

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Unami, Eastern Algonquian, Algic

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): unm

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

Inhabited the west side of the lower Delaware River, from old Duck Creek in northern Delaware up to Tohiccon Creek. (Becker)

1.4 Brief history:

The Lenape were bounded on the south by the Cinconicin, a low-level chiefdom which had their main village where Lewes, Delaware, now stands. To the west, in central Pennsylvania, were the powerful Susquehannock, who controlled the fur trade throughout the area and beyond the Monongahela and Ohio rivers to the Mississippi. The heartland of the Iroquois territory lay to the north of the Munsee, and to the north of the "Jerseys" were various independent groups foraging along the Hudson and other rivers and waterways surrounding Manhattan Island. The Susquehannock and Iroquois had grown powerful through fur trading and overshadowed these foraging peoples living along the major rivers. All the people of the Delaware valley formed an economic backwater with minimal participation in the fur trade during the entire sixteenth century.

In 1622 the uprising of the Potomac confederacy stimulated the Susquehannock to seek other outlets for their furs. The most convenient route ran from the head of the Chesapeake up the Elk River and, by a portage, down Minquas Creek through Lenape territory. This brought the Susquehannock to the lower end of the Delaware River where Dutch traders from New Amsterdam (New York) established a trading post. From the earliest records left by these traders, Beginning in 1623, we have clear evidence that the Susquehannock abused and controlled the Lenape during this period, and the Lenape remained in their shadow for nearly forty years.

During this period, Dutch traders and Swedish colonists purchased small plots of land from the Lenape on which to establish several outposts. The Swedes erected a small village where Wilmington, Delaware, now stands. Swedish farmers spread throughout the lower half of the Lenape range, and many intermarried with Lenape. Swedish needs for food had stimulated the foraging Lenape, who usually gardened a bit of maize at their summer stations, to increase production for sale to the colonists. Between 1640 and 1660, maize became an important cash crop for the Lenape, providing access to European goods, which other nations procured with furs. By 1660, imports of grain from other colonies had captured the local market.

By that time the wars of the Susquehannock, primarily with the Seneca, had created stresses that caused them to become allied with the Lenape and allowed the Lenape to participate more extensively in the fur trade. When English Immigrants began settling the area around 1660 they also made small purchases of land from the Lenape on which to establish farms. These immigrants stimulated the formation of new alliances in the region. In 1674 the Maryland colonists joined with the Seneca and turned on the Susquehannock, who had formerly been their allies. The Susquehannock nation was defeated and scattered, and their power lost forever.

Their lands in central Pennsylvania and to the west became available for Lenape use, although the Maryland colony and some of the Five Nations now held claim to them by right of conquest. Lenape became increasingly active in the fur trade, and a growing number relocated into this vast open area which in 1680 was uncluttered by European immigrants. The political events that led the English Crown to grant a charter for this region to William Penn (1681) at first had little significance for the Lenape. Penn's policy for just treatment of the native peoples led him to contact every Lenape band and to purchase all their holdings in the Delaware Valley. This program began in 1681 and continued until 1701. Although Penn assiduously protected Lenape rights to lands on which they were seated, the foraging life-style depended on access to forest resources and to the abundant fish runs in the streams feeding the Delaware River. Gradually the various Lenape bands relocated their foraging areas and summer stations farther inland, and by 1750 all the Lenape bands had relocated to the west of their homeland, joining their kin who, in some cases, had moved west more than fifty years previously. Many of those who had left in the 1600s had moved even farther to the west by 1740, where they bought lands from other Native American groups. This established a pattern of movement in which the Lenape made purchases directly from aboriginal landholders and later sold these lands to colonists or, after 1780, to the U.S. government.

Over the years various Lenape bands established settlements and villages in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, and even Texas. By the 1920s most of the Lenape had come to speak English, and fewer households were to be found where the Lenape language was maintained. (Becker)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

The tribe was forced from where they lived and traveled to the Midwest. Today, the Unami tribe no longer exists.

1.6 Ecology:

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:

No permanent settlements or villages. They dispersed into nuclear family units for winter hunting. In the spring, the families reassemble near the mouth of a stream that serves as the main focus for the band's territory. A dozen or so bands will meet and each band will consist of about 25 members. Homes were known wigwam, which are less than 9 feet in diameter and about 5 feet tall. (Becker)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): maize (Becker)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Fish, deer (Marshall Harrington 222)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

Used bow and arrows and blowguns (Marshall Harrington 221)

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production:

“The women of the matrilineal Lenape performed traditional female roles and did whatever gardening was done at their summer stations, including preparing the small plots. Their gathering also included nestlings and eggs, and they shared in harvesting fish during the big runs. Men focused on fishing and were of greater economic importance during the winter hunting when they provided most of the winter food supply. These male roles expanded over the years as men became full-time trappers, guides, scouts, and horse traders.” (Becker)

2.6 Land tenure:

“Land usage was held in common among all the members of the band, which could be equated with the core members of the lineage and their in-marrying spouses. The aboriginal lands were sold by each of these bands; with all the adult males (over thirteen or fourteen years of age) signing the land transfer documents. After 1740 most of these groups held land in common among much larger social units, equated with towns. Land sales were made by these larger groups, and sometimes by a series of these groups acting as a single political body.” (Becker)

2.7 Ceramics:

Not too big on ceramics from what I have seen. Focused mainly on leather, quillwork, carving wooden objects. (Becker)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

I was unable to find any information on food taboos.

