

Salish (Southern Puget Sound)

1. Description 1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Name of society and alternatives: Salish, Selish, Flathead [s4] -- Language: Salishan [s4] -- Language Family: Salishan, Twana, Salish, Southern Puget Sound [s6]

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): 639-3 [s3]

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): 47° 15' N, 122° 30' W [s1]

1.4 Brief history: “After the introduction of the horse the Salish adopted a Plains culture, including the hunting of buffalo and the use of the tepee. They fought a series of wars with the Blackfoot over hunting land. The Jesuit missionary Pierre Jean De Smet, who in 1841 founded the mission of St. Mary in the Bitterroot valley among the Salish, persuaded the Blackfoot to make peace. By the Garfield Treaty (1872) the Salish agreed to move north to the valley of the Flathead lake and river. Many now live on the Flathead Reservation in Montana, which they share with a small group of Kootenai. In 1990 there were close to 5,000 Salish and over 2,000 people of mixed Salish and Kootenai descent in the United States.” [s2]

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

“they were moved onto reservations by the treaties of Medicine Creek, Point Elliott, and others in the 1850s. Since then they have waged a continual battle in federal courts over fishing and shellfish rights in the area, one of the most productive in the country.” [s3]

“There existed no formal political institutions.” [s5 p486-7]

1.6 Ecology:

“The western red cedar was used for canoes, houses, clothing, and tools. The Salish harvested salmon and coastal shellfish as their nutritional mainstay, and supplemented their diet with deer, elk, moose, bear, migratory birds, medicinal plants, roots, herbs, and berries.

Herring were abundant everywhere. Halibut generally spawn in twenty to two hundred fathoms of salt water and are found in the southern parts of the strait.

Eulachon (or candlefish) ran in enormous quantities in the Fraser River, as well as in Bute Inlet. Sturgeons were also caught in the Fraser River, they usually entered the river system around the end of April, following the eulachon run. Other fish such as flounder, dogfish, cultus cod, red cod, and rock cod, etc., are found in the Salish territories.” [s12]

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

Population size: about 400

“The Flathead were loosely organized into bands composed of several related families and led by a chief.” [s4]

“The precontact population was estimated to be around 12,600.” [s12]

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

“The vegetal products of the north Pacific region were varied and abundant. In the spring and the early summer green sprouts of salmonberry, raspberry, and thimbleberry bushes were eaten both raw and cooked in pits. Throughout the summer and early fall berries formed a considerable portion of the daily fare. Salmonberries, raspberries, thimbleberries, blackberries, huckleberries of several varieties, elderberries, salalberries, and cranberries were gathered in enormous quantities, a large portion of the crop being dried for a winter food.” [s13 p.49]

“The principal edible roots were those of camas, dog-tooth violet, skunk-cabbage, tule, and bracken. All except the last-named were steam-cooked, and the most of the crop was then dried for storing.” [s13 p.49]

“The managed grasslands not only provided game habitat, but vegetable sprouts, roots, bulbs, berries, and nuts were foraged from them as well as found wild. The most important were probably bracken and camas; wapato especially for the Duwamish. Many, many varieties of berries were foraged; some were harvested with comblike devices not reportedly used elsewhere. Acorns were relished but were not widely available. Regional tribes went in autumn to the Nisqually Flats (Nisqually plains) to harvest them.” [s5 p488-9]

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

Salmon, shellfish, and big game such as buffalo. [s3]

“Fish and salmon were staples. There was *kakanee*, a freshwater fish in the Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish watersheds. Shellfish were abundant... Hunting was specialized; professions were probably sea hunters, land hunters, fowlers. Water fowl were captured on moonless nights using strategic flares.” [s5 p488-9]

“Salish harvested salmon and coastal shellfish as their nutritional mainstay, and supplemented their diet with deer, elk, moose, bear, migratory birds, medicinal plants, roots, herbs, and berries.

