

## 1. Description

**1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:** *Han-Kutchin, Han, Dawson, Moosehide [1] People of the River, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in [2]*

**1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com):** *haa [1]*

**1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):** *Alaska, Yukon River near Alaska-Canada border, Eagle. Also in Canada, Dawson. [1]*

**1.4 Brief history:** *The Klondike Gold Rush affected populations. Prior to it, there were 3 Han band communities adjacent to the Yukon. They were Nuclako-Fort Reliance, Johnny's Village, and Charley's Village. After the disruption caused by the Klondike Gold Rush and the subsequent emigration to Moosehead, the Han-Kutchin moved back into their territory by the 1950s. In 1998, they negotiated their land claim and won back some of the land under the Umbrella Final Agreement. [2]*

**1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:** *By the end of the 18th century, Europeans began to influence the Han-Kutchin. The Hudson's Bay Company traders began to interact directly with the Han-Kutchin. American traders settled at Fort Reliance and Fort Eagle from 1874 to 1885. This transformed the previously fur-focused trade system into one based more on mining, in order to take advantage of the outside influence and demand. The Han-Kutchin began getting more and more European and American tools, technology, clothing, and food. The Klondike Gold Rush completely disrupted the lifestyle of the Han-Kutchin, especially those near Dawson City. Most of the Han-Kutchin relocated to the Moosehide reserve near Dawson City. [2]*

**1.6 Ecology (natural environment):**

**1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:** *300; 7 in Canada [1] >10% speak Han language [2]*

## 2. Economy

**2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):**

**2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:** *Fish; King Salmon, Chum Salmon, whitefish, pike. Hunted moose and caribou during the colder months for food, shelter and other uses. [2]*

**2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:** *Iron tools and guns (rifles) from Europeans. [5]*

**2.4 Food storage:**

**2.5 Sexual division of production:**

**2.6 Land tenure:**

**2.7 Ceramics:**

**2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:**

**2.9 Food taboos:**

**2.10 Canoes/watercraft?** *Use of sawn lumber for boats. [5]*

## 3. Anthropometry

**3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):**

**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):**

**4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):**

**4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):**

**4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:**

**4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:** *Polygyny expected if the man is wealthy enough. Polyandry accepted. [2]*

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

**4.9 Inheritance patterns:**

**4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:**

**4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:**

**4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):** *Society split into three matrilineal clans. Each of these clans are exogamous. Membership in a clan required duties, such as protection and cremation etc. [2]*

**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):** *Cross cousins are preferred, even encouraged. [2] There used to be a distinction between cross cousins and parallel cousins. Now, the distinction has faded. [5]*

**4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?**

**4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring**

**4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?**

**4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females:** *158 males to 100 females. [6]*

**4.22 Evidence for couvades**

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

#### **4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?**

#### **4.24 Joking relationships?**

**4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations:** *Matrilineal descent. [2] Culture split into Wolf and Crow clans with a matrilineal focus. [3]*

**4.26 Incest avoidance rules:** *Taboo against in-clan marriages avoided marrying in the same family. Those that married into their own clan were sometimes exiled, as it was said to bring bad luck to the clan. [3]*

#### **4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?**

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

**4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)** *Marriage generally outside of both the clan and the band, with children taking the band of the mother. [4] There are many marriages outside of the native group as well. [5]*

**4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?** *Marriages were arranged by families earlier on, but after increased interactions with Europeans, marriage moved over time from arranged to love marriage. [5]*

#### **4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:**

### **Warfare/homicide**

**4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:** *From 1825 to 1850, only 30 Kutchin died based on warfare. Deaths due to warfare were much lower than those due to disease. [6]*

**4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:** *Very even ratios of ingroup versus outgroup violence. There is very little documented instances, but they seem to be evenly distributed. [6]*

**4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:** *Interband hostilities often started by quarrels by or about women. Other reasons that were common are searching for prestige, property, and/or revenge. Other causes were perceived sorcery, sickness, death. [6]*

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

**4.18 Cannibalism?** *No known cases. [6]*

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

#### **5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:**

#### **5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):**

**5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):** *No formal organization. Status and leadership attained through skill and achievement. [2] No restriction of symbols or names between classes of people. Women able to reach high active leadership roles after fur-trading period of interaction. The role of traditional leaders is also respected by many communities which have created elder's councils to advise contemporary leaders on issues ranging from land claims to justice and social services. [5]*

**5.4 Post marital residence:** *Young men generally live with wife's parents. After a while, transferring to a neolocal system is normal.*

#### **5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):**

#### **5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):**

#### **5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:**

**5.8 Village and house organization:** *Early basic house types seem to have been semisubterranean rectangular log houses roofed with moss, and a portable dome-shaped skin house. The basic house type for most of the historical period has been the surface rectangular log house, frame houses becoming more frequent since the Second quarter of the twentieth century. Canvas tents are used in warm weather and while traveling. [4]*

