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Round House (Erdrich)

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The Round House

Louise Erdrich, 2012

HarperCollins

336 pp.

ISBN-13: 9780062065254

Summary

Winner, 2012 National Book Award

One Sunday in the summer of 1988, a woman living on a reservation in North Dakota is attacked. The details of the crime are slow to surface as Geraldine Coutts is traumatized and reluctant to reveal the details of what happened, either to the police or to her husband, Bazil, and thirteen-year-old son, Joe. In one day, Joe's life is irrevocably transformed. He tries to heal his mother, but she will not leave her bed and slips into an abyss of solitude. Increasingly alone, Joe finds himself thrust prematurely into an adult world for which he is ill prepared.

While his father endeavors to wrest justice from a situation that defies his efforts, Joe becomes frustrated and sets out with his trusted friends, Cappy, Zack, and Angus, to get some answers of his own. Their quest takes them to the Round House, a sacred place of worship for the Ojibwe. And this is only the beginning. (*From the publisher.*)

Author Bio

- Birth—June 7, 1954
- Where—Little Falls, Minnesota, USA
- Education—A.B., Dartmouth College; M.A., Johns Hopkins
- Awards—National Book Award; National Book Critics Circle Award; Nelson Algren Prize for Short Fiction
- Currently—lives in Minnesota

Karen Louise Erdrich is an author of novels, poetry, and children's books with some

Native American ancestry. She is widely acclaimed as one of the most significant writers of the second wave of what critic Kenneth Lincoln has called the Native American Renaissance. In 2009, her novel *The Plague of Doves* was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction. She is the owner of Birchbark Books, a small independent bookstore in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The eldest of seven children, Erdrich was born to Ralph and Rita Erdrich in Little Falls, Minnesota. Her father was German-American while her mother was French and Anishinaabe (Ojibwa). Her grandfather Patrick Gournneau served as a tribal chairman for the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. Erdrich grew up in Wahpeton, North Dakota where her parents taught at the Bureau of Indian Affairs school.

She attended Dartmouth College in 1972-1976, earning an AB degree and meeting her future husband, the Modoc anthropologist and writer Michael Dorris. He was then director of the college's Native American Studies program. Subsequently, Erdrich worked in a wide variety of jobs, including as a lifeguard, waitress, poetry teacher at prisons, and construction flag signaler. She also became an editor for *The Circle*, a newspaper produced by and for the urban Native population in Boston. Erdrich graduated with a Master of Arts degree in creative writing from Johns Hopkins University in 1979.

In the period 1978-1982, Erdrich published many poems and short stories. It was also during this period that she began collaborating with Dorris, initially working through the mail while Dorris was working in New Zealand. The relationship progressed, and the two were married in 1981. During this time, Erdrich assembled the material that would eventually be published as the poetry collection *Jacklight*.

In 1982, Erdrich's story "The World's Greatest Fisherman" was awarded the \$5,000 Nelson Algren Prize for short fiction. This convinced Erdrich and Dorris, who continued to work collaboratively, that they should embark on writing a novel.

Early Novels

In 1984, Erdrich published the novel *Love Medicine*. Made up of a disjointed but interconnected series of short narratives, each told from the perspective of a different character, and moving backwards and forward in time through every decade between the 1930s and the present day, the book told the stories of several families living near each other on a North Dakota Ojibwe reservation.

The innovative techniques of the book, which owed a great deal to the works of William Faulkner but have little precedent in Native-authored fiction, allowed Erdrich to build up a picture of a community in a way entirely suited to the reservation setting. She received immediate praise from author/critics such as N. Scott Momaday and Gerald Vizenor, and the book was awarded the 1984 National Book Critics Circle Award. It has never subsequently been out of print.

Erdrich followed *Love Medicine* with *The Beet Queen*, which continued her technique of using multiple narrators, but surprised many critics by expanding the fictional reservation universe of *Love Medicine* to include the nearby town of Argus, North

Dakota. Native characters are very much kept in the background in this novel, while Erdrich concentrates on the German-American community. The action of the novel takes place mostly before World War II.

