# A Death in the Family: The Strategic Importance of Women in Contemporary Northern Ojibwa Society

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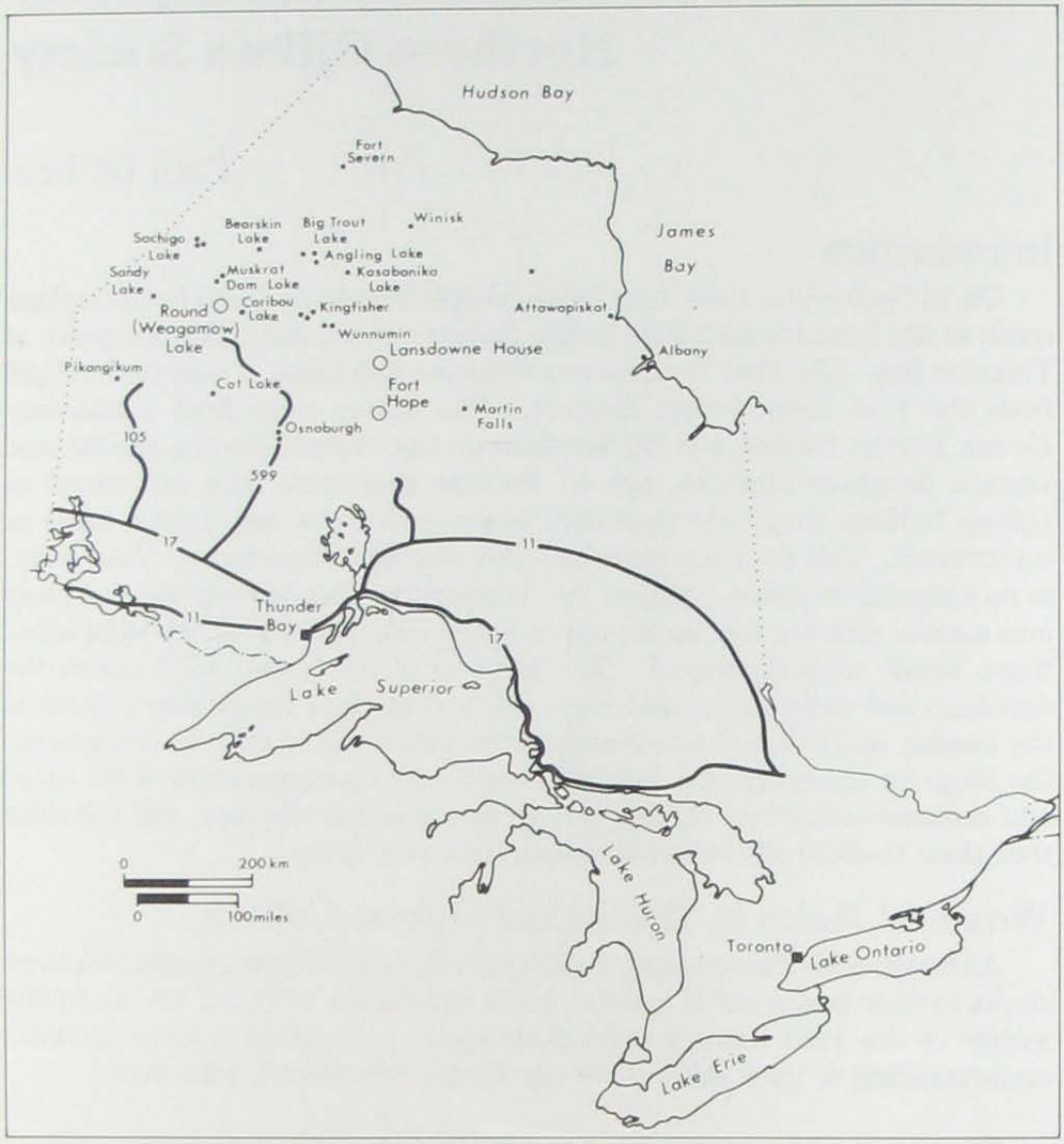
## Introduction

On 23 November, 1983, four Indian people burned to death in an airplane crash at the Lansdowne House Indian Reserve, about 250 miles due north of Thunder Bay[1] (see Map 1). One was Francine Anicinabe, a nine year old girl from the Fort Hope Indian Reserve. The others were from Lansdowne House: Bertha Fiddler, age 42; her sister-in-law, Diane Kewatin, age 26; and Diane's daughter Lizabeth, age 4.[2] Because they were born and raised as Ojibwa Indians, they lived their lives in a way that few non-Indians know or understand. This does not diminish their strategic importance. They were, in no exaggerated sense, the glue that bonded their families together, not only into a social unit but into an economic one as well, and when they were killed those bonds were destroyed. The purpose of this paper is to assess the economic and social losses that were suffered by their families as a result of the deaths, and to determine how long the losses will be felt. In order to set the stage for the analysis, it is best to begin with an examination of the social and economic roles that Ojibwa women performed in the past, and the roles that their traditionally-oriented descendants play today.

## Womens' Roles in Traditional Ojibwa Culture

Although early European accounts typically depict Ojibwa women "as mere slaves to their husbands" (Cameron, 1890; cf. Hansen, 1977, pp. 23-74), by the middle of the 19th century trained observers had gained a more accurate understanding of their roles. One was Henry Schoolcraft, who wrote:

> The duties and labours of Indian life are believed to be equally, and not, as has been generally thought, unequally divided between the male and female. This division [of labour] is also the most natural possible, and such as must ever result from the condition of man, as a mere hunter. It is the duty of the male to provide food, and of the female to prepare it. This arrangement carries with it to the share of the male, all that relates to external concerns, and all that pertains to the internal to the care of the female. ... To the man belongs not only the business of hunting, for this is an *employment* and not a *pastime*,




Map 1: Lansdowne House and other Indian Reserves in Northern Ontario

> but [also] the care of the territory, and keeping off intruders and enemies, and the preparation of canoes for travel, and of arms and implements of war. The duties of cooking and dressing meats and fowl, and whatever else the chase affords, carries on the other hand, to the share of the hunter's wife, [as well as] the entire care and controul [*sic*] of the lodge. [1848, p. 74; emphasis in the original]

Schoolcraft's description reflects the ecological and economic circumstances of traditional Ojibwa life, including the Northern Ojibwa,[3] who occupied an immense tract of land corresponding "to the Patricia portion of the Precambrian Uplands of northern Ontario with a slight extension west into Manitoba and a possible extension southeast" (Rogers and Taylor, 1981, p. 231). Like most other Algonkian-speaking Indians, the Northern Ojibwa were migratory hunters and gatherers. In fall and winter they pursued game in the boreal forest, and in spring and summer they camped by lakes and rivers where they relied on fishing and gathering for their livelihood. Such pursuits were not only well-suited to the environment, they were also productive, especially so when men and women performed different but complementary roles - men focusing on fishing and going after game, and women concentrating on child-rearing, skinning and preparing furs, and butchering and preparing food. The division of labour was consequently an adaptive device for it helped to ensure that both sexes were involved in the survival of the group as a whole (Hansen, 1977, pp. 4-5; cf. Landes, 1971, pp. 124-177; Sharp, 1981, pp. 227-241).

