. All three are in a conflict situation, and the position of each, whether it is the adulterer or the cuckolded individual, is arbitrary and can be reversed in the next conflict situation. Hence, under normal circumstances, labeling someone as "jealous" is not descriptive of a person, as much as it is descriptive of the type of conflict situation.

Individuals in jealousy conflict situations use particular conflict resolution techniques. When they find themselves in the position of the cuckolded individual, their coping techniques are sometimes labeled as being indicative of a jealous personality; whereas the individuals in the position of the adulterer, who may be using similar coping techniques to minimize feelings of blame, are spared such a pejorative label. Thus, the use of verbal aggression in the cuckolded position may be taken as evidence that the individual is jealous, but the identical behavior in the offender's position is not. The arbitrary application of the jealousy label makes it apparent that labeling individuals as being jealous does not explain the cognitions and motives that are driving their behavior. At best, the label makes known the nature of the predicament and the position that someone holds in the conflict situation.

This is a functional approach to the labeling of individuals. Its emphasis is on contextual cues, rather than on hypothetical constructs, such as the jealous personality. The former suggests that individuals may be jealous temporarily; whereas the latter, with its emphasis on the structural basis of individual differences, implies a long-term, internally-driven personality pathology. The classification and definition of jealousy are still in a rudimentary stage. Is jealousy an emotion that is elicited by contextual cues or personality cues? Or is jealousy like a festering disease that colors incoming cues and motivates the individual's reactions to them? The latter implies that jealousy has a life of its own. The former suggests that it is dormant until elicited by environmental cues or hypothetical constructs.

How does the jealous personality differ from a case of normal, temporary jealousy? Is it in the sensitivity of the autonomic nervous system, the unfortunate accumulation of crippling hypothetical constructs (e.g., low self-esteem), inappropriate motives, misperceptions, faulty beliefs, unsuitable responses? Even when the normal jealousy response can be differentiated from the jealous personality, do the attributes indeed describe a distinct category, applicable only to the so-called jealous personality, or do they apply to a general class of malcontents, such as alcoholics, mate abusers, or the unhappily married? (See, e.g., Barnett and Peck 1987.)
sum, the question of what differentiates culturally normal responses in jealousy situations from abnormal responses is in need of clarification.

Notes

1The Ammassalik had a custom of “putting out the lamp,” which served as an invitation for a guest to have sexual intercourse with the wife of the host. In addition, occasionally, two families agreed to exchange mates. Extramarital affairs under any other circumstances elicited violent rage, however. Jealousy was the primary motive for the high rate of murder among the Ammassalik (Mirsky 1937).

2But the Todas could be threatened by circumstances that members of other societies, with different models of social organization and customs, would not consider distressing. For example, the Todas practiced tribal endogamy and primogeniture. They were upset when Toda women had sexual intercourse with non-Toda men (Peter 1963) and when a second-born son usurped the right of a first-born son to select and marry the woman that became the wife for all of the brothers (Rivers 1906). The responses of the Todas in situations that are not distressing to the typical American illustrate the fact that jealousy behavior is provoked by threats to learned values and customs, and not by the imperatives of the gene pool of the society (cf. Daly, Wilson, and Weghorst 1982).

3This was the size of the file at our university at the time of the research. HRAF personnel had selected the societies, so that this shortened file still constituted a representative world sample.

4For example, according to the information in the HRAF category 581, adulthood was conveyed by the act of marriage among the Mbuti Pygmies. It was considered a bad thing not to be married. A wife was necessary for economic survival. Such a description would result in a high rating on 3a and 3b of the Pair-bonding scale in Appendix A. On the other hand, the Yapese were rated low, because marriage was not necessary for economic survival or for status. Marriage was largely motivated by love. Intermediate mean ratings might be the result of low ratings on some criteria and high ratings on others. For example, marriages were easily dissolved among the Salteaux (HRAF 586). On the other hand, a husband’s prestige increased with the number of wives and children he had (HRAF 584).

The availability of pertinent information for the criteria of the rating scales varied across cultures. Rather than artificially inflating or deflating the ratings by summing them, we computed a mean rating on the Pair-bonding scale for each culture.

5Several cultures may have similar high mean ratings. For example, the Warrau received high ratings on the Pair-bonding scale, because the acquisition of several wives increased the status of the husbands, and because the marriages were arranged by the parents of the girls at an early age. The Shilluk also received high ratings, because pair-bonding was required for acceptance as an adult. A man could not have social position without a mate. Although both cultures have high mean ratings, the importance of the mates to the husbands differs. For the Shilluk, the mate is the key to adulthood. In contrast, although the Warrau was already accepted as an adult, the acquisition of a wife was an additional boost to his cur-
rent status. According to the cultural perspective of jealousy, one would expect the Shilluk male to be more threatened by interlopers than the Warrau, because the loss of the mate had more serious consequences for him. A system of weighting the mean frequencies was developed, in order to differentiate the mean ratings in accordance with the different levels of threat suggested by the cultural perspective on jealousy.

