

## 1. Description

- 1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Wik-Mungkan (Wik-Munkan, Wik-Monkan), Wik-Mungkan, Australia
- 1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): wim
- 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Queensland, from the Edward River to the Aurukun. They occupy a large territory centered on the Archer River on the western side of Cape York. (2p15) The latitude and longitude are approximately 142° 50' E x 13° 50' S. (1p1)
- 1.4 Brief history: The first Europeans to make contact with the Wik-Mungkan were the Dutch in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to this time there is little research documenting the history of the Wik. The Cape York Peninsula where the Wik settle could have been a major route for the migration into Australia. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, pressures from the outside world led to a dispossession of lands, and with the arrival of Presbyterian missionaries in the 1900s, the Wik-Mungkan's traditional way of life was challenged by government assimilation policies. (4p1)
- 1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: "At the north of the Wik-speaking region, Aurukun had been established as a Presbyterian mission in 1904." The mission became a center of much fighting with its assimilationist policies, and "reports suggest that malaria, leprosy, and syphilis were rife." "Caught between the twin effects of fighting and disease, the population of the entire Archer River region had declined dramatically." Many in the area now speak English or a combination of Wik languages and English. (3p39-41) Forms of economic life changed radically with the large-scale introduction of a cash economy in the late 1960s. "Some of the Wik still spend periods on or near their traditional lands, supplementing their cash incomes with hunting and fishing... Government transfer payments are the main source of income for the Wik." Nearly all attempts to institute industries such as raising cattle have failed. (4p1) There are occasionally marriages between the Wik-Mungkan and various neighboring northern tribes. (3p145)
- 1.6 Ecology (natural environment): "The greater part of the Peninsula ...consists of flat and undulating country interspersed with low hills and gravelly ridges." The flats have great areas of heavy grass, "intersected with watercourses," which are "sandy ravines" in dry seasons and "raging torrents" in wet seasons. Thomson divides the land into four zones: the mangrove zone, salt pans, scrubby ridges, and savannah woodland. There is a "jungle character" to these scrubby ridges. A variety of lagoons, swamps, and open river flats encompass the land. (3p45-47)
- 1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: The current population is around 840 individuals. (1p1) Before the depopulation brought on by contact with outside civilizations, a "very rough estimate" is that clans consisted of around 20 to 40 individuals. There were about 11 clans per village, for a total size of around 400-450 individuals. Heavily reliance should not be placed on these figures. Estimates from the 1900s depict a much smaller village size, around 82 people. (3p81-82) Population densities were generally higher on the coast. Calculated clan estimates were "approximately from fifty to a hundred square miles" in area, and a rough estimate of population density was "probably at one time, one person to two square miles." (3p82)

## 2. Economy

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Tubers, water lily roots, and a variety of vegetables are diet staples. (4p1)
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Fish are the major source of protein. (3p63). Tortoises, birds, crustaceans, snakes and small mammals are also common. (4p1)
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: For hunting traps and nets are used. Additionally spears, poison, and stone axes are used. (3p63-64)
- 2.4 Food storage: Limited food storage does occur, "most often in connection with ceremonial activities, either for initiation, or for the ceremonial presentation of food required during mourning, and other such occasions." (3p60)
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: A girl "learns to gather food and to collect and prepare the material such as fibers, dyes, etc., used in technology." (2p19) Traditionally women and children gather while men hunt, though it is more complex than that. Men and women both fish, though women are not allowed to use spears. Men cook game while women prepare vegetable foods, though it has become common today to see men preparing bread. (4p1)
- 2.6 Land tenure: Patrilineal clans own the land, each with certain hunting rights. (3p69) However, "the actual picture is considerably more complex, with crosscutting land tenure, clan totems, totemic ritual cults, and linguistic affiliations." (4p1) Support for a territorial claim is usually derived from genealogical links, but habitual residence is also important in denying another's claim. (10p62)
- 2.7 Ceramics: Painted ceremonial objects relating to totemic figures of major rituals are common. (4p1)
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: When food supplies are scarce in a certain area or a greater variety of food is desired, members of a clan "may visit their relatives in other clans whose hunting grounds provide other sources of supply." During special seasons, "when food is plentiful in any locality," members of the clan in charge invite their relatives to come and join them at a specified hunting ground. (3p64) Stingray meat is reserved for older men. (3p64)
- 2.9 Food taboos: Many food taboos apply during pregnancy. Pregnant women cannot eat any snakes or a variety of small, furry mammals. Emu is especially taboo, and pregnant women cannot even eat the eggs of this species, "lest the child have weak knees." These women also cannot eat certain types of fish and stingrays, and are forbidden from eating "any old male wallaby or kangaroo of any species." The crocodile and its eggs are taboo. Various taboos are gradually removed as the child grows, and if the mother should break any of these taboos, it is believed that the child "will develop sores on its head." The father must observe some, but not all, of the taboos. (5p378-379) A father cannot eat any vegetable food provided by his daughters until they are "well grown" and cannot eat any game hunted by his sons until they are at least partially initiated. (5p385-386) There are several food taboos regarding who may share food with another, particularly who can share eggs and yams with another because these are thought to have sexual symbolism. (8p197-199)
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft? "The Wik-Mungkan are not a seafaring people," but they do possess bark canoes, which are "essentially river and estuarine crafts" for hunting turtle and fishing. (3p56)