Herring were abundant everywhere. Halibut generally spawn in twenty to two hundred fathoms of salt water and are found in the southern parts of the strait.” (s12)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

Traded furs for guns during the fur trade [s5 p486-7]

“Bows and arrows, spears, and clubs were the implements of warfare and the chase. The material for bows was generally yew, sometimes vine-maple; but the Cowichan very commonly used the root wood of cedar.” [s13 p.57]

“The primitive knives were slivers of flakable stone or large, sharpened mussel-shells.” [s13 p.56]

They also had war clubs, daggers, and spears. [s14]

2.4 Food storage:

“Butter clams, horse clams, and cockles were dried for trade.” [s5 p488-9]

“Enormous quantities of these fish (salmon) were dried in the smoke of the dwelling houses for winter consumption and for trade.” [s13 p. 41]

Dried berries and roots [s13 p.49]

2.5 Sexual division of production:

Typical of many hunter and gatherer societies with men in charge of hunting while women gathered berries and other natural edibles.

2.6 Land tenure: Lived in permanent houses [s14]

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

“The numerous varieties of canoes may be divided into three general classes. First there is the small, shell-like, elegantly made river boat, which can be poled up the swiftest or the shallowest streams. Next is the medium-size craft manned by two to five or six persons, and used on large streams or on protected arms of the sea either for rapid travel or for fishing with nets, spears, or hooks. Finally, the oceangoing vessel is equipped to take advantage of the winds with a removable mast and a square mat sail, and is capable of carrying a numerous household with their entire possessions. It is called into service when a long voyage is undertaken by a considerable party, and formerly was used by war-parties.” [s13 p.51]

“Canoes of various sizes and designs are used by all the tribes, from the tiny, blunt-nosed river craft capable of carrying, somewhat precariously, two passengers, to the great seaworthy vessel accommodating twenty to thirty persons besides a considerable cargo of household utensils and food – a total burden of perhaps five tons. These larger craft sometimes exceed fifty feet in length and five feet beam. They are fashioned from the whole log, but for canoes of medium size the half log is used, and for the smallest ones the quarter log. In the last case the quarter log is reversed, so that the heart becomes the keel. By means of a small axe (formerly a stone-pointed chisel and a maul were used) the outside of the canoe is roughly shaped, and the inside is then burned out, the adze being employed to complete the hollowing and to smooth down the entire inner surface. The log is then turned over, and with the adze the outside is carefully worked down until the desired thinness is attained. The gracefully symmetrical lines are produced with no artificial aid to the workman’s eye. Along the inner edge of the gunwales is reamed out a channel two to five inches wide, and by the same amount the edge flares outward, forming an overhanging rim which prevents water from curling up over the sides. The hull is charred with a blazing fagot of long strips of cedar, and rubbed smooth with sand-stone or a piece of matting. Finally the canoe is filled with water, which, heated to boiling by red-hot stones and aided by the warmth of a slow fire built all around the canoe, so softens the wood that the sides can be spread by means of forcing the thwarts into place near the gunwales.

These are secured by stout withes tied to their ends and passing through small holes in the sides of the craft. In the process of shaping the log, the lines of the gunwales are left higher amidships, in order that after spreading the sides the vessel may not be too low at that point." [s13 p.51]

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:

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

"Among the various tribes the procedure in the marriage ceremony differed somewhat, but the principle was always the same: namely, payment of goods for the bride, and receipt of a less valuable quantity from her people." [s13 p.68]

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):

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

"a man who took advantage of a woman secretly was liable to the death penalty at the hands of her husband" [s13 p.72]

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

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Girls were secluded during their periods. (s14)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

"A wedding usually entailed the exchanging of gifts (material and/or hereditary privelidges)" (s14)

Families-in-law continued to exchange food and gifts throughout the marriage. (s14)

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

No

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

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

Yes [s14]

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?)

“Depending on the wealth and rank of the families concerned, there were several modes of entering into marital bonds. Among the poor it was by voluntary cohabitation. In families of moderate means there was formal wooing and bartering, while the wealthy exchanged lavish gifts in a highly ceremonial manner. Polygyny was common, and nearly every thrifty man became possessed of three or four wives. In rare cases there were as many as ten wives in one establishment. However, it was only the first marriage that was attended by great ceremony, and the nuptials of the scion of a very prominent chief commanded the most attention.” [s13 p.68]

“Traditionally, the Coast Salish communities have all at some point in time been interconnected through traditional marriages” (s12)

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

Yes, by families, although others eloped [s14]

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

“Warfare for the southern Coast Salish was primarily defensive, with occasional raiding into territory where there were no relatives. No institutions existed for mobilizing or maintaining a standing force.