## The Roles of Traditionally-Oriented Ojibwa Women Today

The division of labour is by no means only a thing of the past; it is still found in remote Ojibwa settlements in the far north of Ontario, particularly where fishing and going after game are viable economic endeavours (cf. Driben, 1983, pp. 32-51; Dunning, 1959, pp. 21-47). The Round Lake Ojibwa, who live about 140 miles northwest of Fort Hope and even closer to Lansdowne House, are an example. There, according to Rogers:

> A man and his wife form an economic unit in which one complements the other on the basis of the division of labor according to sex. A husband provides food, both country game and store food, hides, and clothing for his wife. It is his duty to provide a house in which to live. He also makes basic items of wood that she may require. ... A man will on occasion draw water for his wife and split and saw firewood. A wife, on the other hand, reciprocates by ... preparing and cooking food, sewing and mending, and doing his laundry. She also makes a number of beaded items for him such as moccasins [and] mittens. ... [1962, p. B26; cf. Rogers, 1963, pp. 58-59]

Rogers also states the following:

> The bond between a husband and wife developes [sic] with time. At first their relations tend to be reserved and formal. This alters as they grow older and the relation becomes more free and easy. With time they become genuinely devoted to one another. A wife will worry when her husband fails to return from trapping when expected. She will sometimes write to him when they are separated. A man will show definite concern when his wife is sick and discuss her condition and what must be done. A man will forego trapping to remain at home to care for a sick wife. [1962, pp. B25-B26]

Such comments are instructive, not only because they are relatively recent, but also because they provide some insight into the non-economic ties that unite an Ojibwa husband and wife (cf. Driben, 1986, p. 61). The bonds are much the same among the couples who live off the land in the Fort Hope and Lansdowne House Indian reserves today.

## Living Off the Land at Fort Hope and Lansdowne House

Like their ancestors and neighbours, many men from Fort Hope and Lansdowne House aspire to be "hunters," that is, to earn a livelihood by hunting, trapping and fishing. Considering their history this is not surprising. Hunting and fishing have been integral parts of the Northern Ojibwa economy since time immemorial (Dawson, 1983, pp. 55-84; Wright, 1972), and trapping has been important for more than two centuries (Rogers, 1983, pp. 85-141). Moreover, while some northern Indians have lived in so-called "trading post" communities for years, where white institutions dominate (Helm and Damas, 1968, pp. 9-21; Taylor, 1972, pp. 20-21), throughout most of this century the Indian people from Fort Hope and Lansdowne House have been able to maintain their own cultural institutions. For the most part they hunted and trapped in the fall and winter and fished during the spring and summer, moving back and forth between the Hudson's Bay Company posts at Fort Hope and Lansdowne House and a number of self-contained base camps located on their hunting grounds in the wilderness (Taylor, 1972, p. 21). In fact, it was not until 1950 that Lansdowne House was formed, and this was not because the traditional economy had collapsed, but because of "the establishment ... of a permanent R.C. mission with a resident white missionary ... [and] a government nursing station" (Taylor, 1972, p. 21). Similar circumstances gave rise to the settlement at Fort Hope, which also dates back to the 1950s, except that the introduction of formal schooling played an equally important role (Driben and Trudeau, 1983, pp. 22-36). Hunting, trapping and fishing are consequently deeply ingrained in the culture of both communities and, most importantly, still provide men with the opportunity to

be held in high regard by their peers. As was the case in the past, the more they produce and share the higher their social standing.

Fishing and living off the land, however, are not simply ways for the residents to maintain their cultural identity. In 1969 the federal and provincial governments began to provide the Fort Hope and Lansdowne House Indian bands with funds to hire administrative staff, to start businesses, and to encourage the residents to participate in a wide variety of make-work, job-training and community-development programs (Driben and Trudeau, 1983, pp. 33-36). In the meantime, cash had replaced "payments in kind" in the distribution of welfare (Driben and Trudeau, 1983, p. 29). Altogether, this meant that thousands of dollars of new government money were entering the communities, and the people who lived there began taking advantage of this fact.

Such funds are important. The income that is acquired from government is used to pay bills and purchase possessions such as furniture and television sets, snowmobiles, boats, motors, rifles, clothing and so on. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the government provides the residents with sufficient funds to maintain an adequate standard of living (Driben and Trudeau, 1983, p. 46). In fact, according to the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company store in Lansdowne House, if the Indian people who live there had to rely exclusively on the income they derive from government, they would be able to afford little other than food.[4] In addition, there is a price to pay for exploiting government funds, none more important than the vulnerability that is associated with depending on a resource that is subject to political control (Driben and Trudeau, 1983, p. 46).

Hunting, trapping and fishing, however, do not generate such feelings, so many people prefer these activities to those that are promoted by government. Moreover, living off the land is also a source of wealth. Cash is acquired by commercial fishing, and also by selling furs such as beaver, muskrat, lynx, mink, marten, otter, red squirrel, weasel, coloured fox and timber wolf to buyers such as the Hudson's Bay Company. In addition, animals provide a substantial proportion of the meat the residents of the communities consume. Some families consume fourteen meals per week that are made mainly from "Indian" food, including red meats from species such as moose, woodland caribou, beaver, muskrat and lynx; "poultry" in the form of geese, ducks, grouse and hare; and fish such as pickerel, whitefish and sturgeon.[5] Equally important, a successful hunter not only produces food, but also distributes it to kinsmen and friends. They, in turn, reciprocate, and this means that a good hunter is rarely short of food. Thus, all things considered, the men from Fort Hope and Lansdowne House have good reason to hunt, trap and fish.

## Limits on Productivity

The men from Fort Hope and Lansdowne House who live off the land today are not equally productive. Some do not "hunt," and others do so only on weekends. But there are also those who pursue fish and game on a full-

time basis, and they are the most successful. Such individuals do not reside in the villages throughout the year; they go out on the land for eight to ten weeks in fall and spring - usually between the beginning of October and the end of December, and again between the beginning of March and the end of May - and it is then that they are most productive. They also typically establish fishing camps away from the villages in summer.

Being productive, however, is not simply a matter of movement. A successful hunter must know the land and its limitations. Like all successful hunters in the boreal forest, the most productive individuals from Fort Hope and Lansdowne House are best regarded as experts. They are:

> adept at steadying a beaver snare with a loop of grass, at aging tracks, at noticing the broken bits of sedge at the mouth of a stream. ... [Moreover,] proficient application of these techniques is quite demanding. The ... forager is always learning about climate, landscape, and animal behaviour. Because the environment changes rapidly, in multiple ways, and with significant degrees of statistical unpredictability, the major adaptive skills of the ... forager are (1) observational sensitivity to the state of the ecosystem, (2) the ability to evaluate simultaneously many environmental factors which will affect foraging methods and abilities, and (3) flexible responses. ... [Living off the land] in the boreal forest is the application of simple rules in a complex and skill-demanding setting. Each ... [Indian] forager has a history, built on experience and always engaged with the chances of the moment. [Winterhalter, 1983, p. 236][6]

Of course, more than knowledge and individual effort are required to be productive. The structure of the unit that pursues game and fish is equally important. To maximize the chance for success the workload must be shared, and, among successful traditionally oriented contemporary Northern Ojibwa couples, husbands and wives typically share the work. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the absence of a spouse, for whatever reason, can cause a severe economic loss, whether that spouse is husband or wife.