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

Originally had canoes, but when they were forced to Kansas and Oklahoma they stopped making them (Marshall Harrington 222)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

I was unable to find information that dealt with the overall body size; only able to find information about individual bone lengths and heights.

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

Not for sure on the actual size, but they kept being referred to as a nuclear family in all the articles I read.

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

I don't know the exact proportion, but there was evidence that couples were allowed to separate if they did not get along. (Marshall Harrington 215)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

I know they practiced polygamy in the past, but it isn't a common practice today. Also, I am not for sure on the exact percentage. (Marshall Harrington 215)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

Bride price was active; the potential husband would buy gifts for his future wife and her family. If the gifts were accepted, then it was said that the two were “married”. (Marshall Harrington 215)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

“In the 1600s most of a person's belongings were placed in the grave. By 1700 the relatives contributed food to a feast and secured goods to bury with the deceased as well as to distribute to participants in the burial rituals, not all of whom were close kin.” (Becker)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

“Children were seldom punished. Low-level social controls plus the rigors of foraging life provided sufficient behavioral controls in the past.” (Becker)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

Exogamy was common throughout all the clans. (Marshall Harrington 211)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

Yes, the husband usually exchanges gifts to his future wife and her parents in exchange for her (Marshall Harrington 215)

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

4.22 Evidence for couvades

There wasn't information dealing with this topic. I did find it interesting though that before a child was born the father was believed to be accompanied by the child's spirit while on hunting trips. The spirit would determine whether or not they would receive a game during hunting. The future father would prevent the spirit from frightening away the game by providing the child's spirit with a bow and arrow, for a boy, or a corn mortar, for a girl. The item would be attached to the fathers clothing and allowed the spirit to play and stay quiet. (Marshall Harrington 212)

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

Didn't find any information about this.

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

I was unable to find sufficient information on this subject.

4.24 Joking relationships?

I was unable to find any information dealing with this topic.

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations

Matrilineal (Marshall Harrington 211)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

I was unable to find any information that showed evidence of incest avoidance rules.

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

No, the husband usually gives formal gifts to his future wife and then they move into together. There is no sign of a formal marriage ceremony. (Marshall Harrington 215)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

Children usually received their name from either their parents or a close family friends dreams. (Marshall Harrington 213)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

They marry within their community. (Marshall Harrington 211)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

The husband would tell his parents and the wife parents who he wanted to marry. The husband would then have to give formal presents and the girl would then accept the man. (Marshall Harrington 215)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

It appeared to me that the parents were concerned about who married whom due to the fact that they participated in arranging marriages.

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

I was unable to find an exact number of deaths due to warfare.

4.15 Out-group vs. in-group cause of violent death:

Participated in out-group warfare when necessary with other groups and in-group death was usually caused by murder. (Marshall Harrington 216)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

In-group = murder (Marshall Harrington 216)

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

From all the information I have reviewed, it appears that they were fairly peaceful with their neighbors. Becker even points out in his work that they were tried to avoid confrontation, which would probably result in friendly relations.

4.18 Cannibalism?

I was unable to find any information that showed a sign of cannibalism.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

A group usually consisted of about 25 members. Most of the year they were split up into even smaller groups consisting of an individual nuclear family. (Becker)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

They traveled around most of the winter as nuclear family units to go hunting. During the spring the families would all gather and set up "summer stations near the mouth of [a] stream". (Becker)

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

Chiefs (Marshall Harrington 231)

5.4 Post marital residence:

Matrilocal (Becker)

5.5 Territoriality? (Defined boundaries, active defense):

I didn't find any information that specified whether or not they were very territorial.

5.6 Social interaction divisions? (Age and sex):

Men and women were allowed to interact with each other, but they had many different roles within their society.

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

I was unable to find information about this topic.

5.8 Village and house organization:

House organization: "From several historic descriptions we know that each aboriginal Lenape family lived in a wigwam, less than nine feet in diameter and under five feet high. The walls were formed from thin bent poles tied at the top. These were covered with bark and grass, as well as with mats woven from reeds. A hearth area occupied the center of the floor area."

(Becker)

5.9 Specialized village structures (men's houses):

There were special outhouses, away from the family home, for women who had their period. (Marshall Harrington 215)

Sweat houses (Marshall Harrington 218)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

Slept on ground inside homes or on raised platforms (Marshall Harrington 218)

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

Consisted of nuclear family units during the winter months, bands made of many nuclear family units would meet up for the remaining parts of the year. (Becker)

5.12 Trade:

Didn't have a huge desire trade and didn't really become a large active trading group. They would trade for "metals, cloth, guns, and glass" though. (Becker)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

There was a chief that was in charge of individual bands and another chief that was in charge of the tribe as a whole. The chiefs of each individual band would have to answer to the chief that controlled the entire tribe. (Marshall Harrington 211)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

I was unable to find an exact number, but from my readings it appears that a majority of their time is spent dealing with religion. They have guardians or spirits that guide their day-to-day life and are seen as responsible for the things that happen to them, which makes it seem that a large portion of time must be spent thinking about religion. As for ceremonies, it appears that they participate in many, but the most important and prominent ceremony happens once a year and is known as the Annual Ceremony.