The Beet Queen was subject to a bitter attack from Native novelist Leslie Marmon Silko, who accused Erdrich of being more concerned with postmodern technique than with the political struggles of Native peoples.

Erdrich and Dorris' collaborations continued through the 1980s and into the 1990s, always occupying the same fictional universe.

Tracks goes back to the early 20th century at the formation of the reservation and introduces the trickster figure of Nanapush, who owes a clear debt to Nanabozho. Erdrich's novel most rooted in Anishinaabe culture (at least until *Four Souls*), it shows early clashes between traditional ways and the Roman Catholic Church.

The Bingo Palace updates but does not resolve various conflicts from *Love Medicine*: set in the 1980s, it shows the effects both good and bad of a casino and a factory being set up among the reservation community. Finally, *Tales of Burning Love* finishes the story of Sister Leopolda, a recurring character from all the former books, and introduces a new set of white people to the reservation universe.

Erdrich and Dorris wrote *The Crown of Columbus*, the only novel to which both writers put their names, and *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water*, credited to Dorris. Both of these were set away from the Argus reservation.

Domestic Life

The couple had six children, three of them adopted. Dorris had adopted the children when he was single. After their marriage, Erdrich also adopted them, and the couple had three daughters together. Some of the children had difficulties.

In 1989 Dorris published *The Broken Cord*, a book about fetal alcohol syndrome, from which their adopted son Reynold Abel suffered. Dorris had found it was a widespread and until then relatively undiagnosed problem among Native American children because of mothers' alcohol issues. In 1991, Reynold Abel was hit by a car and killed at age 23.

In 1995 their son Jeffrey Sava accused them both of child abuse. Dorris and Erdrich unsuccessfully pursued an extortion case against him. Shortly afterward, Dorris and Erdrich separated and began divorce proceedings. Erdrich claimed that Dorris had been depressed since the second year of their marriage.

On April 11, 1997, Michael Dorris committed suicide in Concord, New Hampshire.

Later Writings

Erdrich's first novel after divorce, *The Antelope Wife*, was the first to be set outside the continuity of the previous books. She has subsequently returned to the

reservation and nearby towns, and has produced five novels since 1998 dealing with events in that fictional area. Among these are *The Master Butchers Singing Club*, a macabre mystery which again draws on Erdrich's Native American and German-American heritage, and *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*. Both have geographic and character connections with *The Beet Queen*.

Together with several of her previous works, these have drawn comparisons with William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha novels. The successive novels have created multiple narratives in the same fictional area and combined the tapestry of local history with current themes and modern consciousness.

In *The Plague of Doves*, Erdrich has continued the multi-ethnic dimension of her writing, weaving together the layered relationships among residents of farms, towns and reservations; their shared histories, secrets, relationships and antipathies; and the complexities for later generations of re-imagining their ancestors' overlapping pasts. The novel was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2009.

Erdrich's 2010 book, *Shadow Tag*, was a departure for her, as she focuses on a failed marriage.

Erdrich is an enrolled member of the Anishinaabe nation (also known as Ojibwa and Chippewa). Erdrich also has German, French and American ancestry. One sister, Heidi, publishes under the name Heid E. Erdrich; she is a poet who also resides in Minnesota. Another sister, Lise Erdrich, has written children's books and collections of fiction and essays. For the past few years, the three Erdrich sisters have hosted annual writers workshops on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota.

