

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

Severn Ojibwa; Algonquian

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

OJS

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

53. N, 90. W

1.4 Brief history:

Pre-European contact they lived among the many other Ojibwa branches (including the Chippewa). During the expansion to the west the Severn Ojibwa split off and headed north to the Great Lakes and Southern Canada where they currently reside. The French were the first to make contact and began trading with them. They allied with the French during the French and Indian War. They allied with the British in the Revolutionary War in hopes of preventing western expansion of the Americans. Their land was eventually domesticated and their culture declined rapidly. There has been a recent rise in the amount of Ojibwa speakers due to large attempts to educate youngsters on their people's past. (Ojibwa,)

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

Most of the current Severn Ojibwa population is Christian. On reservations elders teach children but many choose to go to public schools. There was a long history of contact and intermarriage between them and the Cree. (Dunning, 2009)

1.6 Ecology:

They are in close relation to the nature around them. Their spirits are named after popular animals of the area. They use water transport via their canoes often. They are nomadic within their territory and move according to the seasonal changes. When wild rice is harvested they are purposely sloppy about the work so that they leave plenty of seed behind for the next season. (Ojibwa,)

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

~10,000 fluent speakers remaining(Dunning, 2009)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

wild rice and maize(Ojibwa,)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

fish and wild game (mostly deer, and buffalo traditionally) (Ojibwa,)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

Bow and arrow, spears, guns (after French settlement) (Ojibwa,)

2.4 Food storage:

containers made from birch wood(Ojibwa,)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

Women tended to growth of rice and maize. Men hunted. Both were involved with construction and production of trading goods. (Dunning, 2009)

2.6 Land tenure: n/a

2.7 Ceramics:

Yes(Dunning, 2009)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: readily traded with outside bands.

Traded canoes, furs, and birch wood (Ojibwa,)

2.9 Food taboos: n/a

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

Famous for craftsmanship of canoes out of birch wood. Traded them for other goods with French. (Hallowell, 1960)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): n/a

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): n/a

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

14 or 15(Dunning, 2009)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

15 or 16(Dunning, 2009)

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):

as soon as puberty began and female could perform household duties ~14 (Dunning, 2009)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

If wife is unable to conceive then marriage is allowed. (Ojibwa,)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

no polygamy(Hallowell, 1960)

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

none(Hallowell, 1960)

4.9 Inheritance patterns: n/a

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

children mostly raised by mothers until the boys are able to contribute to hunting(Ojibwa,)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

They did not have a sense of male and female per say. They viewed things as inanimate or animate. A person could choose to either take on a male or female role in society. (Ojibwa,)

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

Were allowed to marry outside of the bands. Most common were French-Ojibwan marriages and also Cree-Ojibwan marriages. (Dunning, 2009)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?

n/a

4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”)

Sexual was so common that it was not talked about much within the band. Both men and women took pleasure in frequent sexual activity. That being said, it was still the woman’s responsibility to be fertile. She could be divorced if she didn’t produce offspring. (Ojibwa,)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?n/a

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: n/a

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

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Yes(Dunning, 2009)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

n/a

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

Older sister (if applicable) or grandmother (Hallowell, 1960)

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

4.22 Evidence for couvades

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

Younger males produce more offspring than older. They marry as soon as they can show that they can provide enough food to support a family(Dunning, 2009)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

4.24 Joking relationships? n/a

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

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: n/a

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

No. Couples lived with wife's parents for a year and then made their own home. (Ojibwa,)

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

Elders who have been in direct contact with the spirits are the only ones who can name children. (Dunning, 2009)

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

Both are preferred to marry within community, but outside of community is not frowned upon. (Dunning, 2009)

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

Partners choose each other but the relationship must then be approved by parents and elders. (Ojibwa,)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: n/a

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

n/a

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

Frequent outgroup fighting and deaths(Dunning, 2009)

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

Territory disputes. Migration of French, British, and then American(Dunning, 2009)

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

Frequently sided with the French during wartime. (Hallowell, 1960)

4.18 Cannibalism? none

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

n/a

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

nomadic within southern Canada and northern America. South when cold, North when warmer(Hallowell, 1960)

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

Elders were believed to be the leaders of the bands. (Dunning, 2009)

5.4 Post marital residence:

After a year of living with the wife's family the couple would then build their own wigwam (Ojibwa,)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

Very territorial (especially against white people.) (Dunning, 2009)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

Boys and girls were raised separately. There were three stages of life (before walking, walking-puberty, puberty-death) (Dunning, 2009)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

Lived in wigwams. Highly nomadic so they provided the best mobile structures. (Hallowell, 1960)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): Same as everyone else. Lived with parents until married and then moved in with wife's parents. (Ojibwa,)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?
Slept on ground inside wigwams(Ojibwa,)

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

5.12 Trade: Traded often with the French. Would trade them fur, canoes, and tools made from birch bark(Hallowell, 1960)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Shamans provided medical relief. Believed of medicine through spirits.

6.2 Stimulants:

Tobacco was given as a gift at every opportunity. Anytime a person was met for the first time, or married, or born, or died it was tradition to exchange tobacco (Valentine, 1992)

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

menarche: girls would stay in a wigwam and fast for 5 days to be in touch with the spirits

funeral: individual buried west of where they died. Mourning continued for up to a year(Hallowell, 1960)

6.4 Other rituals:

6.5 Myths (Creation): Believed in 7 spirits coming from the sea and teaching the first. The spirits then retreated back into the ocean to monitor and protect them from invaders. (Ojibwa,)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Ceramic art. Pictographs. Rock paintings(Hallowell, 1960)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

Traditionally they had their own beliefs, but Christianity is now the most predominant of their culture. (Valentine, 1992)

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

After death the spirit would walk west until it found a peaceful permanent resting place. (Hallowell, 1960)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

n/a

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

n/a

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

Believed in 7 spirits coming from the sea and teaching the first. The 1st spirit caused death to anyone who saw it so it retreated to the sea. The remaining 6 created the first 6 bands and were named after the spirits. The spirits then retreated back into the ocean to monitor and protect them from invaders. (Dunning, 2009)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

Black face paint for mourning. Bright colors for wartime(Valentine, 1992)

7.2 Piercings:

Multiple piercings. More male than female, but male was not uncommon(Valentine, 1992)

7.3 Haircut:

Both male and female had long, dark hair(Ojibwa,)

7.4 Scarification:

n/a

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Large headdresses for elders, especially during wartime. Beads were strewn into female hair. Animal hides were the main source of clothing. (Dunning, 2009)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

n/a

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

Both wore loose-fitting, thick hides for winter times. Moccasins. (Dunning, 2009)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

There is a new effort to retain some of the traditional cultural adornment and fluency in the language. (Ojibwa,)

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

n/a

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

After death, female is chosen by a different male(Dunning, 2009)

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

1. *Ojibwa*. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Ojibwa.html>
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