### 3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): Not specified, but they are referred to as tall. (10p120)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): Not specified, but they are described as having “thin legs and tall bodies.” (10p120)

### 4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): No exact age is specified, but it is noted that the “first menstruation marks a major transition” and it is not until this that a “girl is considered marriageable.” “At her first period she is taken apart by her mother, who has so far always accompanied her.” (3p126) McKnight remarks that “men are very frightened of menstrual blood” and that menstruating women were traditionally isolated from the rest of camp. (7p101-102)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): Not specified in numbers, though presumably young judging by the young age of marriage. (3p126)

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): Specific numbers are not given, but the family is the basic unit of social life, and “is the group which consists of a man and his wife or wives and their young children.” Family size depends on if the husband has multiple wives. (2p19)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): Not specified.

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): No exact age is provided, but it is most likely quite young, because after her first menstruation a girl is considered eligible to marry. (3p126)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Not specified in numbers, but since marriages are arranged there is occasionally some resistance. McConnel speaks of “a fine looking woman who had run off before marriage to a man of another tribe,” and notes that “When all else fails, there is maritji, or runaway match.” Irregular marriages are viewed with disfavor, which may cause discontent among the tribe. (3p145-147) There are also references to women re-marrying once or more. (10p90)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: No specific numbers are given, but marriage is typically monogamous. However, there are references to men having multiple wives or co-wives. (2p19)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Inheritance is patrilineal, so the bride has no possessions or land of her own to share with the groom. Since marriages are arranged, there is some strategy involved, and there is a “tendency on the part of families to unite in the male line for purposes of common interest in a locality which supports them.” There are no bride purchases, but the two families will act with their interests in mind when arranging marriages. (3p148-149)

4.9 Inheritance patterns: Inheritance of land, names, and totems are patrilineal. (4p1)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: If the child is not wanted, an abortion may be induced by pushing on the abdomen or eating and drinking certain kinds of herbs. (3p97) Typically the women want more children, so apart from rare instances of abortion, interactions are generally peaceful. The girls gather food with their mothers and learn how to prepare items such as clothing. The boys are taken from their families when their initiation is about to begin, around age 8 or 9. He then ceases to be a member of his natal family group and “does not return to the fireside of his mother and sisters.” (2p19-20)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Not found

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Marriages are exogamous in the sense that people marry outside their clans, though they can be considered tribally endogamous. (3p143) However, in some locations it became fairly common for people to marry outside of Wik-Mungkan, marrying individuals of various other Wik tribes. (10p112)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? The father “is linked with the child in complex ways. He, too, must observe special restrictions. Even before birth the parents must regulate their behavior in the interests of their unborn child.” (3p95) The husband also gains a new status when his wife is pregnant. (3p97) He is now known as “impanaq wynpyn”, the “pregnant one begetter” in place of usual kinship terms. (5p378) The Wik-Mungkan recognize that there is only one true physiological father, but all of the father’s younger brothers are known as “little fathers” (5p384)

