

1. Description

1.1 Name of society:

- Yakama. OR
- Ichishkín, Yakima (1)

LANGUAGE

- Sahaptian
Sahaptin (1)

LANGUAGE FAMILY

- Tenino [tqn] (A language of United States) (1p1)
- Umatilla [uma] (A language of United States) (1p1)
- Walla Walla [waa] (A language of United States) (1p1)
- Yakama [yak] (A language of United States) (1p1)

DIALECTS:

- Klikitat. (1p1)

LANGUAGE USE:

- Older adults. Also use English [eng]. (1p1)

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

- 639-3 yak (1p1)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- 46 N 122 W
- South central Washington State, Yakima Reservation, Toppenish. (1p1)

1.4 Brief history:

- “Long before the Europeans arrived to the American continent, the tribes were the farmers of nature. The Native peoples practiced long held beliefs in relation to fishing, hunting, gathering, and farming in ways that would ensure the continuance of resources through time. Before the arrival of Europeans, the Yakama were one of several tribes who lived on the Columbia Plateau of what is today Idaho, Oregon and Washington.” (2p2)

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

- “The forces of change can easily be conjectured, although to be certain a thorough investigation of these issues would be necessary. Apparently, contact with European and Euroamerican culture and peoples challenged Indigenous women's practices. Epidemics, market economy, Christian missionaries, settlers to the Oregon Country, and, after the 1846 boundary decision, the United States government all had an impact on Plateau cultural practices. In the later nineteenth century, the mining rushes and the building of the railroads both north and south of the boundary line brought increased Euroamerican populations and economic development to the interior. By taking girls away from [End Page 12] their families and communities, boarding schools and Euroamerican education contributed greatly to the dissolution of traditional practices.” (3p1)

1.6 Ecology:

- Terrain: “The Plateau is an arid, often mountainous region drained by the Columbia, Fraser, and Snake rivers, or roughly occupying a region defined today by eastern British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon, all of Idaho, and parts of Alberta and Montana. A wide range of Indigenous peoples made their home in the region, such as the Nez Perce in Idaho state, the Yakama of Washington state, and the Thompson, Lillooet, and the Okanagan in Canada” (3p1)

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

- “By the end of 1885, the population of North Yakima had swelled to 1,200 people.” (5p1)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- “Fish, especially salmon (five kinds), steelhead trout, eel, and sturgeon, was the staple. Fish was eaten fresh or dried, ground, and stored. People also ate game, roots, berries, and nuts.” (6p1)
- “Their economy was based on fishing, hunting, gathering, and intertribal trading of such items as fish, woven baskets, oil, white talc, basketry, skins, furs, dogs and horses”(2p2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- “In early spring they traveled to root grounds where they camped and traded with neighboring Tribes. During late spring to early summer, the salmon would begin to travel up the Columbia River where the Yakama would move to the lower Columbia to catch and preserve the fish. In late summer to early fall, they traveled into the Cascade Mountains to pick berries and hunt while drying their provisions for winter.” (2p2)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

- “Men fished using platforms, weirs, dip nets, harpoons, and traps. They hunted using bow and arrow and deadfalls. Other technological items included skin bags, baskets (some watertight), and carved wooden utensils.” (6p1)

2.4 Food storage:

- “With the changing of the seasons, the Yakama people would travel to different parts of the plateau to hunt, gather and trade. During the winter, the people would live in villages of tule-mat lodges along interior rivers, where they subsisted on dried foods.” (2p2)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- “Men fished using platforms, weirs, dip nets, harpoons, and traps. They hunted using bow and arrow and deadfalls. Other technological items included skin bags, baskets (some watertight), and carved wooden utensils.” (6p1) Women tended to making and supporting the families.

2.6 Land tenure:

- My research indicates that land is not inheritable, because they live on reservations.