## The Kewatin, Fiddler and Anicinabe Families

The Kewatin, Fiddler and Anicinabe families are a case in point. Before the plane crash and resulting deaths they did not pursue animals for sport but to survive, and the members learned how to do so in the same manner as countless generations before them. As children, Bertha Fiddler, Diane Kewatin and Francine's mother, Violet Anicinabe, were schooled primarily by their mothers. By example and by allowing the children to practice what they learned as they matured, their mothers taught them that there are certain tasks that women are expected to perform throughout the year: child-rearing, splitting logs for firewood and bringing water from the lake on a daily basis

for drinking, washing and cleaning. Under their mothers' tutelage they also learned about the ebb and flow of traditional Ojibwa life, and how they were expected to fit into the pattern.

In the village they learned how to cook according to custom, to clean house, to do laundry, to sew and repair clothing, to do beadwork, and to make moccasins and mittens. When their families moved to fishing camps in the summer they learned how to help their fathers and brothers set nets in open water, to keep the family's fishing equipment in good repair and to clean, prepare and preserve pickerel, whitefish and sturgeon. Equally important, they learned how to clean, prepare and preserve the waterfowl that their fathers and brothers captured in spring and fall - often the whole family went out on these excursions. In addition, towards the end of summer, they made trips to the bush to collect plants for medicine and food,[7] and in fall they helped prepare and package the food and equipment their families needed to go out on the land.

They were required to master different tasks when their families arrived at their fathers' hunting grounds. By observing and later imitating their mothers, Bertha, Diane and Violet learned how to construct and maintain a winter camp, to fish through the ice, to snare hare and make blankets from the skins, to bait traps for marten and to capture grouse and squirrels. Most important, they also learned how to butcher animals such as moose, caribou, beaver, muskrat and lynx to ensure the maximum yield of edible meat, and how to remove the pelts of fur-bearers such as beaver, muskrat, lynx, mink, marten, otter, red squirrel, weasel, coloured fox and timber wolf to ensure the maximum cash return.

Meanwhile, the men who became their husbands were acquiring a different set of skills. By observing and imitating their fathers, Albert Kewatin, Ben Fiddler and Joseph Anicinabe learned that in summer a man's job was to fish. They were taught how to set and retrieve nets, and where and when to place them to capture the pickerel, whitefish and sturgeon that their families used for food and to sell to commercial buyers who transported the catch by plane to the south. In spring and fall their fathers taught them how best to hunt for geese and ducks, and, as winter approached, they learned how to make ready to go out on the land. They were also taught how to set up a winter camp, and how to go after moose and caribou. When they were out on the land, they learned what kind of traps to use for different species, when and where to set the traps and how best to bait them to ensure a successful harvest.

Thus, by the time they married, the couples who established the Kewatin, Fiddler and Anicinabe families already had acquired substantial skills, and after they married they continued to refine those skills, so much so that by the time of the accident they were all regarded as role models by the people they lived among. According to the residents of Lansdowne House, the Kewatin family was constantly improving its proficiency to produce wealth by hunting, trapping and fishing, which was befitting for a couple in their late

twenties. The Fiddler family was held in higher esteem: many people say that Ben and his wife Bertha were the most productive husband and wife team in the community, and this makes sense given their own maturity (in their middle forties when the accident occurred) and the maturity of their children. Having reached the "stage at which the ... ages of its members are the most favourable for coping with the economic pursuits basic to its existence ... [it was] at the pinnacle of its success" (Rogers, 1962, p. B72). As for the Anicinabe family, befitting the age of its members (husband and wife in their late thirties when the accident occurred), the residents of Fort Hope accorded them a status midway between the Kewatin and Fiddler families.

The residents' perceptions are borne out by government records. As Figure 1 shows, with respect to the production of furs, the status accorded each family before the plane crash is close to the mark. However, the residents also say that as a result of the deaths the economy of all three families has been undermined, and this too is borne out by the facts. Interviews with those who keep track of natural resources harvests indicated that other traditionally oriented families from Fort Hope and Lansdowne House were able to maintain their levels of production after the plane crash.[8] But when the victims were killed, their immediate families suffered unprecedented economic losses.

## Economic Losses

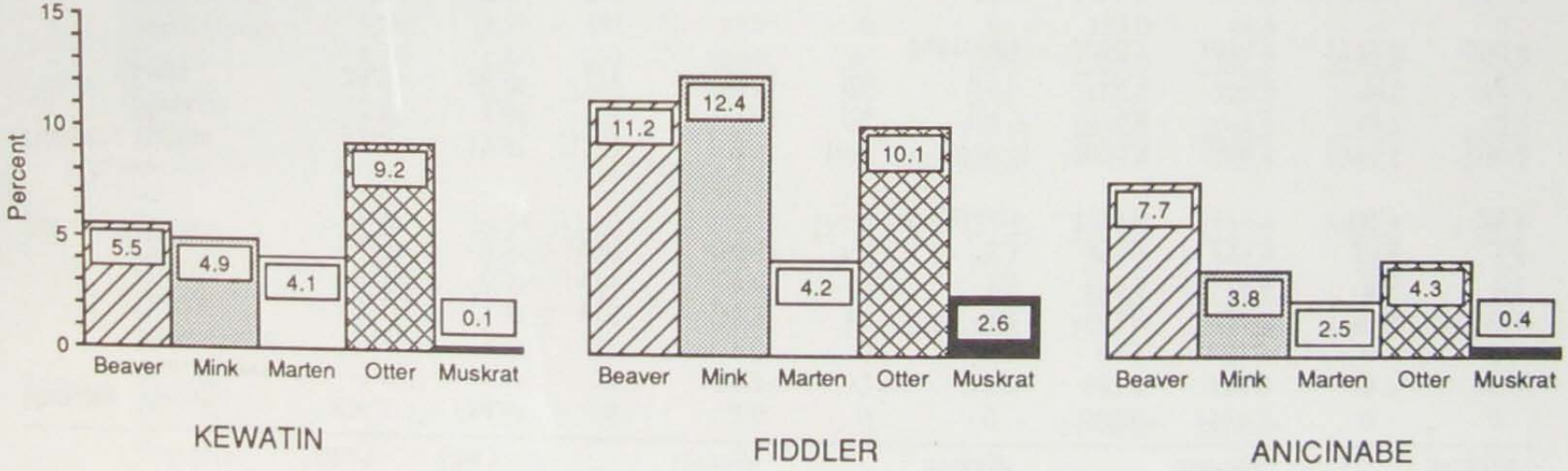
**The Kewatin and Fiddler Familes**

Consider the Kewatin and the Fiddler families. Tables 1 and 2 show the amount of meat that was produced by the families before and after the accident. Both units have been far less productive since the plane crash occurred. In the three-year interval before Diane and her daughter Lizabeth were killed, the Kewatin family produced 11,041.7 pounds of meat, but only 1,840.8 pounds in the three-year period after the deaths. The Fiddler family suffered an even greater economic decline - its members produced 31,244.4 pounds of meat during the three-year period before Bertha Fiddler died, but only 5,194.4 pounds during the same period after her death.

Although the Ojibwa do not calculate the monetary value of such meat, one way to comprehend the magnitude of the loss is to consider its cash replacement value. Tables 3 and 4 contain such data. As they indicate, in terms of cash value, the losses are staggering - on average, $11,217.75[9] per annum in the case of the Kewatin family, and in the Fiddler family, $27,471.42 per year.