4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”) A pregnant woman is viewed as the carrier of the child, and there is only one physiological mother, but many “kat” which are “little mothers” that help care for the child. (5p 384) A pregnant woman is subject to “special restrictions.” (3p95) She observes strict taboos, especially certain food taboos. (5p378)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? The Wik-Mungkan know that pregnancy results from “the introduction of seminal fluid, but as to how the embryo is produced, [their] ideas are as vague.” They believe “seminal fluid enters the uterus and gradually builds up the body of the embryo.” Therefore, men insist that a single sexual act is not sufficient for conception, and believe conception can only result from repeated intercourse. (5p375) They believe there is a bag in which the seminal fluid is stored, and within which it gradually forms an egg. (5p377)

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: McConnel refers to “wife-stealing” between the Wik-Mungkan and neighboring northern tribes. (3p145)

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): Cross cousin marriage is preferable, as the Wik-Mungkan “prefer marriage between a man and his mother’s brother’s daughter... though other marriages do occur.” They prohibit marriage with the father’s sister’s daughter. (6p530)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? There have been instances of “sweethearts” running off before marriage with a man of another tribe. If the problem is settled peacefully, “it is considered a good thing to have happened.” However, if it is considered a “formally wrong relationship” the affair is a tribal concern, and relatives interfere. The offenders might be punished by being speared, apparently in the leg. In the case of adultery, the dispute will be settled between the husband and the sweetheart “in a duel with whatever support they can raise from their relatives.” (3p147) “Sexual liaisons between those who are not husband and wife” do occur, and they are one of the leading sources of conflict. (10p160)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: None found, adultery is considered a punishable offense, and it is noted that extramarital children present kinship problems. (3p147)

- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? If the mother dies, one of the “kat” or “little mothers” is the adopting mother. Generally one of the younger sisters of the mother is designated. (5p385)
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: Not found
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: None found
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older) Not found
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? After a baby is born, the father and all other men are not allowed to see the child or the mother for a period of 2 weeks to a month until the presentation ceremony. (5p381) Toward the father and his younger brothers (little fathers), a child behaves “half naughty” and plays up joking, but restraint is expected from the child towards the father’s older brothers. (5p385) A man will avoid his possible future mother-in-law if he wishes to marry her daughter. (3p122-123) A woman must behave respectfully towards her older sister. They may exchange food, but are subject to certain restrictions and taboos. If a woman and her younger brother are about to meet on a path, they must detour. They behave with reserve rather than outright avoidance. An older brother and younger sister have a mutual avoidance relationship, and may not touch one another. (2p20)
- 4.24 Joking relationships? Thomson provides evidence that the Wik-Mungkan “exhibit well-developed joking relationships,” through which “it is obligatory for certain relatives to joke continuously with each other in public.” The joking is most licensed when it is between members of alternate generations. These joking relationships are more licensed not with close relatives, but rather “outside” or “classificatory” members. With actual relations “some restraint is required.” There are some discrepancies over which members have joking relationships. (9p128)
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: Inheritance, particularly that of totems and naming, are critical to the Wik-Mungkan, and descent is patrilineal. “Land, its sites, its associated ritual and mythology, its totems, and the rights to the pool of clan names that are oblique references to the totems, as well as totemic ritual cult affiliation, are all patrilineal inherited.” (4p1)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: Marriage between very closely related kin is prohibited. The term “kal kampan” means friend, relative, or clansman, and is applied especially to “own or near kin.” One Wik-Mungkan, in explaining this concept, remarked that an actual or own “kala” is a “friend-uncle, not for marrying” distinct from other men who are potential father-in-laws. (2p18) Incest avoidance is evident through certain food sharing taboos, as some foods regarded as sexual cannot be shared with specific close kin. (8p207)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Marriages are attended with little ceremonial activity. The woman builds a fire on her side of the camp and sits beside it. The man takes his spear, joins the girl by the fire, and stays there for the night. This process is repeated the next day, and during dinner the woman shares the vegetables and the man shares meat like married couples do. “The sharing of each other’s food, sleeping by the same fire, the protection of his spear- in the sight of and with the consent of relatives on both sides- constitutes the social recognition of marriage.” (3p127)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? Each clan is associated with clan-ancestors called “puiwaiya,” who are believed to be incarnated in some form. Clan members derive their names from certain puiwaiya. (3p83) After a child is born, the name is determined by divination. The midwife calls aloud names of various relatives of the child, and the name called “at the moment the placenta is delivered is the name of the baby.” (5p380) Kinship terms are very important, and adults are seldom referred to by their actual names; kinship terms are deemed sufficient. (5p381) When a kin member dies, there is a special set of terms applied that replace normal kin terms “temporarily as a term of address.” (3p131)
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Marriage is preferred to be inside the community with cross cousins, although this does not always happen. The Wik-Mungkan have been known to sometimes marry people of neighboring tribes, such as the Wik-Ompom, Wik-Ngathara, and Wik-Paacha. (3p146)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? There is a system of betrothal in which a prospective mother-in-law promises her daughter to a prospective son-in-law. If a man wants a certain woman to be his wife, he will “avoid her mother and give presents to her father. In this way the man can indicate his desire for the formal betrothal to occur.” (3p122-123) Marriages are arranged quite young, and even arranged for unborn children. (3p148)
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Two locally adjacent clans can intermarry together to form a “company.” To avoid a conflict of interest with regards to hunting grounds, a man has a right to hunt on his wife’s ground, and offers in return “the hospitality and privileges of his own to his wife’s people.” The oldest man in the company is in charge of the companies grounds. (3p146) Parents have “obligations from the past” they must meet and “future advantages” to consider when arranging marriages. (3p148)