The award-winning photographer Ronald W. Erdrich is one of their cousins. He lives and works in Abilene, Texas. He was named "Star Photojournalist of the Year" in 2004 by the Texas Associated Press Managing Editors association. (*Adapted from Wikipedia.*)

Book Reviews

With *The Round House*, her 14th novel, Louise Erdrich takes us back to the North Dakota Ojibwe reservation.... This time she focuses on one nuclear family—the 13-year-old Joe Coutts; his mother, Geraldine; and his father, Judge Antone Coutts—that is shattered and remade after a terrible event.... Although its plot suffers from a schematic quality that inhibits Ms. Erdrich's talent for elliptical storytelling, the novel showcases her extraordinary ability to delineate the ties of love, resentment, need, duty and sympathy that bind families together.... The event that changes the Coutts family's lives is the rape and savage beating of Geraldine, which occurs in 1988 near the round house.... While evidence piles up pointing to the identity of the man who raped Geraldine, his arrest and conviction are complicated by jurisdictional rules having to do with whether the crime took place on state or tribal land, and "who had committed it—an Indian or non-Indian." It is Joe's story that lies at the heart of this book, and Joe's story that makes this flawed but

powerful novel worth reading.

Michiko Kakutani - New York Times

The Round House represents something of a departure for Erdrich, whose past novels of Indian life have usually relied on a rotating cast of narrators, a kind of storytelling chorus. Here, though, Joe is the only narrator, and the urgency of his account gives the action the momentum and tight focus of a crime novel, which, in a sense, it is. But for Erdrich, *The Round House* is also a return to form. Joe's voice...recalls that of Judge Antone Bazil Coutts, one of the narrators of Erdrich's masterly novel *The Plague of Doves*. That's appropriate because Joe is the judge's son.... If *The Round House* is less sweeping and symphonic than *The Plague of Doves*, it is just as riveting. By boring deeply into one person's darkest episode, Erdrich hits the bedrock truth about a whole community.

Maria Russo - New York Times Book Review

Erdrich never shields the reader or Joe from the truth.... She writes simply, without flourish.

Philadelphia Inquirer

An artfully balanced mystery, thriller and coming-of-age story.... This novel will have you reading at warp speed to see what happens next.

Minneapolis Star Tribune

Book by book, over the past three decades, Louise Erdrich has built one of the most moving and engrossing collections of novels in American literature.... Joe is an incredibly endearing narrator, full of urgency and radiant candor...and the story he tells transforms a sad, isolated crime into a revelation about how maturity alters our relationship with our parents, delivering us into new kinds of love and pain.

Michael Dirda - Washington Post

The story draws the reader unstoppably page by page.

Seattle Times

The Round House is filled with stunning language that recalls shades of Faulkner, Garcia Marquez and Toni Morrison. Deeply moving, this novel ranks among Erdrich's best work, and it is impossible to forget.

USA Today

A sweeping, suspenseful outing from this prizewinning, generation-spanning chronicler of her Native American people, the Ojibwe of the northern plains.... A

sumptuous tale.

Elle Magazine

A gripping mystery with a moral twist: Revenge might be the harshest punishment, but only for the victims.

Entertainment Weekly

Erdrich threads a gripping mystery and multilayered portrait of a community through a deeply affecting coming-of-age novel.

Karen Holt - O, the Oprah Magazine

Erdrich, a Pulitzer Prize finalist, sets her newest (after *Shadow Tag*) in 1988 in an Ojibwe community in North Dakota; the story pulses with urgency as she probes the moral and legal ramifications of a terrible act of violence. When tribal enrollment expert Geraldine Coutts is viciously attacked, her ordeal is made even more devastating by the legal ambiguities surrounding the location and perpetrator of the assault—did the attack occur on tribal, federal, or state land? Is the aggressor white or Indian? As Geraldine becomes enveloped by depression, her husband, Basil (the tribal judge), and their 13-year-old son, Joe, try desperately to identify her assailant and bring him to justice. The teen quickly grows frustrated with the slow pace of the law, so Joe and three friends take matters into their own hands. But revenge exacts a tragic price, and Joe is jarringly ushered into an adult realm of anguished guilt and ineffable sadness. Through Joe's narration, which is by turns raunchy and emotionally immediate, Erdrich perceptively chronicles the attack's disastrous effect on the family's domestic life, their community, and Joe's own premature introduction to a violent world.