Their plight is all the more severe considering that the income from trapping has also declined. Tables 5 and 6 show the extent of the loss, and it too is significant. On average, the Kewatin family lost $1,979.50 a year in income, and the Fiddler family $3,577.67. To some extent, Mr. Fiddler has been able to overcome the loss. He went commercial fishing with male friends twice after his wife was killed - once in 1984 and again in 1985 - and earned

Figure 1: Percentage of the five most important species of fur-bearers captured by the Kewatin, Fiddler, and Anicinabe families in relation to the harvest of their respective bands in the 1981-82 and 1982-83 seasons.[1]




[1] The data in this figure were obtained from the Geraldton District Office of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Table 1: The Amount of Meat Produced by Albert Kewatin and His Family

| Activity | Species Sought | Average Live Weight (lbs.) | Average Edible Weight (lbs.) | Reported No. of Kills[1] before deaths 1981-83 Total | Reported No. of Kills[1] before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Reported No. of Kills[1] after deaths 1984-86 Total | Reported No. of Kills[1] after deaths 1984-86 Annual average | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Annual average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hunting | Moose | 876.5[2] | 584.6[3] | 6 | 2.0 | 0 | 0 | 3507.6 | 1169.2 | 0 | 0 |
| | Can. Geese | 7.6[3] | 5.1[3] | 76 | 25.3 | 7 | 2.3 | 387.6 | 129.2 | 35.7 | 11.9 |
| | Snow Geese | 5.2[3] | 3.5[3] | 27 | 9.0 | 0 | 0 | 94.5 | 31.5 | 0 | 0 |
| | Ducks | 2.1[3] | 1.4[3] | 115 | 38.3 | 14 | 4.7 | 161.0 | 53.7 | 19.6 | 6.5 |
| | Grouse | 1.3[3] | 0.9[3] | 177 | 59.0 | 4 | 1.3 | 159.3 | 53.1 | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| | Hare | 4.0[4] | 2.7[3] | 150 | 50.0 | 4 | 1.3 | 405.0 | 135.0 | 10.8 | 3.6 |
| | | | | | | | Subtotals | 4715.0 | 1571.7 | 69.7 | 23.2 |
| Trapping | Beaver | 29.8[2] | 19.9[3] | [152] | [50.7] | [89] | [29.7] | 3024.8 | 1008.3 | 1771.1 | 590.4 |
| | Muskrat | 2.4[5] | 1.6[3] | [6] | [2.0] | [0] | [0] | 9.6 | 3.2 | 0 | 0 |
| | Lynx | 24.5[5] | 16.3[3] | [1] | [0.3] | [0] | [0] | 16.3 | 5.4 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | Subtotals | 3050.7 | 1016.9 | 1771.1 | 590.4 |
| Fishing | Pickerel Whitefish Sturgeon | | | | | | | 3276.0[7] | 1092.0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | Totals | 11041.7 | 3680.5 | 1840.8 | 613.6 |

1 Based on Albert Kewatin's recollection and data provided by the Geraldton District Office of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Natural Resources data are presented in brackets.

2 Estimate based on Hamilton (1984, p. 33).

3 Estimates of the average edible weights of these animals are based on information provided to the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment by the Kayahna Tribal Area Council and Environment Canada(see Driben 1983, pp. 32-51).

4 Estimate based on Dawson (1973, p. 3).

5 Estimate based on Banfield (1974, p. 80).

6 Estimate based on Novak (1974, p. 3).

7 Estimate represents a combination of pickerel, whitefish and sturgeon.

Table 2: The Amount of Meat Produced by Ben Fiddler and His Family

| Activity | Species Sought | Average Live Weight (lbs.) | Average Edible Weight (lbs.) | Reported No. of Kills[1] before deaths 1981-83 Total | Reported No. of Kills[1] before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Reported No. of Kills[1] after deaths 1984-86 Total | Reported No. of Kills[1] after deaths 1984-86 Annual average | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Annual average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hunting | Moose | 876.5[2] | 584.6[2] | 6 | 2 | 2 | 0.7 | 3507.6 | 1169.2 | 1169.2 | 389.7 |
| | Can. Geese | 7.6[2] | 5.1[2] | 450 | 150.0 | 75 | 25.0 | 2295.0 | 765.0 | 382.5 | 127.5 |
| | Snow Geese | 5.2[2] | 3.5[2] | 38[3] | 12.7 | 0 | 0 | 133.0 | 44.3 | 0 | 0 |
| | Ducks | 2.1[2] | 1.4[2] | 300 | 100.0 | 30 | 10.0 | 420.0 | 140.0 | 42.0 | 14.0 |
| | Grouse | 1.3[2] | 0.9[2] | 2400 | 800.0 | 48 | 16.0 | 2160.0 | 720.0 | 43.2 | 14.4 |
| | Hare | 4.0[2] | 2.7[2] | 2160 | 720.0 | 15 | 5.0 | 5832.0 | 1944.0 | 40.5 | 13.5 |
| | | | | | | | Subtotals | 14347.6 | 4782.5 | 1677.4 | 559.1 |
| Trapping | Beaver | 29.8[2] | 19.9[2] | [229] | [76.3] | [172] | [57.3] | 4557.1 | 1519.0 | 3422.8 | 1140.9 |
| | Muskrat | 2.4[2] | 1.6[2] | [247] | [82.3] | [12] | [4] | 395.2 | 131.7 | 19.2 | 6.4 |
| | Lynx | 24.5[2] | 16.3[2] | 15 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 244.5 | 81.5 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | Subtotals | 5196.8 | 1732.2 | 3442.0 | 1147.3 |
| Fishing | Pickerel Whitefish Sturgeon | | | | | | | 11700.0[4] | 3900.0[4] | 75[5] | 25[5] |
| | | | | | | | Totals | 31244.4 | 10414.7 | 5194.4 | 1731.4 |

1 Based on Ben Fiddler's recollection and data provided by the Geraldton District Office of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Natural Resources data are presented in brackets.

2 Sources used in estimates are the same as in Table 1.

3 Mr. Fiddler reported that these geese were killed in spring, 1981.

4 Estimate represents a combination of pickerel, whitefish and sturgeon.

5 Estimate represents sturgeon; according to Fiddler no pickerel or whitefish were used for personal consumption.

Table 3: The Cash Value of Meat Produced by Albert Kewatin and His Family

| Activity | Species Sought | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Annual average | Cash Value ($) before deaths 1981-83 Total | Cash Value ($) before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Cash Value ($) after deaths 1984-86 Total | Cash Value ($) after deaths 1984-86 Annual average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hunting | Moose[1] | 3507.6 | 1169.2 | 0 | 0 | 15117.76 | 5039.25 | 0 | 0 |
| | Can. Geese[2] | 387.6 | 129.2 | 35.7 | 11.9 | 1143.42 | 381.14 | 105.32 | 35.11 |
| | Snow Geese[2] | 94.5 | 31.5 | 0 | 0 | 278.78 | 92.93 | 0 | 0 |
| | Ducks[2] | 161.0 | 53.7 | 19.6 | 6.5 | 474.95 | 158.32 | 57.82 | 19.27 |
| | Grouse[2] | 159.3 | 53.1 | 3.6 | 1.2 | 469.94 | 156.65 | 10.62 | 3.54 |
| | Hare[2] | 405.0 | 135.0 | 10.8 | 3.6 | 1194.75 | 398.25 | 31.86 | 10.62 |
| | Subtotals | 4715.0 | 1571.7 | 69.7 | 23.2 | 18679.60 | 6226.54 | 205.62 | 68.54 |
| Trapping | Beaver[1] | 3024.8 | 1008.3 | 1771.1 | 590.4 | 13036.89 | 4345.63 | 7633.44 | 2544.48 |
| | Muskrat[1] | 9.6 | 3.2 | 0 | 0 | 41.38 | 13.79 | 0 | 0 |
| | Lynx[1] | 16.3 | 5.4 | 0 | 0 | 70.25 | 23.42 | 0 | 0 |
| | Subtotals | 3050.7 | 1016.9 | 1771.1 | 590.4 | 13148.52 | 4382.84 | 7633.44 | 2544.48 |
| Fishing | Pickerel[2] Whitefish[2] Sturgeon[2] | 3276.0[7] | 1092.0 | 0 | 0 | 9664.20 | 3221.40 | 0 | 0 |
| | Totals | 11041.7 | 3680.5 | 1840.8 | 613.6 | 41492.32 | 13830.77 | 7839.06 | 2613.02 |