The real enemies of all the Coast Salish for most of the first half of the 19th century were the Lekwiltok Kwakiutl (*Kwakwaka'wakw*). With earlier access to guns with the fur trade, they raided for slaves and loot. Organized retaliatory raids from several tribes were raised several times." [s5 p495-7]

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

Intragroup violence usually resulted in fighting because of revenge. (s14)

"At least in the early nineteenth century, the Southern Coast Salish had to deal with highly aggressive Lekwiltok Kwakiutl raiders. O at least on occasion the Salish tribes banded together to launch a retaliatory attack against [them]." (s14)

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): "Neighboring peoples, whether villages or adjacent tribes, were related by marriage, feasting, ceremonies, and common or shared territory. Ties were especially strong within the same waterway or watershed. There existed no breaks throughout the south Coast Salish culture area and beyond." [s5 p486-7]

4.18 Cannibalism?

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): There is evidence of winter homes, so seasonal mobility patterns are possible. [s13 p.39]

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

"Society was divided into three classes: the chiefs, or wealthy class; the common people; and slaves. The lines were quite rigidly drawn, although the caste system was not so firmly established as it was farther north." [s13 p.59]

"Chiefship was dependent altogether on birth and wealth, and comparative rank was determined largely by the same circumstances. But it was possible for a man to elevate his rank by taking heads in war and by amassing more and more property for distribution among the people." [s13 p.59]

"The tribal organization of the coast Salish was very loose. Indeed it frequently was quite lacking, each small community being independent of all others, and cooperating with them only as the necessities of war and subsistence or as the social instinct demanded." [s13 p.59]

5.4 Post marital residence:

marriages were formalized by cohabitation [s14]

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): No

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

Teepees while away hunting buffalo. [s3]

“They lived communally in longhouses that housed large, extended families and tribal groups.” [s11]

“Among the Puget Sound Indians the house possessed a single- pitch roof sloping from the front to the rear, the guttered roof-boards being arranged like tile and extending in the direction of the slope. At intervals a very broad plank covered a wide space left between two others, so that by means of a pole it could be moved aside and permit the smoke to escape. The wall-boards were placed horizontally and secured by cedar withes to a series of upright poles a few feet apart both inside and outside, each board slightly overlapping the one below it, and all interstices being stuffed with gray tree-moss. In the better structures these planks were carefully fitted, one resting directly on another with a projecting shoulder covering the joint. The framework was begun by setting in the ground to a depth of about thirty inches two parallel rows of heavy, trimmed, cedar posts, which defined the front and the back line of the structure. These sometimes were hewn timbers six to twelve inches thick and as much as three feet wide, the inner surfaces being carved and painted into the semblance of an animal or some mythological being. In each row the uprights were from eight to twelve feet apart. The rafters, connecting each post of the front row with the corresponding one at the back, were of cedar, twelve to fifteen inches in diameter at the top and trimmed down to the same dimension at the butt. At each end the lower side was flattened and provided with a shoulder, so that the beam rested firmly on the flat-topped posts. Across the rafters several rows of six-inch fir poles were bound, and on these rested the roof-boards.”[s13]

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

A church [s13 p.63]

“The sweat-bath was used only as an occasional curative or rejuvenating agency. The sudatory was usually a horizontal excavation in a bank, or a pit in level ground. In the former situation the opening was covered with poles and mats, entrance being effected by crawling under the edge. In the latter, the pit was roofed with boards (or with poles and a thatch of cedar-bark and brush) covered with earth. A scanty, inclined entry-way was provided at one edge, and the heated stones were piled in a hole in the centre of the floor. The sudatory usually accommodated three or four bathers, who after a period of steaming plunged into the water, preferably salt water.” [s13 p.58-59]