### **Warfare/homicide**

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: Not found. There is not “a formalized system of war-making groups or war-names as is apparently the case in some other parts of Australia.” (10p130)
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Most disputes can be settled by mediation of elders or by moving away from the conflict. However, along the coast conflict was caused by fishermen looking for labor during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, leading to the establishment of missionaries, whose presence was also combated. (4p1) There is evidence of warfare on a small scale level, such as small raids for wife-stealing. (3p145)
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: “The fights that formerly took place were not wars of one tribe with another, but of one part of one tribe with one part of another, or at times of one part of a tribe with another part of the same tribe. Thus there was no unity of the tribe in warfare.” (3p68) Conflict is always a part of Wik-Mungkan society, but there is almost always ways to resolve or contain it without escalating to dangerous levels. The “resolution of conflict by fission” was a common method, which involved simply moving away from the conflict, which could easily be done since the Wik are semi-nomadic. In-group conflict and violence have risen dramatically with the introduction of alcohol in recent years, and there has been a noticeable reduction in the amount of control older generations have over their kin. (4p1)

- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): The Wik-Mungkan maintain relationships with neighboring Wik societies, the Wik-Ompom, Wik-Ngathara, and Wik-Paacha, as they share a common way of life and similar language. The Wik-Mungkan have married people from these tribes. These marriages forge a connection with the fellow Wik groups, and would sometimes form “companies” to share hunting grounds and resources. (3p146) However, Sutton states that “sharing a dialect with a certain clan confers no right of freedom over that clan’s resources nor any automatic visiting rights.” (10p73) Each group has “more or less friendly, commercial, or other interests” with some of its neighbors. (10p118)
- 4.18 Cannibalism? Although ritual consumption of flesh of the deceased occurs in other groups of people on the Cape York Peninsula, there is no evidence found to support cannibalism among the Wik-Mungkan. (3p130)

