

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

Northern Tutchone, Athapaskan, Na-Dene

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

ttm

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

Center of the Yukon territory, Canada. Yukon, Whitehorse, and White River areas just East of the Alaskan border (2, p.18).

1.4 Brief history:

The Tutchone were divided in small nuclear family groups who hunted and travelled seasonally. After the Russians discovered the potential for fur trade along the Alaskan coast, the Tutchone began to trade with them for tobacco, guns, etc. In 1896 came the Klondike Gold Rush when thousands of people moved to the Yukon area in search of gold. This damaged the Tutchone land and food and they had to travel far in order to hunt and obtain furs. When the gold rush ended, the Tutchone went back to trapping and continued to trap and hunt well into the 1920s and 1930s. (4)

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

In the 1860s, Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries took interest in the peoples of the Yukon. The Anglican religion became more successful, however. (4)

1.6 Ecology:

Tutchone based their movement patterns on the animals they hunted and their environment. In the spring and fall they followed herds of caribou and moose. They spent their summers fishing king salmon and lived by the river. (4)

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

Lived in small nuclear family groups. Range varied according to the season.

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

Main sources of protein are caribou, moose, salmon and whitefish and made up most of the Tutchone diet (2, p.18).

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

Bow and arrow, knives, spears, and snares all used mostly for hunting purposes (2, p.24). Sometimes it was necessary to fight threatening neighbors or groups that were weak and could be taken over. Much of the warfare was surprise attacks where they would capture women, children, and materials to take back and make their own group bigger and stronger (2, p.50).

2.4 Food storage:

Fish caught during the summer was dried and stored in caches (2, p.29).

2.5 Sexual division of production:

Men were responsible for hunting and trapping, making tools and weapons, and drove god teams. Women prepared game and fish for storage, gathered berries and other plant foods, tanned skins, and sewed clothing (2, Pg. 78)

2.6 Land tenure:

Not any formal ownership of land. Just territory that is presumed to be theirs that they are allowed to wander freely in (2, p.38).

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

Dog, otters, and some large birds were never killed or eaten because of the reincarnation beliefs (2, p.65). The month before a woman gave birth, she had to follow certain food taboos (2, Pg. 76)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

Canoes were used for traveling up and down rivers and lakes and mainly for fishing things like salmon and whitefish (2, p.24).

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):

3 years (2, Pg. 78)

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

Females were married soon after puberty and males sought wives when they were young adults (2, Pg. 75)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

Divorce was quite common, but was less common after the couple had children (2, Pg. 82)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

Polygyny was not necessarily common, but there were examples of polygyny practices in some bands (6)

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

Yes, the man was required to live with the bride's family for 2 years and help with labor (2, Pg. 82)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

Inherited the moiety (Wolf or Crow people) from your mother (6)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

Daughters stayed close with their mothers and helped them with chores and labor and became increasingly responsible for raising siblings as they got older. Sons stayed close with their fathers and learned the necessary hunting/trapping skills usually by age 12 (2, Pg. 79)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

2 exogamous matrilineal moieties: Crow people and Wolf people (6)

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)

Bilateral cross cousins (6)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Yes, in the sense that there were some groups that practiced polyandry (6)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

Siblings or the mother's mother (6)

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

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?

Both same sex cross cousins and brothers and sisters were not allowed to even speak to each other (6)

4.24 Joking relationships?

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

Moiety descent matrilineal (6)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

Could not marry a member of your own moiety, if you did you were killed. If you had an affair or married a parallel cousin, you were killed by your maternal uncle (6)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

Yes (6)

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

Both males and females obtained their names during their puberty ceremony and were named by their parents (6)

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

Could not marry someone in the same band or same moiety (Wolf or Crow) (6)

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

Yes, arranged by the mother and female relatives of the bride. The mother usually preferred an older man for her daughter (2, Pg. 81)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

Extremely low (5)

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

War was rare because it was believed that most "wrongs" could be righted by giving gifts (5)

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

Trespassing on hunting territory resulted in the Tutchone men surprise- attacking your camp at night and taking women and materials. These night "attacks" rarely resulted in death (5)

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

Relationships with neighboring societies centered around trade. There were no marked or observed boundaries, but it was known that each band had their own hunting territory and these territories should be respected (5)

4.18 Cannibalism?

Yes, on occasion in winter when food was scarce and they were suffering from starvation (6)

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

Mean local residential (village) group size: The largest community is a band, usually in the summer months, of an extended family and maybe a few friendly families when there is enough game and fish to support everyone. Always less than about 100 people (2, p.39).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

Tend to follow big game. Catch a lot of fish during the short summer. In winter, when game became scarce, larger groups split up into families and scattered in order to survive (2, p.27).