Publishers Weekly

Set on an Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota in 1988, Erdrich's 14th novel focuses on 13-year-old Joseph. After his mother is brutally raped yet refuses to speak about the experience, Joe must not only cope with her slow physical and mental recovery but also confront his own feelings of anger and helplessness. Questions of jurisdiction and treaty law complicate matters. Doubting that justice will be served, Joe enlists his friends to help investigate the crime. *Verdict:* Erdrich skillfully makes Joe's coming-of-age both universal and specific. Like many a teenage boy, he sneaks beer with his buddies, watches *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, and obsesses about sex. But the story is also ripe with detail about reservation life, and with her rich cast of characters, from Joe's alcoholic and sometimes violent uncle Whitey and his former-stripper girlfriend Sonja, to the ex-marine priest Father Travis and the gleefully lewd Grandma Thunder, Erdrich provides flavor, humor, and depth. Joe's relationship with his father, Basil, a judge, has echoes of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, as Basil explains to his son why he continues to seek justice despite roadblocks to prosecuting non-Indians. Recommended. —Christine DeZelar-Tiedman, Univ. of

Library Journal

(Starred review.) A stunning and devastating tale of hate crimes and vengeance.... Erdrich covers a vast spectrum of history, cruel loss, and bracing realizations. A preeminent tale in an essential American saga.

Booklist

Erdrich returns to the North Dakota Ojibwe community she introduced in *The Plague of Doves* (2008)—akin but at a remove from the community she created in the continuum.... The novel combines a coming-of-age story (think *Stand By Me*) with a crime and vengeance story while exploring Erdrich's trademark themes.... This second novel in a planned trilogy lacks the breadth and richness of Erdrich at her best, but middling Erdrich is still pretty great.

Kirkus Reviews

Discussion Questions

1. *The Round House* opens with the sentence: "Small trees had attacked my parents' house at the foundation." How do these words relate to the complete story that unfolds?
2. Though he is older as he narrates the story, Joe is just thirteen when the novel opens. What is the significance of his age? How does that impact the events that occur and his actions and reactions?
3. Describe Joe's family, and his relationship with his parents. In talking about his parents, Joe says, "I saw myself as different, though I didn't know how yet." Why, at thirteen, did he think this? Do you think the grown-up Joe narrating the story still believes this?
4. Joe's whole family is rocked by the attack on his mother. How does it affect the relationship between his mother and father, and between him and his mother? Does it alter Joe's view of them? Can trauma force a child to grow up "overnight"? What impact does it have on Joe? How does it transform his family?
5. "My mother's job was to know everybody's secrets," Joe tells us. How does this knowledge empower Geraldine and how does it make her life more difficult?
6. Joe is inseparable from his three friends, especially his best friend, Cappy. Talk about their bond. How does their closeness influence unfolding events?
7. What is the significance of *The Round House*? What is the importance of the Ojibwe legends that are scattered through the novel? How do they reflect and deepen the main story? What can we learn from the old ways of people like the

Ojibwe? Is Joe proud of his heritage? Discuss the connection between the natural and animal world and the tribe's spirituality.

8. After the attack, Joe's mother, Geraldine, isn't sure exactly where it happened, whether it was technically on Reservation land or not. How does the legal relationship between the U.S. and the Ojibwe complicate the investigation? Why can't she lie to make it easier?

9. Secondary characters, including Mooshum, Linda Wishkob, Sonja, Whitey, Clemence, and Father Travis, play indelible roles in the central story. Talk about their interactions with Joe and his friends and parents. What do their stories tell about the wider world of the reservation and about relations between white and Native Americans?

10. Towards the novel's climax, Father Travis tells Joe, "in order to purify yourself, you have to understand yourself. Everything out in the world is also in you. Good, bad, evil, perfection, death, everything. So we study our souls." Would you say this is a good characterization of humanity? How is each of these things visible in Joe's personality?

11. He also tells Joe about the different types of evil—the material version, which we cannot control, and the moral one, which is harm deliberately caused by humans. How does this knowledge influence Joe?

