

## 1. Description

- 1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Kawaiisu
- 1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): xaw
- 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): California, Tehachapi Valley
- 1.4 Brief history: From southern California, Hunter and Gatherer society based in the desert region of Mojave desert
- 1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Worked with neighboring native American tribes like the Kitanemuk and the Yokuts to gather food
- 1.6 Ecology:
- 1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: Population size varies from 1500 to 500, smaller groups in the winter months and grouped into larger groups for the warmer months

## 2. Economy

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Kawaiisu's main form of carbohydrates came from nuts, roots, and berries. The main nuts were acorns because of the multiple types of trees that produced them in the region, buckeyes, pine nuts and juniper berries were also a common food staple.
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Deer were the most common form of meat/lipids, however they also hunted antelope and a variety of smaller game animals.
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: They used bows made from juniper branches and the strings were made of sinews, although fish was not a common staple since it was not a readily available source of food they had hooks made from bone. They also used nets made from nettle, milk weed stems, pond weed, or elm parts.
- 2.4 Food storage: Some food was eaten raw/ fresh, however for the colder months where they would camp in a single place they dried meats into jerky and they would also grind nuts/tubers into powder and make "cakes" to store the food.
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: Women typically did the gathering of nuts, berries, and tubers, though women had been known to hunt occasionally. The men would do the majority of the hunting.
- 2.6 Land tenure: Not sure but it seems that there wasn't any "laws" governing who could go where in the Kawaiisu culture. They seemed to be very friendly with neighbors and would work with them to hunt and gather
- 2.7 Ceramics: Ceramics were very popular amongst the Kawaiisu and they used it for storage as well as being used as artwork
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: They would use jerkyed meat for trade and they would also share resources with friendly tribes around them.
- 2.9 Food taboos: The only food taboo that I could find was that when a girl was coming of age amongst the Kawaiisu they had to abstain from eating meat, fat, and salt.
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft? The Kawaiisu were not dependent on canoes or watercraft of any kind

## 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): N/A
- 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): N/A
- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f): N/A
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): N/A
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Seemed to be a little after puberty
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Unknown although divorce was common and in order for a couple to divorce all that was needed was for the couple to separate and move back into their family groups
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: None Kawaiisu marriages were monogamous
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Sometimes the couple would be put together after the male offered the bride's family something or some kind of gift
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: The inheritance of objects typically were passed down by sex. That is to say the father would pass his possessions to the son and the mother to the daughter.
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: N/A
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: N/A
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Marriage seems common amongst Kawaiisu groups as well as peaceful neighboring tribes
- 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: N/A
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): None, were allowed to choose own mate
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? None
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: No evidence found of extramarital partners found.
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? The extended family (Grandparents/Relatives) raised the child
- 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):? Couldn't find anything
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?Unknown
- 4.24 Joking relationships?N/A
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: Coyote parable used as story to warn of incestual relationships
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? There was a celebration but most marriages were just simply started after a gift was given to the suitor's family
- 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?) In the community was preferred
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? The marriages were not necessarily arranged but would have been allowed by families.
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Preferred that kin marry into Kawaiisu groups

### **Warfare/homicide**

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: N/A. The Kawaiisu were peaceful and very rarely went to war. When inter-group fights took place it was usually on an individual basis.
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Fighting amongst individuals over resources most common
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: outgroup killing amongst Kawaiisu and white settlers
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): There were many tribes that the Kawaiisu would work with to gather and hunt the most common being the Kitanemuk and the Yokuts
- 4.18 Cannibalism? None

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

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Would Gather in the Tehachapi Valley then in the cooler months would set up permanent camps in the Mojave
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Chiefs were older and had the most knowledge of customs. They were not official chiefs more just a symbolic chief
- 5.4 Post marital residence: Would simply live were it was convenient for the couple
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): Borders just known, however they were peaceful so they shared land with neighboring tribes
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):Sexes worked together and there was a clear division of tasks
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:N/A
- 5.8 Village and house organization:Lived in small family groups and had mobile house structures till cold season.
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):none
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Seems that the y slept on ground though possible that they didn't since they built platforms for their food to keep pests out of food stores
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:
- 5.12 Trade: Traded with friendly neighbors as well as with Spanish and later the Americans
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? No real social hierarchy however older wiser adults given more respect and followed as "chiefs"

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

- 6 Time allocation to RCR:
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): No shamans, religious stories told by elders
- 6.2 Stimulants:N/A
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Seasonal rituals were common. Explanations for the season usually dealt with the common deity coyote
- 6.4 Other rituals: Marriage rituals, and other sacrifices to deities
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): Whole religion seems to be based around multiple deities. They were animist
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Rock art as well as basketry very common
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Both men and women could participate in ceremonies though some were only done by the men.
- 6.8 Missionary effect: Helped to assimilate them into white culture
- 6.9 RCR revival: There has been a revival of culture amongst Kawaiisu descendants.
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: couldn't find anything
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?N/A
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy? Yes
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)They seem to have a polytheistic religion based on some animism, but also based on some physical surroundings such as mountains

### **7. Adornment**

- 7.1 Body paint: Men and women would have tattoos but the men would save painting their bodies for celebrations and ceremonies
- 7.2 Piercings: Usually just the women would have piercings
- 7.3 Haircut: Adults would let hair grow out with children's hair was cropped by burning it

7.4 Scarification: The Kawaiisu would offer sacrifices to their gods. Sacrifices were usually limited to food staples (nuts and berries) but the most common sacrifice to the gods was eagle feathers.

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

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: Usually the men would paint their bodies for ceremonial/ ritual situations

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Only the men would paint their bodies for ceremonies but everything else seemed to be available to both men and women

7.8 Missionary effect: The first missionary groups to come in contact with the Kawaiisu was the Spanish missionaries. They essentially tried to get the Kawaiisu to accept Spanish rule.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

## **8. Kinship systems**

8.1 Sibling classification system: It seems that the mothers line is more weighted than the fathers, so it would seem that it is matrilineal decent. However there are some patrilineal lines found so it is not necessarily just matrilineal.

8.2 Sororate, levirate: Nothing found on the subject

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): no other types of typology

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

**Basketry very common but had own style of coil weaving not found anywhere else in the region.**

**Rock art very pronounced and seen all over the areas that the Kawaiisu were.**

**Numbered references**

### **1. Californian kinship terminologies, Volume 18, Issues 2-3**

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2. <http://mojavedesert.net/kawaiisu-indians>

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8. [http://www.ethnologue.com/%5C/15/show\\_language.asp?code=xaw](http://www.ethnologue.com/%5C/15/show_language.asp?code=xaw)