1 The cash value of these species is regarded to be equivalent to the combined average cost of one pound of pork chops, one pound of pork butt steak and one pound of hamburger at the Lansdowne House Hudson's Bay Company store. According to the manager, in the fall of 1986 the combined average cost of these products was $4.31 per pound ($4.90 for pork chops, $4.29 for pork butt steak and $3.73 for hamburger).

2 The cash value of these species is regard as equivalent to one pound of chicken at the same HBC store. According to the manager, in the fall of 1986 this was $2.95.

Table 4: The Cash Value of Meat Produced by Ben Fiddler and His Family

| Activity | Species Sought[1] | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Total | Edible Weight (lbs.) after deaths 1984-86 Annual average | Cash Value ($) before deaths 1981-83 Total | Cash Value ($) before deaths 1981-83 Annual average | Cash Value ($) after deaths 1984-86 Total | Cash Value ($) after deaths 1984-86 Annual average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hunting | Moose | 3507.6 | 1169.2 | 1169.2 | 389.7 | 15117.76 | 5039.25 | 5039.25 | 1679.75 |
| | Can. Geese | 2295.0 | 765.0 | 382.5 | 127.5 | 6770.25 | 2256.75 | 1128.38 | 376.13 |
| | Snow Geese | 133.0 | 44.3 | 0 | 0 | 392.35 | 130.78 | 0 | 0 |
| | Ducks | 420.0 | 140.0 | 42.0 | 14.0 | 1239.00 | 413.00 | 123.90 | 41.30 |
| | Grouse | 2160.0 | 720.0 | 43.2 | 14.4 | 6372.00 | 2124.00 | 127.44 | 42.48 |
| | Hare | 5832.0 | 1944.0 | 40.5 | 13.5 | 17204.40 | 5734.80 | 119.48 | 39.83 |
| | Subtotals | 14347.6 | 4782.5 | 1677.4 | 559.1 | 47095.76 | 15698.58 | 6538.45 | 2179.49 |
| Trapping | Beaver | 4557.1 | 1519.0 | 3422.8 | 1140.9 | 19641.10 | 6547.03 | 14752.27 | 4917.42 |
| | Muskrat | 395.2 | 131.7 | 19.2 | 6.4 | 1703.31 | 567.78 | 82.75 | 27.58 |
| | Lynx | 244.5 | 81.5 | 0 | 0 | 1053.80 | 351.27 | 0 | 0 |
| | Subtotals | 5196.8 | 1732.2 | 3442.0 | 1147.3 | 22398.21 | 7466.08 | 14835.02 | 4955.00 |
| Fishing | Pickerel<br>Whitefish | 11700.0 | 3900.0 | | | 34515.00 | 11505.00 | | |
| | Sturgeon | | | 75 | 25 | | | 221.25 | 73.75 |
| | Totals | 31244.4 | 10414.7 | 5194.4 | 1731.4 | 104008.97 | 34669.66 | 21594.72 | 7198.24 |

1 The cash values of these species were determined in the same ways as those in Table 3.

Table 5: The Income from Trapping Produced by Albert Kewatin and His Family

| Species Sought | Reported No. of Kills[1] | | | | Price per Pelt[2] ($) | Estimated Cash Return ($) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | before deaths 80/81 - 82/83 | | after deaths 83/84 - 85/86 | | | before deaths 80/81 - 82/83 | | after deaths 83/84 - 85/86 | |
| | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average | | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average |
| Beaver | 152 | 50.7 | 89 | 29.7 | 45.00 | 6840.00 | 2250.00 | 4005.00 | 1335.00 |
| Mink | 16 | 5.3 | 5 | 1.67 | 15.00 | 240.00 | 80.00 | 75.00 | 25.00 |
| Marten | 113 | 37.7 | 57 | 19.0 | 45.00 | 5085.00 | 1695.00 | 2565.00 | 855.00 |
| Otter | 25 | 8.3 | 21 | 7.0 | 40.00 | 1000.00 | 333.33 | 840.00 | 280.00 |
| Lynx | 1 | 13.0 | 0 | 0 | 300.00 | 300.00 | 100.00 | 0 | 0 |
| Muskrat | 6 | 2.0 | 0 | 0 | 2.00 | 12.00 | 4.00 | 0 | 0 |
| Red Squirrel | 2 | 0.7 | 3 | 1.0 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.33 | 1.5 | 0.50 |
| Weasel | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1.0 | 1.00 | 0 | 0 | 3.00 | 1.00 |
| Coloured Fox | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.33 | 50.00 | 0 | 0 | 50.00 | 16.67 |
| Timber Wolf | 1 | 0.33 | 1 | 0.33 | 75.00 | 75.00 | 25.00 | 75.00 | 25.00 |
| | | | | | Totals | 13553.00 | 4517.67 | 7614.50 | 2538.17 |

1 The reported number of kills is based on data provided by the Geraldton District Office of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

2 The prices in this column were provided by the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company store at Lansdowne House. Although they represent 1986 values, the manager indicated that similar prices were paid during the previous several years.

Table 6: The Income from Trapping Produced by Ben Fiddler and His Family

| Species Sought | Reported No. of Kills[1] | | | | Price per Pelt[2] ($) | Estimated Cash Return ($) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | before deaths 80/81 - 82/83 | | after deaths 83/84 - 85/86 | | | before deaths 80/81 - 82/83 | | after deaths 83/84 - 85/86 | |
| | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average | | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average |
| Beaver | 229 | 76.3 | 172 | 57.3 | 45.00 | 10305.00 | 3435.00 | 7740.00 | 2580.00 |
| Mink | 42 | 14.0 | 22 | 7.3 | 15.00 | 630.00 | 210.00 | 330.00 | 110.00 |
| Marten | 115 | 38.3 | 54 | 18.0 | 45.00 | 5175.00 | 1725.00 | 2430.00 | 810.00 |
| Otter | 24 | 8.0 | 19 | 6.3 | 40.00 | 960.00 | 320.00 | 760.00 | 253.33 |
| Lynx | 15 | 5.0 | 0 | 0 | 300.00 | 4500.00 | 1500.00 | 0 | 0 |
| Muskrat | 247 | 82.3 | 12 | 4.0 | 2.00 | 494.00 | 164.67 | 24.00 | 8.00 |
| Red Squirrel | 4 | 1.3 | 0 | 0 | 0.50 | 2.00 | 0.67 | 0 | 0 |
| Weasel | 1 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 |
| Coloured Fox | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.33 | 50.00 | 0 | 0 | 50.00 | 16.67 |
| | | | | | Totals | 22067.00 | 7355.67 | 11334.00 | 3778.00 |

1 Aside from lynx, the reported number of kills is based on data provided by the Geraldton District Office of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The number of lynx killed is based on Mr. Fiddler's recollection.