“ But the triumph of their architecture is displayed in the buildings erected for festivals. These were of extraordinary size and strength, considering the means at their disposal. Mr. H. A Goldsborough measured one at Port Madison, erected by the brother of Seat'hl ['Seattle'], some forty years before, the frame of which was standing in 1855. This was 520 feet long, 60 feet wide, 15 feet high in front, and 10 in the rear. It was supported on puncheons, or split timbers, 74 in number, from 2 to 3 feet wide, and 5 to 8 inches thick, carved with grotesque figures of men, naked and about half size. The cross-beams

were round sticks, 37 in number, 60 feet in length, and from 12 to 22 inches in diameter. They were erected for special occasions, and afterward dismantled.” [s13]

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

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

5.12 Trade:

Traded furs for guns during the fur trade [s5 p486-7]

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

“Society was divided into upper class, lower class and slaves, all largely hereditary.” [s7]

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

6.2 Stimulants:

“Smoking was not common. Native tobacco, obtained from transmontane tribes either at the great trading ground by the Dalles of the Columbia or at more northerly points reached by trails across the Cascade mountains, was mixed with dried leaves of the partridge-berry, osiercornel, yew, or madroña. Contrary to the widespread custom of the plains Indians, the bark of the osier-cornel, or so-called red willow, was not used for smoking. The pipe-bowl was of stone, usually talc, and was angular, not tubular.” [s13 p.50]

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

Birth: “Birth carried numerous rituals and restrictions, especially regarding twins” (s14)

Death: “The dead were buried in skins and robes. A mourning feast followed the funeral; included the disposal of the dead person’s former possessions. The mourning period could last a year.” [s14]

Puberty: “Boys marked puberty by making their first kill” (s14)

Feasts were held for the girls and their hereditary privileges were announced (s14)

Seasonal: “The Winter dance was sponsored by someone who was ill as a result of a returning spirit.” (s14)

6.4 Other rituals:

“ Vision quest journeys involving other states of consciousness were varied and widely practiced. The Duwamish had a soul recovery and journey ceremony.” [s5 p495-7]

6.5 Myths

(Creation): Creation of the Red and White Races

Among the people of long, long ago, Old Man Coyote was the symbol of good.

Mountain Sheep was the symbol of evil.

Old-Man-in-the-Sky created the world. Then he drained all the water off the earth and crowded it into the big salt holes now called the oceans. The land became dry except for the lakes and rivers.

Old Man Coyote often became lonely and went up to the Sky World just to talk. One time he was so unhappy that he was crying. Old- Man-in-the-Sky questioned him. "Why are you so unhappy that you are crying? Have I not made much land for you to run around on? Are not Chief Beaver, Chief Otter, Chief Bear, and Chief Buffalo on the land to keep you company?"

"Why do you not like Mountain Sheep? I placed him up in the hilly parts so that you two need not fight. Why do you come up here so often?"

Old Man Coyote sat down and cried more tears. Old-Man-in-the-Sky became cross and began to scold him.

"Foolish Old Man Coyote, you must not drop so much water down upon the land. Have I not worked many days to dry it? Soon you will have it all covered with water again. What is the trouble with you? What more do you want to make you happy?"

"I am very lonely because I have no one to talk to," he replied. "Chief Beaver, Chief Otter, Chief Bear, and Chief Buffalo are busy with their families. They do not have time to visit with me. I want people of my own, so that I may watch over them."

"Then stop this shedding of water," said Old-Man-in-the-Sky. "If you will stop annoying me with your visits, I will make people for you. Take this parfleche. It is a bag made of rawhide. Take it some place in the mountain where there is red earth. Fill it and bring it back up to me."

Old Man Coyote took the bag made of the skin of an animal and travelled many days and nights. At last he came to a mountain where there was much red soil. He was very weary after such a long journey but he managed to fill the parfleche. Then he was sleepy.

"I will lie down to sleep for a while. When I waken, I will run swiftly back to Old-Man-in-the-Sky."

He slept very soundly.

After a while, Mountain Sheep came along. He saw the bag and looked to see what was in it.

"The poor fool has come a long distance to get such a big load of red soil," he said to himself. "I do not know what he wants it for, but I will have fun with him."

Mountain Sheep dumped all of the red soil out upon the mountain. He filled the lower part of the parfleche with white solid, and the upper part with red soil. Then laughing heartily, he ran to his hiding place.

Soon Old Man Coyote woke up. He tied the top of the bag and hurried with it to Old-Man-in-the-Sky. When he arrived with it, the sun was going to sleep. It was so dark that the two of them could hardly see the soil in the parfleche.