2.7 Ceramics:

- “Each menstrual seclusion after the all-important puberty ritual reinforced the special manifestation of a woman's power in the production and decoration of these products. Women could use their "leisure" time in the menstrual lodge to make baskets, tanned-skin clothing, beaded objects, or the more mundane twine and tule mats.” (3p1)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- “Groups of families lived together in permanent winter villages, where they raced, gambled, and held festivals. During the rest of the year individual families dispersed to hunt, fish, and gather food.” (6p1)

2.9 Food taboos: none found; However, “Men fished using platforms, weirs, dip nets, harpoons, and traps. They hunted using bow and arrow and deadfalls. Other technological items included skin bags, baskets (some watertight), and carved wooden utensils.” (6p1)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- “Men fished using platforms [...]” (6p1)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): none found

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): none found

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): none found

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): none found

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): 3.4 (4p1)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): none found

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): In my research I found one note of a male marrying at age 20, however, there has not been any further evidence. Women, however, enter womanhood at the first of her menstrual rituals. She will then establish her own dwelling and the husband will move in with her. (3p1)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- “Upon divorce, a man's belongings were set outside the lodge door, while the woman retained the dwelling” (3)
- Separation was a simple matter and even if a husband opposed his wife's desire to leave him, she nevertheless could not be compelled to remain (10p7).

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- “Most men had two wives at once, and men of importance had more.” (10p9)

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

- Bride price was usually six horses. (10p8)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

“Located along the eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountain Range, the Yakama Nation forest consists of 600,000 acres of timbered lands. All this for future generations yet unborn according to teachings by our elders.” (11p1)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- “Yakimas maintain many aspects of traditional culture, including family customs, service, and leadership. Although most live in nuclear families, elders remain of key importance to Yakima society. The language is alive and well, especially as part of religious ceremonies and among more traditional people. Adults and children may take classes to strengthen their native language skills. Yakima basketry is still an important art and craft.” (6p1)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: none found

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- “In a great many cases, at least, one wife was from some neighboring tribe or band, for there was much intermarriage with the kindred bands of Shahaptians, as well as with more the more easterly Chinookans, and the Salishan bands above Priest rapids.” (10p9)

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

- Though there is a lot of research on ‘community’ there are no comments on “other fathers”

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

- Mothers duty to her daughter during the daughters first menstrual cycles is to pass on her knowledge of womanhood and the rituals that come with it. (3p1)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? none found

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: none found

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

- “A chief’s son usually married the daughter of another chief, if not of a kindred band, then of some neighbouring, friendly tribe.” (10p14)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

- Recreant wives were not punished but the guilty man might be killed by the husband with impunity. (10p9)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: none found

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

- Based on the tribal community and heavy influences of European and American culture it is reasonable to conclude that children would be raised in the community. However, no evidence of this thought could be found.

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: none found

4.22 Evidence for couvades: none found

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

- “Since westernization and assimilation encroached upon the reservation, kinship relation, language use, traditional food practices, and other Yakama cultural tradition have been eroded. [...] Elders are ideally situated to provide not only the technical skills, but also the cultural teachings [...]” (4) This sums up the role that Elders play in kinship.

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

- Avoidance is seen during the menstrual rituals of young girls who begin their womanhood training.

4.24 Joking relationships? none found.

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: none found

4.26 Incest avoidance rules:

- It was not uncommon for women to marry into a different tribe or band; however, there was no specific evidence for incest avoidance.

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

- “The chief would announce a dance, which was understood to be for unmarried people, though married persons came as spectators.” (10p7)

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

- “Infants were called by temporary names given without formality. At the age of four or five years, names were formally bestowed.” (10p9)

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

- Men had wives from neighboring tribes (10p9).

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

- “The chief would announce a dance, which was understood to be for unmarried people, though married persons came as spectators. A young woman coming out from the crowd and dancing thus signified willingness to be married; and any young man matrimonially inclined could follow, lay his hand on her shoulder, and facing her, begin to dance. If she threw his hand off, he was rejected; If not, he was accepted, and everybody recognized them as man and wife. They lived together without further formality. Later was adopted the custom by which the father of the young man was required to go to the family of the young girl with the promise of a certain number of horses, usually six.” (10p7)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

- “There were no clans or gentes among the Yakima, and the only bar to marriage was known relationship.” (10p9)

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

- Multiple sources provided information about deaths during the documentation of Yamima culture, however, no number was ever recorded.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- “They weren’t really known as a warlike tribe, but they did sometimes fight with the Shoshones.” (8)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: none found

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

- “The Yakamas were allies and trading partners of other platuo tribes such as the Nez Perce and Umatilla. They weren’t really known as a warlike tribe, but they did sometimes fight with the Shoshones.” (8)

4.18 Cannibalism? None found.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- “The 1990 Indian population was 6,296, of a total population of well over 27,000. The Yakima Nation is governed by a 14-member elected tribal council of both sexes.”

