



Figure 6. Exchange odds for food-insecure versus food-secure households on the basis of country food productivity (from table 1).

membership; past membership predicts current council membership; but current food sharing out-degree does not predict recent council membership (FM sharing does). Clearly, something is going on that ends in statistically meaningful associations, even as income, kin group size, or number of households with close kin act fail to predict recent or past council membership.

Ready and Power interpret this as evidence of a range of instrumentalisms and social investments, coupled with a kinship system where “generosity, influence, and affluence can lead to a compounding of the benefits for better-situated households” while it can also “lead to a compounding of the economic and social disadvantage of households without these traits.” I don’t doubt that this is true, but I wonder to what extent those disparate strategies are individual or momentary and whether the effects are restricted to single households rather than communities within communities. Given what we found in the eastern Arctic, it is possible that the two distinct circles of exchange reflect a deeper social division/separation that is masked by the occupation of the same social space. This question goes beyond the current analysis, but suggestions in the article make it worth asking. Underneath such a question is the larger issue of whether and to what extent individual strategies are what is at stake, or whether instead the exchanges we see are evidence of a social topology that is much more hidden and where individual choices are constrained in ways that are not easily visible to those involved. In such cases, we might ask whether such structures are also hidden in part by our own our ethnographic tendencies to see holism where it may not be (Dombrowski et al. 2016).

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Human behavioral ecology (HBE) succeeds where its theoretical and empirical toolkit permits modeling optimal decision-

making given available options and constraints; its weakness is ignoring history and the embedded social and power structures within which individuals operate (i.e., the model “constraints”). However, explicit modeling of these constraints might be unnecessary for some questions and difficult to integrate empirically. Embeddedness of behavior in a larger political, economic, or social context also tells a more complete but less generalizable story. With these caveats in mind, Ready and Power should be commended for bridging the microeconomic approach of HBE with higher-level social processes in their study of country food sharing in a mixed Inuit economy. Their use of ERGMs includes nodal and dyadic covariates and endogenous network variables all in the same empirical framework—an important advance that others will surely imitate. We focus our comment on two issues: (1) the utility of network analysis and how it might help connect societal-level structure with individual-level behavior and (2) how to situate the current study in the larger context of socioeconomic change.

The network of food transfers among 110 households is used to represent the social structure within which individual behavior is embedded. Two problems arise from this approach. First, given that the considered network derives from food-sharing behavior, there is circularity in thinking about how network structure might influence food sharing and vice versa. How to assess aspects of social structure independent of sharing? The structure of social interactions spans beyond country food exchanges, especially if 88% of the diet is comprised of other foods. Are other foods not shared? To what extent is there interdependence in food production, economic specialization combined with trade, or social relationships within the community? Information about these activities would help contextualize or constrain patterns of country food sharing. Second, without a way of establishing causality, it will be impossible to disentangle the causal role of sharing in affecting and being affected by changes in social structure. For example, how to assess the effects of exogenous or endogenous changes in social structure on production and sharing decisions? Do sharing activities exhibit temporal patterns in association with the election of local leaders? As noted by the authors, the ordered nature of events coupled with longitudinal data may permit better causal inference in future studies.

Despite these concerns, some findings are quite familiar: people share avidly with close kin, neighbors, and reciprocators, and families experience varied gains and losses from participation in sharing networks. Those findings are robust across ecological settings and subsistence modes. Unlike other populations, however, Kangiqsujuaq subsistence activities are limited to the wealthy who can afford the high cost of vehicles, gasoline, rifles, and other technology. These wealthier households are more likely to hold political office, actively hunt, donate country food, and share with close kin who possess similar characteristics. Country food sharing may strategically help keep these relationships embedded, but it's hard to tell. Certainly, excluding others from receiving shares is more often the rule than the exception. Only 4% of potential household dyads witnessed any exchange over a 1-year duration, suggesting that country food sharing is very limited.

If the country food-sharing network does represent the larger social web of interactions, we would have expected to see more analyses that incorporated specific aspects of network structure. Only the GWESP variable, which assesses transitivity, appears to be a network-specific measure, and in this case, GWESP is treated as a control variable rather than an interpretable representation of clustering patterns within the network.

Other tools from network analysis may prove useful in addressing the role of network topology. One's position in the sharing and kinship network (e.g., eigenvector or betweenness centrality) might be useful to explore relationships with political influence, economic wealth, and reputational enhancement that would not otherwise be visible using more traditional regression approaches (e.g., generalized linear mixed model). Ties to well-connected individuals are unlikely to be equal to those of less embedded partners. Strategies of peripheral versus more centrally positioned actors in the network might provide insight into how families navigate multiple needs. Peripheral households may indeed be poorer, but they may also have independent means of obtaining country foods (e.g., buying and selling).

This leads to our second point. Sharing is often a primary means of reducing the risk of shortfalls in nonmarket economies. If other ways of managing risk become available (e.g., with increasing market integration), traditional sharing networks sometimes collapse, in other cases they remain unchanged, and sometimes wealth is used to help expand sharing networks, as we found among Tsimane forager-farmers of Bolivia. Long-standing questions in anthropology consider how and when cooperation, monetized exchanges, private property norms, restricted sharing, wealth accumulation, and incipient inequality go hand in hand as traditional populations experience socioeconomic change. As hinted in the paper, historical intergenerational inequality due to some families living mostly on the trapline during the fur trade may have already established some components of a restricted production and sharing ecology. Given recent changes in Nunavik, perhaps wealth can be leveraged more reliably and effectively to manage some risks

better than social indebtedness; under such conditions, food transfers may be increasingly used as a prestige signal to garner political support. If indeed "the influence of individuals [still] depends on the cooperation of others" despite the lack of strong economic or social interdependence among households, then generosity may help generate political support. Generosity could also act as an insurance premium to cover other risks, paid by wealthy households that can afford it. The fact that wealthier households engage in more traditional economic pursuits suggests that hunting and fishing has transitioned from a staple subsistence strategy to a luxury sport—now profitable only with expensive technology given the alternative economic options available in the Nunavik environment. As is usually the case with interesting research, we are pleased that Ready and Power raise many exciting questions that move discussion beyond the simple case study of the biology of altruism—and direct our attention to pertinent questions that have long been neglected.

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This study is innovative because the authors quantitatively tested the relationships of Inuit food sharing with kinship, physical proximity, reciprocity, or political status using social network analyses. I completely agree with their argument that contemporary Inuit food sharing has multiple functions and that it can be regarded as an example of Mauss' "total social phenomenon" (Kishigami 2012, 2013). Indeed, I think that this paper, with its new approach, contributes greatly to the theoretical development of food sharing research, not only of the Inuit but also of hunter-gatherers in general. Keeping that in mind, here I offer several critical comments on the paper.

First, the authors do not define "sharing." They questioned Inuit household heads about sharing, which seems to mean "giving or receiving of country food." They state that the heads "were asked to free-list their most important country food sharing partners, both who they gave to and who they received from." Based on my ethnographic research in Akulivik, since 1984, I have found that much of food sharing among the Akulivimuit was done not through giving and receiving of meat or communal meals in the village but through the sharing of daily meals within the village or sharing of game meat in hunting/butchering sites located away from the village. I wonder whether the authors' interviews covered those practices.

My second comment concerns the authors' explanation of economic and political inequality among Inuit in a village under the contemporary mixed economy. Their argument that sharing contributes to economic and political inequality in Kangiqsujuaq is provocative. I agree that such inequality exists in Inuit villages in Nunavik. However, I disagree with their explanation regarding its cause. Each extended or local family