12. When Joe makes his fateful decision concerning his mother's attacker, he says it is about justice, not vengeance. What do you think? How does that decision change him? Why doesn't he share the information he has with the people who love him?

13. What do you think about the status of Native Americans? Should we have reservations in modern America? How does the Reservation preserve their heritage and culture and how does it set them apart from their fellow Americans?

14. Could the American West have been settled without the conflicts between white Europeans and native peoples? Do you think we, as Americans, have changed significantly today?

15. We hear a great deal about reparations and atonement for slavery. What about America's history with the Native American population—should these same issues be raised? Racism is often seen in terms of black and white. How does this view impact prejudices against others who aren't white, including people like the Ojibwe? Do you think there is prejudice against Native Americans? How is this portrayed in the book? Contrast these with examples of kindness and fairness.

16. "My father remembered that of course an Ojibwe person's clan meant everything at one time, and no one didn't have a clan; thus, you know your place in the world and your relationship to all other beings." How has modernity—and westward expansion—transformed this? Has our rush to the future, and our restless need to

move, impacted us as a society and as individuals?

17. Race, politics, injustice, religion, superstition, magic, and the boundary between childhood and adulthood are explored in *The Round House*. Choose a theme or two and trace how it is demonstrated in a character's life throughout the novel.

18. The only thing that God can do, and does all the time, is to draw good from any evil situation," the priest advised Joe. What good does Joe—and also his family—draw from the events of the summer? What life lessons did Joe learn that summer of 1988?

(Questions issued by publisher.)

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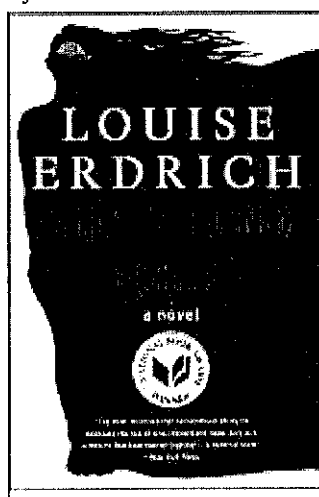
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Review

The Round House

by Louise Erdrich



In 1988, a North Dakota Ojibwe Indian family suffers a crisis when Geraldine, a tribal judge's wife, is brutally raped near the round house, a place for religious ceremonies. Her husband, Bazil, is a man who adheres to strict tribal ethics, though his wife is the victim. In this novel, Geraldine and Bazil's 13-year-old son Joe, a precociously observant youngster catapulted into adulthood, adroitly recalls these events.

Bazil conducts a private investigation. Geraldine, who had been blindfolded, is unsure where the attack occurred. If the crime was committed by a white man, or did not occur on tribal land, Bazil has no jurisdiction. He explains this complexity when he cites case law to Joe: "*Oliphant v. Suquamish* [t]ook from us the right to prosecute non-Indians who commit crimes on our land." In 1823, Supreme Court "Justice Marshall went out of his way to strip away all Indian title to all lands."

"Like multitudinous notes in a symphony, Louise Erdrich orchestrates the nuances in Joe's complex life. She gets into the mind of a teenage boy, and fondly reminds me of the goofiness I experienced at that age. Tragic events at the conclusion, though, also remind me of personal crises that prematurely thrust me into an adult realm."

Like his father, Joe begins his own investigation and locates evidence overlooked by police. He tells us, "My father had forgotten my existence. Memories put down in agitation at a vulnerable age do not extinguish with time, but engrave ever deeper as they return and return." He becomes obsessed with the burden of returning his family's life to its lost innocence.

Joe recalls how, on the day of the crime, he helped his father pull sprouted tree seeds out of their home's foundation: "Each seed had managed to sink the hasp of a root deep and a probing tendril outward." This symbolism courses through the novel like the countless buffalo that once dominated the prairies. "And how funny, strange, that a thing can grow so powerful even when planted in the wrong place."

