



**The Sexual Life of Savages In North-Western
Melanesia; An Ethnographic Account of
Courtship, Marriage and Family Life Among the
Natives of the Trobriand Islands, British New
Guinea**

Bronislaw Malinowski

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2012 Reprint of 1929 Edition. Exact facsimile of the original edition, not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. Profusely illustrated. All original illustrations have been retained and re-screened for this reprint edition. "The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia" contains ethnographic data that attempts to establish that the Freudian Oedipus complex is not universal. This important work is his second in the trilogy on the Trobrianders, with the other two being "Argonauts of the Western Pacific" (1922), and "Coral Gardens and Their Magic" (1935). In the preface Malinowski says that sexuality "dominates in fact almost every aspect of culture". Malinowski provides a detailed description of the social organization of sexuality - social rites, partner choice, et al - "tracing the Trobriand lifecycle from birth through puberty, marriage, and death". Children don't submit to a system of "domestic coercion" or "regular discipline" - they "enjoy considerable freedom and independence". The idea of a child being "beaten or otherwise punished in cold blood" by a parent is viewed as unnatural and immoral and when proposed by westerners (like the anthropologist) is "rejected with resentment". Things are asked "as from one equal to another; a simple command, implying the expectation of natural obedience, is never heard from parent to child in the Trobriands". The event of a person getting angry and striking another person "in an outburst of rage" sometimes happens but as often from parent to child as from child to parent. In further chapters, the parent-child relationship of the Trobrianders is described with details of their complex matrilineal relationship structure in which the biological parentage is ignored.

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