## 5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Before the population decline resulting from missionaries and government assimilationist policies during the 1900s, a “very rough estimate” is that clans consisted of around 20 to 40 individuals. There are about 11 clans per village, for a total size of around 400-450 individuals. Heavily reliance should not be placed on these figures. Estimates from the 1900s depict a much smaller village size, around 82 people per village. (3p81-82)
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Seasonality has a huge impact on food sources available, and therefore has an impact on major shifts in pattern of residence and mobility. During the wet season the inland groups must move to higher ground to avoid flooding, or move to more coastal regions for good campsites with plentiful mangrove zones and estuaries. During dry seasons they can move back down to lower ground and around reliable water sources. (3p76-80)
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): The Wik-Mungkan are depicted as “people without politics.” (3p142) “There is no tribal chief, nor any form of tribal government.” (3p68) Each horde (collection of parental families that regularly cooperate) is “independent and autonomous,” and manages its own affairs by means of the camp council, often directed by someone appointed as head for the council. (3p68)
- 5.4 Post marital residence: Since inheritance is patrilineal, a woman joins her husband’s camp, though she typically retains close connections with her own. Male heads of households generally make the decision about where to live at any time. (10p68) A household is not confined to one particular dwelling, and the composition of the household is constantly changing. (4p1)
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): The tribe’s patrilineal clans each have hunting rights over a certain territory, and “hunt chiefly on their own grounds, to which they are deeply attached.” (3p69) Small-scale policing of territory “in a strict manner” used to be common. (10p69)
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): There are different distinctions for one’s older and younger brothers. One's mother's older brothers belong to a different category, “for one should not marry his daughters.” (8p195) When boys reach the age of 8 or 9, they are separated from their natal family group and various brother-sister taboos are enforced when the separation begins. (2p19-20) A man should not come into direct contact with his mother-in-law. (8p196)
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: Joking relationships are exhibited between “classificatory” or “outside” members, with whom these members constantly joke with in public. Joking is “less obscene” with members of the proximate generation, and is “most licensed” with members of alternate generations. (9p128)
- 5.8 Village and house organization: The basic unit of social life is the family, and “this is the group which consists of a man and his wife or wives and their young children.” Each family lives and hunts as an independent unit. (2p19) A house is composed of a man, his wife or wives, and possibly some in-laws or older generations; and the composition is constantly changing. (4p1)
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses): When the birth of a child is imminent, the husband moves to the single men’s camp, and the woman moves to a shelter some distance from the usual camp. This place, known as the ark, “becomes taboo” and “may be visited only by women until after the newly born child has been presented ceremonially to its father.” (5p379) There are also totemic centers, which “must be treated carefully, the spirits there spoken to...and the locus of the totemic phenomenon ritually cleaned up.” (10p65)
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? The campfire is the center of family life, “around which a man and his wife, or wives and children, sleep.” (3p80)
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: A child belongs to the clan of its father. The clan is corporate in the sense that its adult male members “engage in collective action.” As a clan they have collective ownership and control of a certain territory with its food resources and its totem centers. (3p67) Additionally, there are hordes, which are defined as “collections of parental families which regularly cooperate in the food quest, a parental family consisting of a man with his wife or wives and their unmarried children. The unity of the horde and its connection with a certain territory result from the fact that all the married men of a given horde are members of one particular clan. A woman belongs to her father's clan but to her husband's horde.” (3p67) Lineage is patrilineal, and a child belongs to their father’s horde. A woman belongs to her husband’s horde when she marries. (3p68) Wik-Mungkan recognize two exogamous patrilineal divisions called “Kuyan” and “Katpi.” Kapti “are of one blood” or line of descent, and Kuyan are of another. (3p150) “The only corporate identity in the area is the named patrilineal totemic clan, which is the land-holding unit.” (10p31)
- 5.12 Trade: There is evidence of trade of material items like pearl shells being traded down by northern and eastern neighbors, with stone axes and stingray barbs being traded out. Spear handles, ochers, and resins are traded. However, trade is “rarely a purely economic activity, serving social, political, and ritual ends rather than formal economic ones.” (4p1) Since the arrival of missionaries, cash has been introduced, conflicting with the traditional way of life. (10p103)
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? Each family lives and hunts independently, and is responsible for their own kin, minimizing different status positions. (2p19) There is no tribal chief or any form of social government, so there are no hierarchies in that regard. (3p68) However, elders are highly respected, and during a camp council one who is held in high regard is appointed head of council to keep the meetings running smoothly. (3p68)

