

Anishinabee social movment

[History](#)



The road to preservation and restoration of Ojibway culture and teachings has been filled with so many obstacles that have slowed down its progress. Since the arrival of the light skinned men in their lands, native Indians have had to grapple with the huge influence that the foreigners had on their culture. This was facilitated by trade where foreign goods like clothing, colored glass beads, coats, beautiful woven clothes, steel knives, iron cooking pots and metallic axes were introduced to the people. While the traders had good intentions with the natives, their home country saw this as an opportunity to spread their 'superior' culture to the natives. Through military expedition, the British tried to conquer the natives, but they were unsuccessful as the former migrated to various states in Canada.

The biggest blow for Ojibway came when America got her independence from England. The new US government put an end to the Indian free movements. They were thus, confined in reservation areas with less hunting and fishing grounds and unlike their predecessors, Americans military force was more brutal and led to a lot of massacres. Through trickery and false accusations of Indian chiefs, Americans tried to contain the natives who they deemed hostile. However, military warfare seemed a futile way of trying to control the Indians as they were natural warriors. They therefore turned on indirect ways of 'civilizing' the natives. By the late 1800s, Indian children were accepted in large numbers into American schools. The strategy was to indoctrinate and incorporate American values and culture into the children while at the same time teaching them to abscond their native customs.

Therefore, children were forbidden to speak their native language, their long hairs were cut short and their tribal regalia and medicine were openly burned. The ultimate result was children turned against their elders and

customs. Indians were therefore forced to relocate to towns after they lost their lands. Currently, the situation is worse. Apart from the fact that Indian culture and history is deliberately ignored in the school system, the portrayal of the natives is shocking and false. The social, economic and political injustices that American Indians faced have been swept under the rug and what is taught in schools is utter nonsense that tries to justify the unjust occupation of Indian land.

However, a recent crop of young Indians have begun retracing their roots. They are busy searching for elders who are accustomed to their olden ways to teach them about their customs and beliefs. They are also seeking out ways of learning their native language. They are busy fighting for restoration and compensation for stolen land that would see them get back their hunting and fishing rights that were synonymous with their customs. They are also re-establishing their olden rituals and traditional ceremonies that would add value to their values to their lives. In order to control their influence of western values in schools, the new crop of Indians is busy building schools predominantly for teaching Indian history, values and customs. They are hopeful, that this strategy will be successful in the near future and that the teachings of Ojibway will soon be safely etched in the hearts of every Indian.