2 Prices in this column were obtained from the same source as for Table 5.

$10,579.16 (see Table 7). Although this averages out to about the same amount that was lost from trapping, it did not offset the decline in the production of meat. Thus, his losses are still enormous, on the order of $27,522.80 per year: $27,471.42 in meat and $3,577.67 in furs, minus $3,526.39 from commercial fishing. As for Mr. Kewatin, his loss totals $13,197.25 per year: $11,217.75 in meat and $1,979.50 from trapping; he did not fish commercially either before or after his wife and daughter died.

**The Anicinabe Family**

The death of Francine Anicinabe had a similar impact on the productivity of her immediate family. As Table 8 indicates, on average, the loss amounts to about $13,131.33 per year. At first glance the economic decline of the family seems strange; after all, Francine was a nine-year-old child. However, as a result of her death, her mother Violet lost interest in fishing and living off the land, and in the context of Ojibwa culture her attitude makes sense. As Rogers has pointed out: "The loss of children is a constant anxiety in the minds of [Ojibwa] parents" (1962, p. B39) and "the death of a child ... is taken extremely seriously" (1962, p. B61); cf. Dunning, 1959, pp. 102-104). Mrs. Anicinabe's behaviour illustrates the point. She was devastated by the loss of her daughter - she still cried when I spoke to her four years after the accident - and to be out on the land, she said, was a constant reminder that her family was no longer intact. This, too, makes sense in the context of Ojibwa culture, for it is in the wilderness that family ties are uppermost in peoples' minds (Rogers, 1962. p. B71). Thus, Mrs. Anicinabe's husband Joseph is now in the same position as Mr. Kewatin and Mr. Fiddler. Without their wives they are "weekend" hunters at best, and this is reflected in the productivity of their immediate families.[10]

## Social Losses

**The Fiddler and Kewatin Familes and Their Kin**

Numeric data tell only part of the story of the loss that was suffered by the families of the deceased. Women in Northern Ojibwa culture are not only an economic asset, but a social asset as well. Without them, the family unit is subject to social disintegration. The Fiddler family is a case in point. At the time of her death, Bertha Fiddler not only cared for her husband, but for their children as well. Altogether, eleven people were contained in the household. Since her death, however, the number of individuals has been reduced to two - Mr. Fiddler and one of his sons. The older children have established their own households, and all but one of the younger children have been adopted by relatives according to Indian custom. Had the children remained at home they might have been able to comfort each other and their father. This is especially true of the older children who have a greater understanding of death. Instead, they moved away, and not, according to them, because they were ready to strike out on their own, but because of the

Table 7: Ben Fiddler's Income from Commercial Fishing since the Death of His Spouse[1]

| Species Sought | Income in 1984 | Income in 1985 | Income in 1986 | Three-Year Total | Three-Year Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whitefish<br>Pickerel<br>Sturgeon | $ 4971.75 | $ 5607.41 | nil | $10579.16 | $ 3526.39 |

1 Data provided by the official in the Lansdowne House Indian Band who monitors commercial fishing.

Table 8: The Wealth Produced by the Anicinabe Family before and after the Death of Francine Anicinabe[1]

| Activity | Species Sought | Reported Number of Kills | | | | Cash Value of the Edible Meat ($) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | before deaths 1981-83 | | after deaths 1984-86 | | before deaths 1981-83 | | after deaths 1984-86 | |
| | | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average |
| Hunting | Moose | 15 | 5.0 | 2 | 0.7 | 37794.35 | 12598.12 | 5039.25 | 1679.75 |
| | Can. Geese | 210 | 70.0 | 90 | 30.0 | 3159.45 | 1053.15 | 1354.05 | 451.35 |
| | Ducks | 120 | 40.0 | 30 | 10.0 | 495.60 | 165.20 | 123.90 | 41.30 |
| | Hare | 100 | 33.3 | 0 | 0 | 796.50 | 265.50 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | Subtotals | 42245.90 | 14081.97 | 6517.20 | 2172.40 |
| Trapping | Beaver | [126] | [42.0] | [26] | [8.7] | 10806.89 | 3602.30 | 2229.99 | 743.33 |
| | Muskrat | [3] | [1.0] | [84] | [28.0] | 20.69 | 6.90 | 579.26 | 193.09 |
| | Mink | [14] | [4.7] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Marten | [70] | [23.3] | [39] | [13.0] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Otter | [23] | [7.7] | [8] | [2.7] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Red Squirrel | [9] | [3.0] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Timber Wolf | 0 | 0 | [1] | [0.3] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | Subtotals | 10827.58 | 3609.20 | 2809.25 | 936.42 |
| Fishing[2] | Pickerel<br>Whitefish<br>Sturgeon | | | | | 7815.70 | 2605.23 | 885.00 | 295.00 |
| Other[3] | | | | | | | | | |

1 Sources and conversion factors same as those used in Tables 1 through 6.

2 Mr. Anicinabe did not engage in commercial fishing either before or after the death of his daughter.

3 Other includes wage labour for the Fort Hope Band, and welfare payments made by the Band, the federal government and the provincial government. Data provided by the Fort Hope Band, the Thunder Bay Area Office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and the Department of Health and Welfare. These sources report that from 1981 to 1983 the Anicinabes acquired $3,042.50 from wage labour, $11,081.00 from general welfare assistance and $5,716.08 in family allowance payments. This averages out to $1014.16 per year from wage labour, $3,693.67 from general welfare assistance and $1,905.36 from family allowance. The same sources indicate that from 1984 to 1986, the Anicinabes acquired $25,785.80 from wage labour, $6,284.00 from general welfare assistance and $5,526.00 from family allowance. This averages out to $8,595.27 per year for wage labour, $2,094.66 from general welfare assistance and $1,842.00 from family allowance.

Table 8 continued

| Activity | Species Sought | Direct Cash Return ($) | | | | Total Cash Value ($) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | before deaths 1981-83 | | after deaths 1984-86 | | before deaths 1981-83 | | after deaths 1984-86 | |
| | | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average | Total | Annual average |
| Hunting | Moose | - | - | - | - | 37794.35 | 12598.12 | 5039.25 | 1679.75 |
| | Can. Geese | - | - | - | - | 3159.45 | 1053.15 | 1354.05 | 451.35 |
| | Ducks | - | - | - | - | 495.60 | 165.20 | 123.90 | 41.30 |
| | Hare | - | - | - | - | 796.50 | 265.50 | 0 | 0 |
| | Subtotals | | | | | 42245.90 | 14081.97 | 6517.20 | 2172.40 |
| Trapping | Beaver | 5670.00 | 1890.00 | 1170.00 | 390.00 | 16476.89 | 5492.30 | 3399.99 | 1133.33 |
| | Muskrat | 6.00 | 2.00 | 168.00 | 56.00 | 26.69 | 8.90 | 747.26 | 249.09 |
| | Mink | 210.00 | 70.00 | 0 | 0 | 210.00 | 70.00 | 0 | 0 |
| | Marten | 3150.00 | 1050.00 | 1755.00 | 585.00 | 3150.00 | 1050.00 | 1755.00 | 585.00 |
| | Otter | 920.00 | 306.67 | 320.00 | 106.67 | 920.00 | 306.67 | 320.00 | 106.67 |
| | Red Squirrel | 4.50 | 1.50 | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 1.50 | 0 | 0 |
| | Timber Wolf | 0 | 0 | 75.00 | 25.00 | 0 | 0 | 75.00 | 25.00 |
| | Subtotals | 9960.50 | 3320.17 | 3488.00 | 1162.67 | 20788.08 | 6929.36 | 6297.25 | 2099.08 |
| Fishing | Pickerel Whitefish Sturgeon | | | | | 7815.70 | 2605.23 | 885.00 | 295.00 |
| Other | | 19839.58 | 6613.19 | 37595.80 | 12531.93 | 19839.58 | 6613.19 | 37595.80 | 12531.93 |
| | | | | | Totals | 90689.26 | 30229.75 | 51295.25 | 17098.42 |

depression into which their father had fallen.[11] Nor does Mr. Fiddler deny these feelings; the death of his wife, his sister Diane, and his niece Lizabeth, he says, left him numb, so numb in fact that he was no longer even able to care for his young children. In this sense, the social support system of the immediate family was undermined.