**5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):** *The core of a residence group was usually either a group of sisters or a group of brothers. Living with them in each camp were their spouses of the opposite moiety, their children, and other relatives. Residence patterns are no longer structured strictly on the basis of kinship in larger modern settlements. [5]*

#### **5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?**

**5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:** *The nuclear family was the most important social structure for the Han community. Occasionally, this would include elders who worked with their family. [2]*

**5.12 Trade:** *Some trade for obsidian, copper, and sea shells as well as iron in exchange for food and fur. [5]*

**5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?** *Due to no formal organization in the political system, social stratification does not seem extremely prevalent, but some stratification based on age, gender, or political power is likely. [5]*

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

**6.0 Time allocation to RCR:** *No systematically developed RCR. [4]*

**6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):** *Shamans could affect the outcome of certain events and were used as medicine men. These could be either female or male. Rumored to bring prosperity and health. [2] Religious figures/practitioners not extremely important. Faith less organized. [4]*

#### **6.2 Stimulants:**

**6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):** *It was considered inappropriate to keep the deceased outside of the ground. Burial was necessary. [3]*

**6.4 Other rituals:** *Over the last century, syncretic religious ceremonies have developed among the Carrier, Beaver, Slave, Dogrib, and other groups. Called in various regions "tea dance," "prophet dance," or "drum dance," these ceremonies combine traditional and*

Christian beliefs and are led by an individual termed, in a rough translation of the various words used in different Athapaskan languages, "dreamer". These words emphasize the importance of dreams as a source of understanding. [5]

**6.5 Myths (Creation):** Many mythological monsters and supernatural beings were thought to exist. [4]

**6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):** Primary source of artistic and creative endeavors were songs. [2] Skilled craftspeople make clothing with traditional materials such as moosehide, quills, beads, and furs. Stories about a mythic time when animals spoke and took on human form are common to the groups, as are stories about monster animals from earlier ages which were destroyed or rendered harmless by various heroes. Historic events of the past often take on mythic qualities as they become part of the oral history of each group. Younger people find the stories fascinating and often visit elders at home or seek out stories in books. Traditions are also shared through the use of video and television. Many communities in the Territories and farther south receive the satellite signal of Television Northern Canada, which offers programming from Whitehorse, Yellowknife, and Iqaluit. Part of the programs from Whitehorse and Yellowknife are in native languages. There is also an international storytelling festival in Whitehorse each summer which features native performers from across the circumpolar north. [5]

**6.7 Sex differences in RCR:** Women involved in all aspects of RCR. Women allowed to become ministers/prophets depending on the success of missionaries on the group. [5]

**6.8 Missionary effect:** Missionary groups realized varying degrees of success in converting in the nineteenth century. A Roman Catholic mission was established among the Chipewyan in 1844, and in the following two decades a number of Anglican and Catholic missions were established among the Chipewyan, Dogrib, Slave, Gwich'in, and Beaver. In general, the Roman Catholics were more successful in gaining converts in the Mackenzie region and a majority of the population in this region is at least nominally Catholic today. [5]

**6.9 RCR revival:**

**6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:** Some believed in reincarnation. [4]

**6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?**

**6.12 Is there teknonymy?**

**6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.):** Belief in shamanism. No discrimination based on gender in regards to practicing religion. Shamanism used to cure illnesses, improve outcome of a hunt, and defeat enemies. [2] Close relationship with the natural world, especially the caribou. [4]

## **7. Adornment**

**7.1 Body paint:**

**7.2 Piercings:**

**7.3 Haircut:**

**7.4 Scarification:**

**7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):** Decorations on clothing. Accessories as well. [2]

**7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:**

**7.7 Sex differences in adornment:**

**7.8 Missionary effect:**

**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.):** Cross-cousins were the preferred spouses. [2]

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

- The development of native media has increased awareness of native issues and promoted self esteem among Na-Dene people generally. A large number of young people have also been trained as writers, producers, translators, and technicians with native media. Federal support has been vital to the development of native media, but some of these ventures are threatened by recent cutbacks. [5]

- Many social problems in contemporary Na-Dene communities – alcoholism, family breakdown, marital violence, teenage suicide, and so on – are due to the displacement of traditional ways of life by non-native culture. [5]

-Infanticide relatively common. Some evidence that infanticide increased in the postcontact period. [6]

## **Numbered references**

1. Ethnologue Report [[http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_language.asp?code=haa](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=haa)]
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4. Kutchin [<http://www.everyculture.com/North-America/Kutchin.html>]
5. Multi-Cultural Canada [<http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/a9>]
6. University of Wisconsin - On the Aboriginal Population of the Kutchin [Shepard Krech, III]