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- Yakama mostly remain on the reservation designated by the U.S.

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

- “Autonomous bands were led by leaders selected partly by merit and also by heredity. The bands came together under a head chief in times of celebration and danger.” (6)
- “Chieftanship was largely hereditary. The son of a chief, especially the eldest son, was much more likely to become a chief than a common man...But there was nothing except incapacity that prevented any man from attaining the position of chief.” (10p9)

5.4 Post marital residence:

- The woman will live with her family until she is of age. She will then construct her own hut in which will be shared with the husband. (3)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- “Once the Yakama people were moved onto the reservation, agents forced them to grow crops; yet, many resisted and continued to fish, hunt, and gather. During this time, the Yakama increasingly lost access to hunting, fishing, roots and berry grounds where non-native people started farms and ranches on ceded lands. Currently the 1,377,034-acre reservation is located in South-central Washington, along the eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountain Range (NWtravel Magazine, 2009). By the early 1900s, nearly all tillable acreage was purchased out of the hands of the Yakama people. On lands purchased during the Allotment Era, the towns of Toppenish and Wapato were established. State, county and federal governments pushed for and promoted development that included railroad and road construction through Yakama territory. Non-native people wanting to restrict the movement of the Yakama people on the Columbia Plateau and on their lands sought official intervention thus further limiting their cultural practices of gathering (NWtravel Magazine, 2009). (3)

5.6 Social interaction divisions? (age and sex):

- “Women from other Plateau groups also experienced intense training, according [End Page 7] to recent informants. “At puberty time for a girl, the Nez Perce had those menstrual lodges where women would go... during her period... they go there, and they

stay there, her grandmother or mother would take her there and help them, explaining about it. She would stay there during that time," recalled a Nez Perce woman in the 1980s" (3)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: None found.

5.8 Village and house organization:

- "Groups of families lived together in permanent winter villages [...]" (6)

5.9 Specialized village structures:

- "The importance of the women's lodge in the construction of Plateau women's gender roles has been defined in three ways. First, the lodge was a woman-built structure using woman-made materials on a preferred site selected by women. Second, the lodge was the puberty ritual's site, where the elders trained up each generation in ways appropriate for women. Third, the lodge was a place of production, where skills were introduced to girls and where menstruating women made goods. Finally, the woman's lodge was also the site for another, equally significant, gender construction task. Birth is the fourth understanding of the lodge's importance." (3)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- "Plateau women set up camp, including raising the mat lodges, then broke camp and dismantled the lodges when traveling and when returning to traditional villages." (3)

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

- "Longhouse families throughout the Plateau region are linked together, mostly through marriage. The Indian Shaker religion is also active on the reservation, as are several Christian churches.
- Yakimas maintain many aspects of traditional culture, including family customs, service, and leadership. Although most live in nuclear families, elders remain of key importance to Yakima society." (6)

5.12 Trade:

- "Because of their particular home territory and its varying resources, tribal women "specialized" in certain products. Klickitat baskets, Nez Perce sweet grass sally bags, Salish parfleches, or Canadian Plateau birch-bark baskets circulated in the region through the Indigenous trade fairs and at mutually used food resource sites. A talented tanner, quiller, or basket-maker became well known throughout the region and her work was sought after."