The Kewatin family is in a different situation. At the time of the accident Diane and Albert Kewatin were raising four young children, one of whom, Lizabeth, also died in the crash. The three other children have remained at home, not because relatives have failed to offer to take them in, but because Mr. Kewatin insists on raising them himself. Mr. Kewatin is nevertheless the only adult in his household, and the social support he receives from his children, although important, he says, is not the same as he received when his wife and daughter were alive. Besides, by keeping his children at home Mr. Kewatin has been placed in a position where he must not only play the role of both mother and father, but must also spend the majority of his time in the village. This is stressful, especially considering the fact that he is also mourning the loss of his daughter Lizabeth as well as his sister-in-law Bertha.

Nor are the members of the immediate families the only relatives of the deceased who experienced a social loss on account of the crash. Bertha and Diane were not only sisters-in-law, they and Lizabeth were also members of large kindreds, including, among other individuals, about thirty people who belonged to their families of orientation and procreation. Although I have not had the opportunity to speak to all of these people, those who were interviewed spoke with deep emotion about the roles the deceased played in their lives, not only as kin but also as friends. They say that when Bertha, Diane and Lizabeth were alive, they visited the Fiddler and Kewatin households regularly, often on a daily basis, to have tea and chat or to watch their children play. However, they also say that they no longer feel comfortable visiting the survivors and see them intermittently or not at all. Given the fact that many of them are mourning three deaths, their feelings are easier to understand.

**The Anicinabe Family**

The Anicinabe family's social loss is also substantial. Mrs. Anicinabe was deeply affected by the death of her daughter. Contrary to custom, and in contrast to the Kewatin and Fiddler families, the Anicinabes did not move to a new house after the accident. Instead, at Mrs. Anicinabe's insistence, the family remained in the same house until the winter of 1987, because, as she says, that was the last place she saw her daughter alive. But going against custom may have been a double-edged sword. It allowed Mrs. Anicinabe to remember her daughter, but it also appears to have deepened her grief. According to her immediate family, she is not nearly as stable as she was before the accident occurred, and this has made everyone in the unit less stable. Even visits to two different traditional Indian "healers," one in Fort

Hope and another in a more northerly village, Mrs. Anicinabe admitted, have not helped her to overcome her emotional turmoil.

## Prospects for the Future

Given such losses, the question that comes immediately to mind is whether the families will be able to recover. The Anicinabes are likely in the most favourable position. Although they have only been living in a new house for a short time, they appear to be rebuilding their lives. In the winter of 1987 Mrs. Anicinabe went out on the land with her husband for the first time since the death of her daughter, and this may indicate that the family is intent on re-establishing its former social and economic position.

Unfortunately, the prospects for the two other families are bleak. The division of labour that is associated with the pursuit of game, furs and fish is not only a time-honoured, traditional pattern, it is also a concession to necessity. The fact is that Bertha Fiddler and Diane Kewatin were an indispensable economic asset. Indeed, from the standpoint of Ojibwa culture, a hunter without a wife is "apta," meaning half, and that is now the status of the husbands of the deceased. There is simply too much work for them to do alone, especially when they are out on the land, and that is when they are most productive. In fact, even when they do go out on the land, which is now strictly on weekends, they are obliged to "pay" women to butcher and clean the animals they capture when they return to the village. For instance, when they return with beaver they keep only the pelt; the meat is taken by the women who prepare the fur for sale.

Nor can the Kewatin and Fiddler families expect the community to make up their losses. For one thing, the income that is acquired from trapping is not shared; instead, it is used by those who produce it. For another, it is unlikely that gift-giving will be able to offset the decline in the production of meat. There are two reasons for this. One is that food sharing among the Northern Ojibwa is based on reciprocity, that is, food is shared with the expectation that the gift will be returned in kind. However, now that the families are less productive they have far less to share, and this means that they will receive less in return. This does not mean that charity is not practiced at Lansdowne House. Quite the contrary: the people who received food from the families of the deceased are sympathetic to the economic and emotional turmoil that surrounds the survivors. Nevertheless, food sharing also has sociological implications, and this is the other reason why the families cannot expect extraordinary gifts of food. To give such gifts would simply remind the husbands that they are half of what they were before, and that their status as successful men has been undermined.

It is also highly unlikely that the husbands will be able to offset their economic losses by turning to wage labour and welfare as a source of support. That they have not already done so attests to this fact. As Table 9 shows, compared to their earnings before their relatives were killed, on average, neither man has increased his income to any great extent. Mr. Kewatin's

Table 9: Income ($) from Wage Labour for Albert Kewatin and Ben Fiddler

| Individual & Type of Wage Labour | before the deaths 1981 | 1982 | ----- after the deaths ----- 1983 | 1984 | 1985[1] | Annual Average Income before deaths 1981-1983 | after deaths 1984-1985 | Overall Increase or Decrease |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mr. Kewatin | | | | | | | | |
| Carpentry[2] | 3245.00[3] | 4938.00[3] | 3060.00[4] | 6340.00[4] | 532.48[4] | 3747.67 | 3436.24 | – 311.43 |
| Logging[5] | 0 | 230.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 76.67 | 0 | – 76.67 |
| Totals | 3245.00 | 5168.00 | 3060.00 | 6340.00 | 532.48 | 3824.34 | 3436.24 | – 388.10 |
| Mr. Fiddler | | | | | | | | |
| Carpentry[2] | 3799.00 | 7518.52[6] | 8152.00[4] | 8936.00[6] | 6620.00[4] | 6489.84 | 7778.00 | +1288.16 |
| Band Councillor[7] | 450.00[8] | 900.00[6] | 1050.00[8] | 0 | 0 | 800.00 | 0 | – 800.00 |
| Totals | 4249.00 | 8418.52 | 9202.00 | 8936.00 | 6620.00 | 7289.84 | 7778.00 | + 479.16 |

1 The latest year for which data were available was 1985.
2 Refers to housing construction for the Lansdowne House Indian Band.
3 As per Canada Pension Plan contribution statement.
4 As per Revenue Canada form T-4, Statement of Remuneration Paid.
5 Refers to logging work for the Roman Catholic mission at Lansdowne House.
6 As per the Lansdowne House Indian Band record of employment.
7 Refers to serving on the Council of the Lansdowne House Indian Band.
8 As per band records.

annual average income from wage labour has actually declined, down by $388.10 per year, and Mr. Fiddler's has increased only marginally, up by $488.16 per year.