Old-Man-in-the-Sky took the dirt and said, "I will make this soil into the forms of two men and two women."

He did not see that half of the soil was red and the other half white. Then he said to Old Man Coyote, "Take these to the dry land below. They are your people. You can talk with them. So do not come up here to trouble me."

Then he finished shaping the two men and two women--in the darkness.

Old Man Coyote put them in the parfleche and carried them down to dry land. In the morning he took them out and put breath into them. He was surprised to see that one pair was red and the other was white.

"Now I know that Mountain Sheep came while I was asleep. I cannot keep these two colors together."

He thought a while. Then he carried the white ones to the land by the big salt hole. The red ones he kept in his own land so that he could visit with them. That is how Indians and white people came to the earth." (s10)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): "Religious life centered around guardian spirits obtained in dreams or visions induced by fasting and prayer." [s4]

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

"Boys marked puberty by making their first kill" (s14)

Feasts were held for the girls and their hereditary privileges were announced (s14)

6.8 Missionary effect:

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

"The Flathead believed that after death good souls journey to an upper world inhabited by the deity, Amo'tken, while bad souls go to live in an underworld inhabited by the evil deity, Amte'p." [s4]

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

"for the names of the dead are not uttered for many years after death, until time has dulled the fang of grief." [s13 p.73]

6.12 Is there tekonymy? No Information found.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): "Belief in guardian spirits and transmutation between human and animal were widely shared in myriad forms. The relations of soul or souls, the lands of the living and the dead, were complex and mutable." [s5 p495-7]

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

"It appears probable that tattooing was not a native practice in this region, but one introduced by early sailors, as it has never within historical times been a common usage. The Quinault sometimes decorated the forearms and the lower legs with

figures of birds and beasts, or with pleasing arrangements of lines and dots. The powdered charcoal was inserted beneath the skin by means of bone splinters. Some of the Cowichan men had stripes across the chest, and the women three parallel lines across each cheek. The lower legs of Twana girls bore several horizontal bars about three inches in length. To heighten their beauty as well as to protect the skin from wind and sun, both sexes rubbed on the face a cosmetic composed of grease (preferably kidney fat of the mountain-goat) colored with some powdered mineral, usually red ochre.”[s13]

7.2 Piercings:

“The ears of all children at the age of a few months are pierced without formality by old female relatives.” [s13 p.73]

“The most precious ornaments were ear-pendants of oblong bits of abalone shell, which was obtained in trade from the northern tribes. No person of low caste could afford these. Some wore a dentalium shell transversely in the septum of the nose, but this was not common. Both males and females of all ages, provided their means were sufficient, wore necklaces consisting of many strands of dentalium shells or of clam-shell beads pendent on the breast.” [s13]

7.3 Haircut:

“The hair of men was parted in the middle and gathered at the back in a single switch, the end of which was tied with a portion of a long string. It was then wound into a knot on the crown or at the base of the skull, and secured by winding the string around and around it. Warriors wrapped a fillet about the head just below the crown, and permitted the loose ends of the hair, powdered red, to flow down about the face in the wildest confusion, in order to accentuate their appearance of ferocity. The women parted their hair from the forehead to the nape of the neck, and arranged it in two braids, which hung either down the back or in front of the shoulders, the ends being tied with cedar-bark fibre.” [s13]

7.4 Scarification:

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

feathers, beads [s9]

“The only armor was the corselet, which consisted usually of a double row of flattened slats or round rods of ironwood or yew held closely together by cords passing alternately under and over them.” [s13 p.58]

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

“The basketry head-dress of some of the Puget Sound tribes, as the Nisqualli and the Puyallup, was a closely fitting skull-cap worn by women on gala occasions.” [s13]

“Buckskin clothing was therefore a very well respected feature of the Coast Salish winter dances.” (s12)

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.):

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

-Practiced wood carving. [s3]

-“fur trading became an important part of the economy beginning in the early nineteenth century” [s4]

-“Games often involved gambling on a sleight-of-hand game known as slahal, as well as athletic contests. Games that are similar to modern day lacrosse, rugby and forms of martial arts also existed. ” [s8 p4]

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