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

“Chief” meant “man with many things” and was an inherited position. Each clan had its own crest and the chief’s material prowess allowed him to maintain a high level of respect and prestige (1, p.xx). While chiefs had many material things, he had no coercive power because of people wandering and so all adult males attempted to reach a consensus on decisions and policies (2, p.48).

5.4 Post marital residence:

The husband always goes to live with the bride and her parents until the birth of their first child (2, p.55).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

The Tutchone follow a restricted wandering where they stick to the territory they define as theirs and defend it from trespassing. They also have the right to all game in the area (2, p.38).

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

Same sex parallel cousins and brother and sisters could not speak to each other (6)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses):

When girls reached menarche, they were secluded in a special hut where men were forbidden to touch. (2, Pg.76) There were also special birthing huts where women went to give birth (2, Pg.79)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

In summer, they slept in tipis that had an open hole at the top for smoke and was made of sticks and covered with caribou hide on the outside (2, p.35).

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

Extended families made up clans and tended to live with or near each other depending on time of year. When they were not together they kept in touch and many family members moved from group to group (2, p.38).

5.12 Trade:

The Tutchone had direct access to English and Russian traders via the White River and Klondike River. They traded shells, handmade blankets, pipes, beads, and knives for clothing, furs, and caribou skins (1, p.21).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

War leaders emerged through physical strength and led raids and attacks. Other leaders were respected and gave advice and emerged because of personality and superior hunting abilities that allowed them to provide for their family/clan (2, p.48).

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

Most of their religion is relying on magic and shamans to cure people’s sicknesses or to bring them good luck in hunting (2, p.39).

6.2 Stimulants:

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

When someone died, they would have a potlatch which was a gift-giving festival to honor a dead relative (2, p.49). When girls experienced their first menarche, they went into a special hut where men were not allowed to go near (2, p.47).

6.4 Other rituals:

There was a ceremony for the first salmon catch of the year where the men would take sweat baths and put on their best clothes before they cleaned and cooked them (2, p.69).

6.5 Myths (Creation):

Each Tutchone is either a Crow or Wolf by matrilineal descent. A Crow must marry a Wolf and vice versa. (6)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Hunters would sing magical songs that would give them access to the powers of certain animals (2, p.65).

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

Many Tutchone began attending Catholic schools by 1920 (3, p.41).

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

They believed that the souls went to live in the land of the dead (2, p.62).

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

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

There was a widespread belief that man was reincarnated in animal form, and so a major facet of their religion was keeping the spirits of animals happy. Other than that, most religion was individualized and each person chose the beliefs that best suited his/her needs (2, p. 60).

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

7.2 Piercings:

Noses pierced with ring usually during one’s puberty ceremony (5)

7.3 Haircut:

Both males and females had long hair. Braids were common, and when going to war males wore their hair in a “ponytail.” (5)

7.4 Scarification:

None (5)

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

Wore clothing decorated with beads, porcupine quills, seeds, and moose hair (5)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

Men styled hair with red ochre mixed with grease and sprinkled with down (5)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

Both males and females wore soft-tanned hide leggings, shirts, and coats (5)

7.8 Missionary effect:

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

If a Tutchone was related to a high ranking sibling he received training from his mother's brothers (1, p. 69). Siblings were characterized maternally (2, p.51).

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

Levirate happened very frequently among Tutchone groups but sororate was very rare (2, p.53).

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

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

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4. "History/Culture of the Yukon." *Pinnacle Travel*. Web. 05 Dec. 2011. <<http://pinnacle-travel.org>>.
5. "Canada's First Peoples Before Contact." *First Peoples of Canada Before Contact Menu*. Web. 05 Dec. 2011. <<http://firstpeoplesofcanada.com>>.
6. Legros, Dominique. *Oral History as History: Tutchone Athapaskan in the Period 1840-1920*. [Whitehorse]: Yukon Tourism and Culture, Cultural Services Branch, 2007. Print.