For a different interpretation of the influence of property on male jealousy, see Reiss 1986.

Low ratings on the Responses in Jealousy Situations scale may be due to various reasons, such as adultery being frequently condoned by the husband or, at most, inducing only a quarrel (Andamanese); there being no restraints on the sexual activity of married individuals (New Ireland); husbands and wives, in separate quarters, being allowed to have visitors at night (Kikuyu); or adultery being neither a crime nor a punishable offense (Zuni).

We thank James C. Webster for these ratings.

### APPENDIX A: Scales

#### 1. Social Structures

**Pair-bonding**

1. Divorce difficult to obtain.
2. Pair-bonding available only when in possession of sufficient money, property, or status.
3. Pair-bonding required for
   a. acceptance as an adult;
   b. economic survival;
   c. sexual intercourse;
   d. siring children.
4. Restrictions on selection of mate (e.g., parents select mate, limited range of eligible partners).
5. Status decrease with divorce.
6. Status increase with acquisition of several mates.

Weights:

A. Pair-bonding easily entered and/or easily terminated. (2)
B. Divorce difficult to obtain, and/or pair-bonding arranged by parents, and/or pair-bonding not easily entered (e.g., need for money). (3)
C. Pair-bonding necessary for survival and/or required for acceptance as an adult. (4)

**Progeny**

1. Childlessness is cause for divorce.
2. Children take care of parents in old age.
3. Fatherhood established with physiological paternity.
5. Married children are source of food and booty.
6. Personal progeny important.
8. Status increase with children.
   Weights:
   A. Personal descendants preferred. (2)
   B. Children required as laborers and for increase in status. (3)
   C. Children required for old age survival. (4)

**Property**

1. Children control personal property.
2. Food is private property.
3. Individual owns:
   a. dwelling;
   b. food source (e.g., livestock, garden);
   c. household goods;
   d. land;
   e. weapons, tools, etc.
4. Permission required to borrow property.
5. Personal property restricted to owner (i.e., no one seeks to borrow it).
6. Status increases in proportion to possession of property.
7. Theft punished by banishment, beating, disfigurement, or death.
   Weights:
   A. Adults own personal property (e.g., cooking utensils, weapons, etc.). (2)
   B. Adults own home and/or land, livestock, etc. (i.e., property that goes beyond the bare necessities listed in category A). (3)
   C. Children have total control over personal property. (4)

**Sexual Gratification**

1. Mores associated with sexual intercourse:
   a. cohort restrictions;
   b. intercourse discouraged before marriage;
   c. restrictions during marriage;
   d. restrictions after divorce or death of mate.
2. Status decrease with increase in number of sexual partners prior to marriage.
   Weights:
   A. None or only minor restrictions on sexual activity (1)
   B. Restrictions on sexual activity during marriage. (2)
   C. Restrictions on sexual activity before marriage. (3)
   D. Restrictions on sexual activity before, during, and after marriage. (4)

**Responses in Jealousy Situations**

1. Extramarital affair of mate leads to:
   a. banishment;
   b. death sentence;
c. emotional responses (e.g., tears, anger, depression) and loss of self-worth;
d. fines;
e. loss of status of offended mate, if latter condones the affair;
f. loss of status of offender;
g. no action taken;
h. reprisals by individuals other than the mate;
i. reprisals by mate or parents;
j. ritualized customs (e.g., mock battle, contest);
k. temporary separation;
l. termination of marriage.

2. Taking of additional mates is protested.

Weights:
A. The marriage is maintained. The offended individual responds emotionally or with verbal abuse. There may be fines, jail sentences, loss of status, or the execution of ritualized customs, such as mock battles and contests. (2)
B. The marriage is terminated by nonviolent means, such as divorce, return of the brideprice, etc. (3)
C. The extramarital affair results in banishment from the tribe, corporal punishment, disfigurement, or death of the offenders. (4)

APPENDIX B

Ratings of Cultures on the Severity of Male and Female Responses in Jealousy Situations and on Attitudes toward Pair-Bonding, Progeny, Property, and Sexual Gratification.

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Societies not in the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample.

**HRAF societies selected by Murdock and White (1969) as suitable substitutes for societies in the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample.

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