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

"No individuals held strong ritual power, but some people were blessed with the ability to heal" (Becker)

6.2 Stimulants:

During ceremonies they use tobacco, herbs, and some medicines. (Mark Harrington 26)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

Death = When a person dies their spirit lingers for eleven days. Family members are supposed to offer the spirit food. Then, on the 12th day, the spirit is said to leave and travel to the 12th and highest level in heaven. (Marshall Harrington 228)

Puberty = for young boys at about the age of 12, the boys were forced out of their camp by his parents. The young man would then have to fast and live alone for about 12 days. During this time, the son and parents hoped, that a supernatural power would take pity on the boy and assist him then and throughout life. (Mark Harrington 63-64)

6.4 Other rituals:

Annual Ceremony. This ceremony lasts around 12 days. For the first few days the men chant their dreams or visions, while they also partake in dancing and singing. On the fourth through seventh day the men go out and hunt for a huge feast. Once the men finish their chants, then it's the women's turn to share the dreams or visions they have been having. At the end of the ceremony, both men and women would chant to the heavens/great spirit by saying "Hoooo", which they believed would reach the 12th level of heaven, where the great spirit is said to be located. (Marshall Harrington 228-230)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

They believed that when the world was created it consisted entirely of water. The Great Spirit sent a muskrat with a little dirt in his paws. This dirt was then placed on the back of turtles. The dirt became mud and began to expand until it became "the great island upon which we live" and floated upon the water. (Marshall Harrington 232-233)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Games: 1) "Snow snake" was a game where they would throw wooden wands great distances across the snow. 2) Moccasin game was when a bullet was hidden under a moccasin and then the opponent was to guess which moccasin contained the bullet. 3) A game resembling football also existed. Both men and women would play, the men would kick the ball and the women would throw the ball. (Marshall Harrington 216)

Music: Was composed by flageolets, many different types of drums, turtle shell rattles, horns, and gourds. (Marshall Harrington 235)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

From the articles I have read they haven't pointed to any specific sex differences within the ceremonies, but men are usually found to perform their chants first and are allocated a larger portion of time during ceremonies than are women.

6.8 Missionary effect:

Quakers and Moravians impacted the tribe the most and imposed their Christian religious views on them. (Dictionary of American History)

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

"Death was caused by evil spirits, and the polluted dead were buried in graves lined with rushes, bark, and mats several hundred meters from their summer encampments. Complex funeral ceremonies involved transportation of the corpse to a prepared burial site, ritual lamentation, and participation in a ritual feast for the dead. Mourning periods varied depending on degrees of kinship, with the surviving spouse continuing for a full year. Some of these aspects of Lenape society continue to this day, ensuring that the souls of the departed will find their way to the west where hunting is good and they will have an easy afterlife." (Becker)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

They don't appear to name dead people.

6.12 Is there tekonymy?

From what I have read, I have found no sign of tekonymy.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

They did have what they believed in a supernatural world. From this world, they received health, success in the things they did such as hunting and farming. They communicated with the other world through dreams or visions that were sent through ones "guardian spirit" (Marshall Harrington 227)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

Facial paint and tattooing was practiced. (Marshall Harrington 220)

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

Men = shaved heads, with a bit of "hair running from a point just back of the forehead to the nape of the neck." (Marshall Harrington 220)

Women = tended to wear their hair in braids. (Marshall Harrington 221)

7.4 Scarification:

Tattooing (Marshall Harrington 220)

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

Men = used eagle feather in hair, furs for clothing or headbands, caps with many feathers (Marshall Harrington 220)

Women = seen today are outfits containing ribbons, beadwork, and silver they received from trading (Marshall Harrington 220), in the past porcupine quills and moose hair was dyed in a variety of colors and was what originally used before ribbon was available (Marshall Harrington 220)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

Women wore tall hats that contained ostrich plumes, silver, and ribbon. (Marshall Harrington 221)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

7.8 Missionary effect:

The missionaries' brought over the ribbons, beads, and silver the tribe members used to create their adornments.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

Becker did speak of Hawaiian kinship.

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

1. "[Delaware Indians.](http://www.encyclopedia.com)" *Dictionary of American History*. 2003. *Encyclopedia.com*. 26 Oct. 2011 <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.

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3. Harrington, Marshall R. "A Preliminary Sketch of Lenape Culture." *American Anthropologist*. 2nd ed. Vol. 15. Oxford: Blackwell, 1913. 208-35. New Ser. Web. 26 Oct. 2011. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/659665?seq=27>>.

4. Harrington, Mark R. "Religion and Ceremonies of the Lenape." *Google Books*. 7 May 1936. Web. 27 Oct. 2011. <<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en>>.