Joe and his best friend, Cappy, experience racial and economic prejudice from "store clerks who watched us with suspicion and took our money with contempt." Later, as a teen, Joe enters manhood when he makes a decision and sees it through; he deceives his parents, "building lie upon lie, and it all came naturally to me as honesty once had. Any judge knows there are many kinds of justice."

Like multitudinous notes in a symphony, Louise Erdrich orchestrates the nuances in Joe's complex life. She gets into the mind of a teenage boy, and fondly reminds me of the goofiness I experienced at that age. Tragic events at the conclusion, though, also remind me of personal crises that prematurely thrust me into an adult realm. The recipient of many awards, Erdrich was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for *THE PLAGUE OF DOVES*, a prequel of sorts to her 14th and current stunning novel, which I believe will take home that coveted prize.

(Please wear a Pink Ribbon to signify breast cancer awareness. In the afterword, Erdrich, who is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, discloses, "Everyone rallied wonderfully during my treatment for breast cancer.")

Reviewed by L. Dean Murphy on October 12, 2012

The Round House
by Louise Erdrich

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Genres: Fiction, Mystery

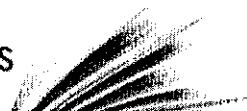
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About the Author

Full text biography:

Louise Erdrich

Birth Date : 1954

Known As : Erdrich, Karen Louise

Place of Birth : United States, Minnesota, Little Falls

Nationality: American

Ethnicity : Native American

Occupation : Writer

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about this author

Awards:

Johns Hopkins University teaching fellow, 1978; MacDowell Colony fellow, 1980; Yaddo Colony fellow, 1981; Dartmouth College visiting fellow, 1981; First Prize, Nelson Algren fiction competition, 1982, for "The World's Greatest Fisherman"; National Endowment for the Arts fellowship, 1982; Pushcart Prize, 1983; National Magazine Fiction awards, 1983 and 1987; Virginia McCormack Scully Prize for best book of the year dealing with Indians or Chicanos, National Book Critics Circle Award for best work of fiction, and *Los Angeles Times* Award for best novel, all 1984, and Sue Kaufman Prize for Best First Novel, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, American Book Award, Before Columbus Foundation, and named among best eleven books of 1985 by the *New York Times Book Review*, all for *Love Medicine*; Guggenheim fellow, 1985-86; *The Beet Queen* named one of *Publishers Weekly's* best books, 1986; First Prize, O. Henry Awards, 1987; National Book Critics Circle Award nomination; World Fantasy Award for Best Novel, World Fantasy Convention, 1999, for *The Antelope Wife*; National Book Award for fiction finalist, 2001, for *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*, and 2003, for *The Master Butchers Singing Club*; named associate poet laureate of North Dakota, 2005; Scott O'Dell Award for historical fiction, 2006, for *The Game of Silence*; Pulitzer Prize in Fiction nomination, 2009, for *The Plague of Doves*; honorary doctorate (Doctor of Letters), Dartmouth College, 2009; National Book Award for Fiction, 2012, for *The Round House*.

Personal Information:

Born June 7, 1954, in Little Falls, MN; daughter of Ralph Louis (a teacher with the Bureau of Indian Affairs) and Rita Joanne (affiliated with the Bureau of Indian Affairs) Erdrich; married Michael Anthony Dorris (a writer and professor of Native American studies), October 10, 1981 (died, April 11, 1997); children: Reynold Abel (died, 1991), Jeffrey Sava, Madeline Hannah, Persia Andromeda, Pallas Antigone, Aza Marion. **Education:** Dartmouth College, B.A., 1976; Johns Hopkins University, M.A., 1979. **Politics:** Democrat. **Religion:** "Anti-religion." **Avocational Interests:** Quilting, running, drawing, "playing chess with daughters and losing, playing piano badly, speaking terrible French." **Memberships:** International Writers, PEN (member of executive board, 1985-88), Authors Guild, Authors League of America. **Addresses:** Agent: Andrew Wylie Agency, 250 W. 57th St., Ste. 2114, New York, NY 10107-2199.

