

## **1. Description**

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

Alaskan Yupik, Yupik (central), Eskimo

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

ESU (Central), EMS (Pacific Gulf)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

60 N, 163 W

1.4 Brief history:

Yupik are ancestors of shore dwellers who arrived about 10,000 years ago across the Bering Strait and settled in the coastal headlands. Larger population and an inconsistent food supply caused them to move upriver where they eventually settled along the delta in the southwest corner of Alaska. They have lived there since, and have had very limited interaction with outside groups. (6)

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

Contact did not happen until the 1800's so the Yupik maintained most of their culture. Missionaries introduced Christianity in the late 1800's. The Yupik took in certain parts of Christianity if they were compatible with their prior beliefs (1)

1.6 Ecology:

Lived in flat marshy plain, with many waterways. Temperature is more moderate and can range from -80 degrees to 80 degrees Fahrenheit. (1)

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

24,000 population (2) Villages 50-250 people (1) Household were from 5 to 11 people (8)

## **2. Economy**

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

Greens and berries (2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

Birds, big game such as bear, moose and caribou on land. From the sea they got whales, seal, walrus, and many fish. (1)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

Bow and arrow, spears (1)

2.4 Food storage:

Food would be air dried or smoked. If possible it would be frozen or stored in cold water (7)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

Men are responsible for the hunting and tool making, where women will cook sew, as well as gather fruits and berries in the spring and summer (1)

2.6 Land tenure:

Based on prior use. Had the right to harvest a site based on relationship with previous generations that used that site (6)

2.7 Ceramics:

Men would carve wood or ivory into artwork (6)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

Mother or other female divides up food of a kill, and distributes first to elders, keeping none for the immediate family (3)

2.9 Food taboos:

None found

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

Had kayaks for the fishing and sealing (2)

## **3. Anthropometry**

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

M- 64-66 in

F- 60-62 in (4)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

No data found

## **4. Life History, mating, marriage**

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

14-15 (3)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

no data found

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

Generally, the entire village was related by blood or marriage (1)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

no data found

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

females in early teens, boys in their twenties (3)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- Divorce was uncommon, and would occur when the male or females family had specific reasons such as infertility or laziness.(3)
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:  
No numbers given, but it says some marriages were polygamous (6)
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:  
Groups perform “buying ceremonies.” Groom would live with bride’s father for first year and perform service in exchange for the patrilineage of the bride at the completion of the year (3)
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns:  
When someone passed away, their belongings were either spread at the gravesite or given equally outside the immediate family (6)
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:  
All children would live in the women and children camp until they were 5, then they would separate by sex, and learn the skills required for each sex (2)
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:  
Homosexual sexual expressions happened, and sexual joking did occur when someone is a known homosexual (3)
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):  
Marriage happened outside the village, but within the regional groups (1)
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?  
Semen from many men helped the fetus grow (3)
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”)  
The fetus would not grow correctly if the women did not have many sexual partners during pregnancy (3)
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?  
Yes, the semen from more men would make the fetus grow (3)
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)  
Preferred to be descendents of cross cousins (6)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?  
Had formalized spousal exchanges called “relationships” where men gained rights to each others spouses. These were passed on through generations, extending family. (3)
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring  
none found
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?  
Become orphans, usually taken in by a relative (9)
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females  
no data available
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades  
none
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)  
Prefer older and stronger over younger/weaker (3)
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?  
There is much respect given to all relatives, but no evidence of avoidance (9)
- 4.24 Joking relationships?  
Lots of teasing and joking between cross cousins (9)
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations  
Patrilineal descent system is the basis for the symbols and relations (3)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules  
Incest rules did exist, but were often broken with only mild sanctions (3)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?  
Yes, the groom’s ramket (clan group) would parade through the village with gifts piled on sleds
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?  
Named after the last person to die, whether a boy or a girl. Given alternate names during sickness because it was believed to cause healing once the right name is found. (2)
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)  
It is always within the regional group, although generally not in the immediate village (1)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?  
Promised at a young age by senior elders (3)
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:  
No evidence found

### **Warfare/homicide**

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:  
No data found

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

Bow and arrow warfare was the main outgroup death (1), not much in group violence

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

Regional groups had been at war for a long time due to territoriality (2)

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

Very hostile relationship with the other regional groups, however they Yupik were extremely peaceful towards the tribes within their regional group. (5)

4.18 Cannibalism?

None found

## **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

around 300 people in the winter camps (1)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

Had a permanent winter home, but in the spring and summer would move to fishing and sealing camps. (1)

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

No formal leadership. Elders from well respected families held most power (6)

5.4 Post marital residence:

Men lived in a communal house; women and children lived in groups of 4 to 12 in sod houses (1)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

Regionally, regularly had conflicts with the other regional groups. (1)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

For a period of 3 to 6 weeks, the boys and girls would exchange what they had learned (girls would teach boy how to sew and cook, boys would teach girls what they know about hunting and tool making) (2)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

Cross cousins had a very joking relationship (9)

5.8 Village and house organization:

Mens houses would be in the center surrounded by the smaller women and children huts (2)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

Men lived in the ceremonial house or "Qasgiq." It was mad from the birch and spruce trees and was used for most formal ceremonies and dances. (2)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

Make huts out of the spruce and driftwood. Men live in larger ceremonial houses, and women and children in smaller huts (1)

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

There were no class distinctions, although the elders held more power over younger people and male over female. (6)

5.12 Trade:

Trade occurred between coastal and inland groups, usually involving sea mammal products in return for big game or furs. (6)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

No specific hierarchy, but older over younger, stronger over weaker and men over women. (3)

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

6 Time allocation to RCR:

no data

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

Had shamans who could communicate with the spirits (3)

6.2 Stimulants:

none found

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

Women would tattoo face and body, and boys would tattoo their joints and corners of mouth to show that they are becoming a young adult (3)

6.4 Other rituals:

Masked dances were used to communicate with the spirit world (6)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

could not find belief on creation

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Singing, dancing and the making of ceremonial mask was a large part of Yupik culture (6)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

no significant differences

6.8 Missionary effect:

Not much effect, only adapted parts of Christianity that fit in with prior beliefs. (1)

6.9 RCR revival:

Minimal effect so no revival.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- Nobody really dies, their soul cycles and is reborn in another generation. Extends to animals and others. (1)
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?  
None found
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy?  
no
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)  
Shamanism- believed in spirits, and the cycle from birth to death where they are reborn into a different generation, including animals. Had shamans to communicate with the spiritual world. (2)

## 7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint:  
Many tattoos, locations based on male or females during puberty as previously stated (3)
- 7.2 Piercings:  
Nose pins and ear adornment (3)
- 7.3 Haircut:  
Longer, shaggy look to hair (3)
- 7.4 Scarification:  
none found
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):  
Amulets to represent the spirits (2)
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:  
Made elaborate ceremonial masks carved out of wood or ivory (6)
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment:  
Locations of the tattoos are different. Men would tattoo joints and corner of mouth and women would tattoo face and body (3)
- 7.8 Missionary effect:  
Because interaction happened much more recent than most groups, the Yup'ik were able to keep influence to a minimum (2)
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:  
none found since influence was so minimal

## 8. Kinship systems

- 8.1 Sibling classification system:  
first child is an anngaq (older brother) or alqaq (older sister). Otherwise it is the same as our system (9)
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate:  
not found
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):  
Cross cousins were very important in this culture. (9)

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

- The name Yup'ik means "real people" because Eskimo was seen as a derogatory term (1)  
Grandparents were vital in children's life and had the job of transmitting knowledge (9)  
Never used igloos like the typical Eskimo (1)

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