## 6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

- 6.0 Time allocation to RCR: Totems are an integral part of daily life, and major ceremonies mark birth, initiation, and death at these times in life, so there is no exact time allocation. (3p140)
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Sickness and misfortune are the cause of sorcery, or are “attributed to ritual infringements of various kinds.” Healers counteract the work of the sorcerer through ritual intervention. Bark poultices and infusions are often used for wounds and upset stomach. (4p1)
- 6.2 Stimulants: Little is mentioned of stimulants, though there are references to tobacco use. (8p205) Alcohol has had a recent and devastating influence. (4p1)
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Two weeks to one month after a baby is born the baby is presented to the father at the presentation ceremony. During this ceremony the mother carries the baby toward the group accompanied by an older woman fanning her. She approaches her husband and walks twice around him, and then encircles his oldest sister. The mother then presents the baby to the father, and food is usually presented too. When he receives the child, he “rubs [his] sweat, or smell... on the head of the child.” The mother then rubs hers on the father. Finally, the father rubs sweat on the knee and elbow joints of the child, and gently bites them, “so that the child might grow strong.” (5p381-383) The Uchanama is the first degree initiation ritual when boys reach puberty. They are formally separated from the women, and restrictions are enacted until the duration of the ceremony on speaking to the women and receiving food from them. The second degree ritual, Wintychanama, may last a period of over two years, and during this the adolescents are not allowed to give food to any woman and must hand over all they hunt to the older men. At the end of this period the initiate is considered eligible to marry. (3p124-125) Boys and girls each have the right or left upper incisor pulled, and this takes place after puberty. This is not an initiation rite, but is associated with dream life and life after death. (3p126) Upon death, the organs are removed and the body is dried, wrapped in sheets, and preserved in a kind of mummification. (3p130) The widow must “cry quietly” by a piece of bark all night, and may not eat or speak to any of the husband’s relatives for three days. After the three days she has certain food restrictions that are gradually lifted. Women perform a mourning dance around the body. (3p131-133) After the mourning period is over (exact time is not specified) the body is cremated. (3p138)
- 6.4 Other rituals: “Ceremonies for the increase of babies are carried out,” and to help a pregnant woman keep her baby, she can tie tree bark around her body when she dives for water lilies. (3p97) “Theechawama” is a ritual consisting partly of instruction and hardship tasks, but “essentially is ritualized confrontations” in which “abusive and often obscene songs are sung against opponents. (10p150-151)
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): The Wik-Mungkan believe that long ago the moon dwelt on the earth as a man. He went fishing and sank down under the water. Two young women went under the water, and he raped them. A crowd of people admonished the man, and the man replied that he will die and rise again every day, and he then becomes the moon. (5p388-389) Another myth states that in the beginning a “little man” lived with a “little woman.” These were ghosts or spirits who started out small and grew, and they were the only two people in existence. They had a child together and constructed a totem center for the baby. Rituals are performed around the totem centers to increase fertility and the number of children. (5p389-390)
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Drama, dance, and song are the most common form of expression, especially regarding initiation and totemic rituals. During rituals myths or stories of certain totems may be performed. (7p95) The Wik-Mungkan also create a “variety of distinctive items” including spears, spear throwers, woven bags, and fishing nets that are used for a small handicraft industry. (4p1)
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: The healers are referred to as men. (4p1) Initiation ceremonies are exclusively for men. (3p124-125) Women “had their own specific rituals in the mortuary cycles,” as well as their ceremonies regarding birth and children. (4p1)
- 6.8 Missionary effect: Since missionary arrival, Christian and traditional aspects of religion have been mixed. Since mission times, burial has replaced cremation and a Christian service may be used for the burial. There used to be far more ritual specialists, but with the arrival of Christian missionaries ritual specialists are few and knowledge of the ritual cycles has lessened. (4p1)
- 6.9 RCR revival: Traditional religious beliefs have declined with the introduction of Christianity. (4p1)
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: There is a close identification of the dead with their totems. “One suspects that the dead eventually become the pulwaiya (totemic beings).” (3p140) There are at least 2 spiritual constituents of a person; following death the “life essence” of a person “goes west, over the sea,” and their “earthly shadow” remains, infusing the places and objects they used during life. The totemic spirit is associated with their particular clan. Now, however, Christian influence has resulted in a blend of Christian and totemic beliefs. (4p1)
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? None found
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy? Each individual retains their natal name, but kinship terms are often used to refer to people. When a child is born, the father may be referred to as “the father or begetter of [the child’s name].” (5p381)
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.) There is a close identification of the dead with their totems. “One suspects that the dead eventually become the pulwaiya (totemic beings).” (3p140) People come from their auwa, places where totemic beings “sink into” such as lagoons or swamps, and when they die their spirit returns to their auwa. (7p92) There are also taboo places that are mystically dangerous. The owners of a piece of land must put their smell on a stranger, or the pulwaiya will smell the stranger and make them ill. Children have the same pulwaiya as their father. (7p92-93) There is a being called the “Rainbow Serpent” than can cause evil among the tribe. It is considered “very dangerous” for a pregnant woman to draw water from a well, or the “Rainbow Serpent might enter her stomach and seize her unborn child.” (7pg94)

## 7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint: For the presentation ceremony of the baby to its father, the mother is painted with white clay only, and the baby is painted with red ochre and then painted white. (5p382) When a husband dies the widow covers herself with charcoal during mourning. (3p132) During dramas and various ritual dances body paint is also worn, typically red or white. (7p95)