Career Information:

Writer, educator. North Dakota State Arts Council, visiting poet and teacher, 1977-78; Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, writing instructor, 1978-79; Boston Indian Council, Boston, MA, communications director and editor of

the *Circle*, 1979-80: Charles Merrill Co., textbook writer, 1980. Birchbark Books, Minneapolis, MN, owner. Previously employed as a beet weeder in Wahpeton, ND; waitress in Wahpeton, Boston, MA, and Syracuse, NY; psychiatric aide in a Vermont hospital; poetry teacher at prisons; lifeguard; and construction flag signaler. Has judged writing contests.

Writings:

NOVELS

- *Love Medicine*, Holt (New York, NY), 1984, expanded edition, 1993, perennial edition, HarperCollins Publishers (New York, NY), 2009.
- *The Beet Queen*, Holt (New York, NY), 1986.
- *Tracks*, Harper (New York, NY), 1988.
- (With husband, Michael Dorris) *The Crown of Columbus*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 1991.
- *The Bingo Palace*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 1994.
- *Tales of Burning Love*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 1996.
- *The Antelope Wife*, HarperFlamingo (New York, NY), 1998, Harper Perennial (New York, NY), 2012.
- *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2001.
- *The Master Butchers Singing Club*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2003.
- *Four Souls*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2004.
- *The Painted Drum*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2005.
- *The Plague of Doves*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2008.
- *Shadow Tag*, Harper (New York, NY), 2010.
- *The Round House*, Harper (New York, NY), 2012.

POETRY

- *Jacklight*, Holt (New York, NY), 1984.
- *Baptism of Desire*, Harper (New York, NY), 1989.
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"BIRCHBARK HOUSE" SERIES; JUVENILES

- (And illustrator) *The Birchbark House*, Hyperion Books for Children (New York, NY), 1999.
- *The Game of Silence*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2004.
- *The Porcupine Year*, HarperCollins (New York, NY), 2008.
- *Chickadee*, Harper (New York, NY), 2012.

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- (Author of preface) Desmond Hogan, *A Link with the River*, Farrar, Straus (New York, NY), 1989.
- (With Allan Richard Chavkin and Nancy Feyl Chavkin) *Conversations with Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris*, University Press of Mississippi (Jackson, MS), 1994.
- *The Falcon: A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, Penguin (New York, NY), 1994.
- *The Blue Jay's Dance: A Birth Year* (memoir), HarperCollins (New York, NY), 1995.
- *Grandmother's Pigeon* (juvenile), illustrated by Jim LaMarche, Hyperion (New York, NY), 1996.
- *The Range Eternal* (juvenile), illustrated by Steve Johnson, Hyperion (New York, NY), 2002.
- *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country*, National Geographic (Washington, DC), 2003.
- *The Red Convertible: Selected and New Stories, 1978-2008*, HarperCollins Publishers (New York, NY), 2009.

Author, with Michael Dorris, of *Route Two*, 1990. Author of short story, "The World's Greatest Fisherman": contributor to anthologies, including *Norton Anthology of Poetry: Best American Short Stories of 1981-83*, 1983, and 1988; and *Prize Stories: The O. Henry Awards*, 1985 and 1987. Contributor of stories, poems, essays, and book reviews to periodicals, including *New Yorker*, *New England Review*, *Chicago*, *American Indian Quarterly*, *Frontiers*, *Atlantic*, *Kenyon Review*, *North American Review*, *New York Times Book Review*, *Ms.*, *Redbook* (with her sister Heidi, under the joint pseudonym Heidi Louise), and *Woman* (with Michael Dorris, under the joint pseudonym Milou North). Also editor, with Katrina Kenison, of *The Best American Short Stories 1993*, 1993.

Media Adaptions:

The Crown of Columbus was optioned for film production.