Since both men now spend the majority of their time in the village it might be expected that the figures would be higher. However, in their case, there are good reasons why the figures are low. Mr. Kewatin has had to sacrifice wage labour for the sake of cooking, keeping his household in order, and, most importantly, raising his children. Mr. Fiddler faces a different dilemma. There are only seventeen steady jobs for Indian people in Lansdowne House, one job for every fourteen band members, and these positions already are filled. Thus, it is not very likely that he will be able to secure a steady job. Besides, both men have devoted their lives to learning the skills that are necessary to live off the land, not the skills for wage labour.

Welfare presents a slightly different picture. Although such payments are an important component of the local economy, they are typically exploited on an intermittent rather than a full-time basis, largely because those who depend exclusively on welfare are not held in high regard. Mr. Kewatin and Mr. Fiddler exemplify the pattern. As Table 10 shows, while both men used welfare to supplement their income before and after the accident, they have been careful not to become totally dependent on welfare. This is particularly true of Mr. Fiddler, who now receives $2,126.95 less per annum from welfare than when his wife was alive. As for Mr. Kewatin, although his income from welfare has increased by $3,719.17 per annum, he does not look on such payments as a solution to his economic dilemma. Quite the contrary, he is concerned that too great a reliance on welfare will ruin his community standing. In any event, considering his losses from hunting, trapping and fishing, the amount he receives from welfare has done little to re-establish his wealth.

To make matters worse, it is also unlikely that the families will be able to re-establish their social cohesion in either the short or medium term. There is no set period of mourning among the Northern Ojibwa (Rogers, 1962, p. B58); grief associated with mourning is a function of the age of the deceased and the nature of his or her death. In general, the people from Lansdowne House believe that the death of children and elders is a particularly devastating loss. However, they also believe that accidental deaths are a cause for great grief, no matter what the age of the deceased. Like non-Indians they ask themselves "Why?", and until that question is answered they are apt to continue to grieve. In the case of the survivors of Bertha Fiddler and Diane and Lizabeth Kewatin, that process may take an especially long time, for at the funeral the caskets were understandably closed, and this has caused them to doubt whether the deceased are actually buried. Thus, it is possible that the family members have not yet fully accepted their loss, doubly so perhaps because of the sudden and gruesome nature of the deaths. Based on interviews I conducted with the survivors I believe this to be the case: they are still in mourning.

Table 10: Income ($) from Welfare for Albert Kewatin and Ben Fiddler

| Individual & Type of Welfare | before the deaths 1981 | 1982 | after the deaths 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | Annual Average Income before deaths 1981-1983 | after deaths 1984-1985 | Overall Increase or Decrease |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mr. Kewatin | | | | | | | | | |
| General assistance[1] | 0 | 1694.16 | 6932.40 | 544.00 | 1805.00 | 2010.00 | 2875.51 | 1453.00 | –1422.52 |
| Family benefits[1] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1797.29 | 6032.29 | 8065.40 | 0 | 5298.33 | +5298.33 |
| Family allowance[2] | 1150.08 | 1291.68 | 1368.96 | 1078.20 | 1125.72 | 1136.88 | 1270.24 | 1113.60 | – 156.64 |
| Totals | 1150.08 | 2985.84 | 8301.36 | 3419.49 | 8963.01 | 11212.28 | 4145.76 | 7864.93 | +3719.17 |
| Mr. Fiddler | | | | | | | | | |
| General assistance[1] | 853.50 | 2784.35 | 1094.00 | 58.50 | 0 | 0 | 1577.28[1] | 19.50 | –1557.78 |
| Family benefits[1] | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1025.00 | 0 | 0 | 0[1] | 341.67 | + 341.67 |
| Family allowance[2] | 1150.08 | 1291.68 | 1368.96 | 1078.20 | 0 | 0 | 1270.24[1] | 359.40 | – 910.84 |
| Totals | 2003.58 | 4076.03 | 2462.96 | 2161.70 | 0 | 0 | 2847.52 | 720.57 | +2126.95 |

1 Data provided by the Thunder Bay Office of the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services.
2 Data provided by the Department of Health and Welfare.

## Final Comment

At first glance, aside from the obvious pain and suffering that individuals experience when a member of their immediate family dies, the death of four Indian people from Fort Hope and Lansdowne House may seem inconsequential. A deeper examination contradicts this opinion. The contributions they made to their families were vital, not only in an economic sense, but from a social standpoint as well. On account of a tragic accident, what were once three well-functioning traditionally oriented Ojibwa families were subject to serious social disruption and staggering economic losses. Moreover, while the Anicinabe family may be on the road to recovery, there is certain irony to the situation in which the survivors of Bertha Fiddler and Diane and Lizabeth Kewatin have been placed. In the same year that they were killed, the chief and council of the Lansdowne House Indian Band and local school officials implemented a program that makes it possible for husbands and wives to take their children out on the land during the school year for two weeks at a time, once in the fall and again in the spring. Thus, although hunting, trapping and fishing will no doubt continue to be viable economic endeavours at Lansdowne House in the future, it is highly unlikely that either the Fiddler or Kewatin family will be able to take advantage of this opportunity. Even if the men should remarry, their losses will still be great, for, as Rogers has pointed out, it takes years for the husband-wife relationship to mature in Ojibwa culture.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my thanks to the residents of the Lansdowne House and Fort Hope Indian reserves for their hospitality while I was conducting the field research on which this paper is based. I am also grateful to Donald J. Auger, whose many constructive comments on earlier drafts are sincerely appreciated. Without his help the paper could not have been written. I alone, however, am responsible for any errors or omissions.

## Notes

1 Miraculously, three others survived the crash - the pilot, co-pilot and one passenger - all of whom were non-Indian.

2 The names of the deceased and their surviving kin are pseudonyms.

3 Although there is some doubt about the northern boundary of their aboriginal homeland, there is no doubt that the Ojibwa were the dominant cultural group in northwestern Ontario by the close of the first quarter of the 19th century (Bishop, 1981, pp. 158-60, cf. Dawson, 1977).

4 This opinion is borne out by the relatively high cost of meat that is flown in from the south - pork chops cost $10.77 per kg. at Lansdowne House, hamburger $8.20 per kg., and chicken parts $6.49 per kg. In Thunder

Bay, pork chops cost $5.55 per kg., hamburger $2.18 per kg., and chicken parts $3.95 per kg. High prices for food and other goods imported from the south are characteristic of most Indian reserves in northern Ontario (Driben, 1983, p. 80).

5 Wild berries and other plant foods are also collected although not to any great extent.

6 Although Winterhalder's comments pertain to the Cree, they are equally applicable to the Northern Ojibwa.

7 The Northern Ojibwa possess a vast knowledge of plant life (see Densmore, 1928).

8 Those individuals who keep track of natural resource harvests include officials from the Fort Hope and Lansdowne House Indian bands and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources personnel.

9 All funds are reported in Canadian dollars.

10 This is not to say that the death of Francine Anicinabe caused her father no upset. At Round Lake, Rogers found that "[m]en who are generally jovial become sombre when they speak of their children who have died" (1962, p. B60). According to his relatives, Mr. Anicinabe is suffering from this malaise. It is also worthwhile to point out that, as Rogers has said, a "man will forego trapping to remain at home to care for a sick wife" (1962, p. B26).

11 The childrens' attitude also makes sense in a cultural context, for, "[f]rom the point of view of the ... Ojibwa a man or woman becomes adult only at marriage" (Rogers, 1962, p. B47).

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