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- "Autonomous bands were led by leaders selected partly by merit and also by heredity. The bands came together under a head chief in times of celebration and danger." (6)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- "Yakima Indians believed in a creator as well as the existence of animal spirits. The latter could be helpful in life and were sought in remote places by adolescent boys. Shamans' powerful spirits allowed them to cure illness. Most important ceremonies had to do with first food (salmon, root, berry) feasts." (6)

6.2 Stimulants:

- "Marijuana remains illegal on the 1.2 million-acre reservation, said the tribe's attorney George Colby, who added that the citizens of Washington lack the authority to legalize recreational pot use on tribal lands." (9)

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

- "The ritual practice of menstrual seclusion on the Plateau discloses the sited nature of girls' puberty rites. Passing on women's lore and wisdom occurred during puberty training. Women's training in the production of artifacts, such as basketry, leather goods, and quill (later beadwork) adornment was also spatially defined in the menstrual lodge. Delivery of the next generation took place in the woman's lodge, where births occurred. For many girls, the menstrual lodge was where they insured a good future (that included health, prosperity, husband, and children) for themselves through ritual practices. The range of activities within the lodge and the weight of their importance for women mark the structure as culturally significant." (3)

6.4 Other rituals:

- "[...]that in Plateau culture some practices transcended gender. Men also went into seclusion and purification before hunting or going to war. Both boys and girls underwent purification and were isolated when they sought a guardian spirit on the vision quest. Fathers followed restrictions, as did mothers, at birthing. Boys even let blood from cuts in their legs during a portion of

their puberty training. It follows, then, as a wider cultural practice that women would go into isolation and undergo purification during this powerful time. (3)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- “There were also male-female similarities in Plateau culture. In fact, men were believed to have formerly menstruated. Coyote's decision to change the matter was influenced by both gender and spatial considerations. In *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natuaral History*, James Teit recounts a Shuswap menstruation myth...” (3)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- “Fine arts included tanned skins, decorated with shells, beads, and feathers, as well as baskets and reed mats.” (6)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- “There seems to be focus on women and their power within the society. This is indicated by the cultural values surrounding the becoming rituals. Perhaps most important as she progressed through her life cycle, the Plateau woman would carry forward the training and teachings of gender roles that she received from her own grandmother, other female family members, and community elders. Some of the values imparted in the puberty training were to "be pure, cleanly, honest, truthful, brave, friendly, hospitable, energetic... virtuous... kindhearted to friends, diligent... modest... charitable... faithful... industrious." Important lessons of female-male relationships were disclosed, childbirth discussed, and family advice shared.” (3)

6.8 Missionary effect:

- “Christian missionaries, settlers to the Oregon Country, and, after the 1846 boundary decision, the United States government all had an impact on Plateau cultural practices. In the later nineteenth century, the mining rushes and the building of the railroads both north and south of the boundary line brought increased Euroamerican populations and economic development to the interior. By taking girls away from [End Page 12] their families and communities, boarding schools and Euroamerican education contributed greatly to the dissolution of traditional practices. Taking a spatial perspective, however, is also instructive. The challenge to Indigenous control of territories, especially with Euroamerican population incursion, treaties with the United States that dissolved Indian title to the land, and the establishment of the reservations in the region, added to the pressure for change because some of the traditional places were no longer accessible, even with porous reservation boundaries and inventive Native circumvention of officialdom. The practice of seasonal food gathering rounds was challenged in the nineteenth century by settler takeover of fertile root grounds and fishing sites, for instance.” (3)

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- “In Yakima County, 66.21 per 100,000 youth ages 10-17 either committed suicide or attempted to commit suicide.” (7)
- “Canoe-burial was the method of disposing of the dead. A person of the same sex as the deceased was summoned to wash and clothe the body, which was done without reward. Then two persons, hired to prepare the burial place, took with them two canoes, one of which they placed in a rocky shelter, and the other broke into pieces. The body, securely wrapped in deerskin, was taken to this place, laid in the one canoe, and covered with the pieces of the other.” (10p9).

