

How Social Groups Maintain Order

Many Societies have ways of maintaining social order and because of the diversity of these societies around the globe, these ways can widely differ. This essay is going to look into how different methods of social control influence the harmony and conflict within not only one's own community but between communities. The methods I am going to look at begin with the importance and significance of verbal communication within societies, the ways in which violence can occur between members and how these conflicts are resolved, the ways in which alcoholism has influenced and altered the behaviour of consumers within one's community and how the greater power of national governments impacts smaller society's traditional ways of life in order to maintain nationwide social control. These points can be seen in significance in societies such as the Ju/'hoansi in southern Africa [...] My information has come significantly from Holly Peters-Golden (2012) [...]

Verbal Communication

Peace is a value in many societies, one such is the Ju/'hoansi. Because of this value, communications in the way of talking and sometimes, storytelling are used to deter conflict and defuse tensions (Peters-Golden, 2012: 111). Day after day and into the night, Ju/'hoansi participate in conversation with each other within many activities such as working and eating. These conversations involve subjects such as the events of that day's hunt, the amount of berries or nuts that had been gathered and plans for the following day's activities (Peters-Golden, 2012: 111). However, there are more than just pleasantries exchanged with Ju/'hoansi communication. As a culture with egalitarian, there is a concern that if a man was to come back from a hunt with more meat or better than usual, he would start to see himself as superior to the rest of the group. Therefore, any meat that is brought back is insulted in order to maintain the egalitarianism (Peters-Golden, 2012: 108).

Violence

As peace and harmony is the way of life for the Ju/'hoansi, when conflict arises, or somebody is behaving inappropriately, the situation needs to be dealt with in order for that sense of calmness and kind spirit to be returned. Song within Ju/'hoansi culture for disciplinary purposes. According to Peters-Golden, songs can be used to warn a group member of their wrong actions, how they disapprove of these actions and that they should correct themselves (2012: 111). In times of in group combat over arguments such as meat distribution or gift exchange, actions are taken as these occurrences can be fatal, especially in poisonous darts get involved. Should a fight take place, it lasts a few minutes, then other pull the participants apart and keep them separate until they calm down. It may only take a few moments after for the former quarrellers to joke about what just happened, furthermore, society is back to its valued harmony (Peters-Golden, 2012: 112).

Alcoholism

With the introduction and use of alcohol, values can change as consumers under the influence behave differently, as sometimes aggressively. The Ju/'hoansi is one such tribe where alcohol has been an impact. With their values of peace and harmony usually being

the shaping of many day to day activities, alcohol consumption disrupts this (Peters-Golden, 2012: 117).

This has also been a major problem within the Baka as Phil Agland found in his documentary in Cameroon. On an update from his 1987 research, Agland found that there was a significantly higher rate of alcohol consumption among everybody, including young children and pregnant women (2012). One such case of this impact was a mother called Camera who became angry at her husband for being absent during the mourning period for their son who died as an infant because he was drinking with other men. Another case which shows a more significant impact is of a young girl who cannot speak nor walk without aid. Agland mentions within the documentary that the young girl's mother consumed alcohol whilst pregnant with her (Agland, 2012). With this rate of alcohol consumption, it can impact the social security of harmony within the group as more disagreements can turn to violence.

Governmental Impact

In relatively recent times, the Ju/'hoansi culture has clashed with more and more with the nations governmental control. This makes it harder and harder for them to continue their traditional way of life. Especially around Namibia and Botswana where approximate 90 percent of the Ju/'hoansi live, there have been significant governmental restrictions due to creation such as game reserves, which prohibit Ju/'hoan men from hunting in these areas (Peters-Golden, 2012: 117). Not only that but as times advance, the Ju/'hoansi have had to do the same. Children which are sent to school but are not allowed to speak the language of the Ju/'hoansi while they are there, furthermore, the punishment being physical (Peters-Golden, 2012: 117). This can disrupt, the teaching of Ju/'hoansi values of harmony, therefore overrule Ju/'hoansi culture with governmental. Another point to make of how the governmental affairs effected Ju/'hoansi society is when South Africa fought with South West Africa over the apartheid system in the mid-late twentieth century. Over seven-hundred Ju/'hoansi men were drafted into the military where many of them died (Peters-Golden, 2012: 117).

References

- Peters-Golden, H. (2012) *Culture Sketches: Case Studies in Anthropology USA*, McGraw-Hill
- Agland, P. (2012) *Baka: People of the Rainforest* Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b017xgv8>