- 7.2 Piercings: Both men and women wear “shell nosepegs,” which involves the piercing of the nasal septum. Men may also have one ear pierced. (3p127)
- 7.3 Haircut: If a husband dies, the widow grows her hair long and covers it with clay and charcoal during mourning, and headbands are made from the dead man’s hair. (3p132-133) Once mourning is over and the body is cremated, the woman’s hair is shaven. (3p138) The Wik-Mungkan are generally photographed with shorter, curly hair.
- 7.4 Scarification: There are no direct references or writings on scarification, but some is shown in photographs on the shoulders and chest of some men. (3p127)
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Most adornment is for ceremonial and ritual purposes, and includes body paint, feathers, and amulets. (3p132), (5p382)
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: For the presentation ceremony of the baby, the baby is adorned with a mother of pearl breast pendant and feathers in addition to the body paint. (5p382) A widow wears necklaces and amulets during mourning. (3p132) Masks may be worn during rituals to symbolize certain myth characters or totems. (7p95)
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Only men wear “large hollow ear cylinders” that are painted red and white and worn in the stretched lobe of one ear. (3p127)
- 7.8 Missionary effect: Various body paint designs are now considered a form of “clan corporate property” and are now seen only in mortuary rites. (4p1)
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: Not found.

## 8. Kinship systems

- 8.1 Sibling classification system: Great significance is given to age, as an older brother is supposed to take care of his younger brother, but the younger brother is not allowed to take food from his older brother. (8p204) Siblings “play together without restriction” when they are very young children. While a girl will remain a member of her natal family until she marries, a boy will cease to be a part of his natal family at age 8 or 9 when he is taken away for initiation, and certain taboos are then enacted. (2p20) A woman must behave respectfully towards her older sister, and there are certain restrictions and taboos. There are additional taboos, particularly food taboos, between a woman and her younger brother. (2p20) There are also distinctions between the mother’s older and younger brothers, and certain behaviors and marriage rules are enacted. (8p17)
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate: The Wik-Mungkan have modified sororate and levirate systems. (3p143) When a woman’s husband dies, after the appropriate mourning period and mourning taboos are observed, the woman “passes into the care of the deceased husband’s brother.” However, the brother does not have to marry her, though he might. He may be responsible for finding her a suitable husband, generally a “clan brother” or a “tribal brother.” (3p138-139) A woman’s husband’s younger brother traditionally stood to inherit her through levirate. (10p196)
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): The Wik-Mungkan “make a distinction between the mother's elder brother (muka) and mother's younger brother (kala).” A man is expected to marry the daughter of a classificatory mother's younger brother. Keeping in line with this marriage rule, behavior with a mother's younger brother is “quite different” from behavior with the mother’s older brother. (8p17)

## 9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- McKnight claims that the Wik-Mungkan are “terrified of lightening.” (7p105)
- To prevent bad luck or illness, the Wik-Mungkan believe “one should warm one's hands and feet over a fire and poke one's gums to make them bleed.” (7p104)
- It is considered dangerous for initiates and uninitiated people to handle “pulwaiya” carvings. If one of these people does handle a carving, older initiated men must wipe their smell on the perpetrator to prevent sickness. (7p105)

## Numbered references

1. Ethnologue.com
2. Thomson, Donald. *Kinship and Behaviour in North Queensland*. 1972. Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
3. von Sturmer, John Richard, *The Wik Region: Economy, Territoriality, and Totemism in Western Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland*. 1978. University of Queensland.
4. Everyculture.com/Oceania/Wik-Mungkan
5. Thomson, Donald. *Fatherhood in the Wik-Monkan Tribe*. *American Anthropologist*. Volume 38 Issue 3.
6. Hormans, George. Schneider, David. *Mother’s Brother in Wikmunkan Society*. October 1962. *Ethnology* Volume 1 Number 4.
7. McKnight, David. *The Wik-Mungkan Concept Nganwi: A Study of Mystical Power and Sickness in an Australian Tribe*. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 137. 1981.
8. McKnight, David. *Sexual Symbolism of Food Among the Wik-Mungkan*. *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*. *Man*, New Series. Volume 8. No 2. June 1973
9. Jackes, Mary. *Wikmunkan Joking Relationships*. *Mankind* Volume 7, Issue 2. December 1969.
10. Sutton, Peter. *Wik Aboriginal Society, Territory, and Language At Cape Keerweer, Cape York Peninsula, Australia*. The University of Queensland. 1979.