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- “Corpses were buried in pits where they were sometimes cremated as well. Graves were marked by a ring of stones. More than one individual may have been buried and cremated at a time. Burials also occurred in rock slides, where they were marked with stakes.” (6)

6.12 Is there teknonymy? none found.

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

- “Yakima Indians believed in a creator as well as the existence of animal spirits. The latter could be helpful in life and were sought in remote places by adolescent boys. Shamans’ powerful spirits allowed them to cure illness. Most important ceremonies had to do with first food (salmon, root, berry) feasts.” (6)

7. Adornment

7.1 & 7.2

- “Body paint: For several Canadian Plateau groups, women's facial tattoos and ear or nose rings could now be worn. Her puberty training complete, the new woman would reenact elements of the rite whenever she was secluded.” (3)

7.3 Haircut:

- “The hair of the men was cut square on the front and left hanging loosely at the sides and the back. The custom of wrapping the braided hair with strips of fur began within the memory of men now living, probably not earlier than the middle of the century.” (10p7)

7.4 Scarification:

- “No nose ornaments were used nor was tattooing practiced.” (10p7)

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

- “Special attire and appearances within the women's lodge were also important, perhaps carrying spiritual but certainly gendered significance. Although the patterning might vary, girls from all groups painted their faces red. All wore knee and ankle fringes decorated with deer hoof rattles. [...] Among the Yakama, she would now begin her string counting ball, marking important events by knotting the string and keeping it with her until death. For several Canadian Plateau groups, women's facial tattoos and ear or nose rings could now be worn.” (3)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- “Each menstrual seclusion after the all-important puberty ritual reinforced the special manifestation of a woman's power in the production and decoration of these products. Women could use their “leisure” time in the menstrual lodge to make baskets, tanned-skin clothing, beaded objects, or the more mundane twine and tule mats. Perhaps the focus of much of the “work” done during the puberty rite was to train the hands—as the articulators of a woman's creative power made manifest in menarche—in proper duties or habits or relationships with the object they produced.” (3)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- “Breechclouts, aprons, vests, and moccasins were made of skins. Fur robes were added in cold weather. Plains-style leggings and dresses became popular in the eighteenth century.” (6) “Each menstrual seclusion after the all-important puberty ritual reinforced the special manifestation of a woman's power in the production and decoration of these products. Women could use their “leisure” time in the menstrual lodge to make [...] tanned-skin clothing [...]” (3)

7.8 Missionary effect: “

- The forces of change can easily be conjectured, although to be certain a thorough investigation of these issues would be necessary. Apparently, contact with European and Euroamerican culture and peoples challenged Indigenous women's practices. Epidemics, market economy, **Christian missionaries**, settlers to the Oregon Country, and, after the 1846 boundary decision, the United States government all had an impact on Plateau cultural practices. In the later nineteenth century, the mining rushes and the building of the railroads both north and south of the boundary line brought increased Euroamerican populations and economic development to the interior. By taking girls away from [End Page 12] their families and communities, boarding schools and Euroamerican education contributed greatly to the dissolution of traditional practices.” (3)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

- “From the ears dangled elk-teeth, or dentalium shells obtained in trade, stung on deer skin thongs and medicine men sometimes wore necklaces of grizzly-bear claws.” (10p7)

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: none found

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- Some men did have multiple wives, otherwise no specific information was found. (10p9)

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

- “Since westernization and assimilation encroached upon the reservation, kinship relation, language use, traditional food practices, and other Yakama cultural tradition have been eroded. [...] Elders are ideally situated to provide not only the technical skills, but also the cultural teachings [...]” (4p1) This sums up the role that Elders play in kinship.

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Economy/Poverty:

“Timber is the Yakima Nation’s main income producer; its forest products industry includes a furniture manufacturing plant. The nation maintains extensive range and farmland. However, 80 percent of irrigated land remains leased by non-Indians. The Wapato Project provides the Indians with control over their own water. The tribe has spent over \$50 million to purchase former lands. The Yakima-Klickitat Fish Production Project, a cooperative effort between the Yakima Nation and Washington State, is a major fishery restoration/ conservation venture. An industrial park contains Indian and non-Indian industries. The Yakima Land Enterprise operates fruit orchards and stands and a recreational vehicle park. Other employment is provided by the government and the nation as well as by small business enterprises. Still, unemployment fluctuates between about 30 and 60 percent, and up to 75 percent of the people live below the poverty level.” (6p1)

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