Sidelights:

The daughter of a Chippewa Indian mother and a German American father, Louise Erdrich explores Native American themes in her works, with major characters representing both sides of her heritage. In an award-winning series of related novels and short stories, Erdrich has visited and revisited the North Dakota lands where her ancestors met and mingled, creating "a Chippewa experience in the context of the European American novelistic tradition," to quote P. Jane Hafen in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Many critics claim Erdrich has remained true to her Native ancestors' mythic and artistic visions while writing fiction that candidly explores the cultural issues facing modern-day Native Americans and mixed-heritage Americans. As an essayist for *Contemporary Novelists* observed: "Erdrich's accomplishment is that she is weaving a body of work that goes beyond portraying contemporary Native American life as descendants of a politically dominated people to explore the great universal questions--questions of identity, pattern versus randomness, and the meaning of life itself." In fact, as Hafen put it, Erdrich's "diverse imageries, subjects, and textual strategies reaffirm imperatives of American Indian survival."

A contributor to *Contemporary Popular Writers* credited Erdrich with a body of work that is "more interested in love and survival than in recrimination." The writer added: "Past wrongs and present hardships do figure in her work but chiefly as the backdrop against which the task of 'protecting and celebrating' takes on added force and urgency." The reviewer went on to note: "Erdrich's sense of loss never gives way to a sense of grievance; her characteristic tone is hopeful, not mournful, and springs from her belief in the persistence and viability of certain Native American values and the vision to which they give rise." The author's creative impulse has led to a significant accomplishment. Elizabeth Blair wrote in *World and I*: "In an astonishing, virtuoso performance sustained over more than two decades, Erdrich has produced ... interlinked novels that braid the lives of a series of fallible, lovable, and unpredictable characters of German, Cree, métis, and Ojibwe heritage." Blair noted: "The painful history of Indian-white relations resonates throughout her work. In her hands we laugh and cry while listening to and absorbing home truths that, taken to heart, have the power to change our world. We listen because these truths come sinew-stitched into the very fabric of the tapestry she weaves so artfully."

Erdrich's first year at Dartmouth College, 1972, was the year the college began admitting women, as well as the year the Native American studies department was established. The author's future husband and collaborator, anthropologist Michael Dorris, was hired to chair the department. In his class, Erdrich began the exploration of her own ancestry that would eventually inspire her novels. Intent on balancing her academic training with a broad range of practical knowledge, Erdrich told Miriam Berkley in an interview with *Publishers Weekly*: "I ended up taking some really crazy jobs, and I'm glad I did. They turned out to have been very useful experiences, although I never would have believed it at the time." In addition to working as a lifeguard, waitress, poetry teacher at prisons, and construction flag signaler, Erdrich became an editor for the *Circle*, a Boston Indian Council newspaper. She told *Writers Digest* interviewer Michael Schumacher: "Settling into that job and becoming comfortable with an urban community--which is very different from the reservation community--gave me another reference point. There were lots of people with mixed blood, lots of people who had their own confusions. I realized that this was part of my life--it wasn't something that I was making up--and that it was something I *wanted* to write about." In 1978, the author enrolled in an M.A. program at Johns Hopkins University, where she wrote poems and stories incorporating her heritage, many of which would later become part of her books. She also began sending her work to publishers, most of whom sent back rejection slips.

After receiving her master's degree, Erdrich returned to Dartmouth as a writer-in-residence. Dorris--with whom she had remained in touch--attended a reading of Erdrich's poetry there and was impressed. A writer himself--Dorris would later publish the best-selling novel *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* and receive the 1989 National Book Critics Circle Award for his nonfiction work *The Broken Cord: A Family's Ongoing Struggle with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome*--he decided then that he was interested in working with Erdrich and getting to know her better. When he left for New Zealand to do field research and Erdrich went to Boston to work on a textbook, the two began sending their poetry and fiction back and forth with their letters, laying a groundwork for a literary relationship. Dorris returned to New Hampshire in 1980, and Erdrich moved back there as well. The two began collaborating on short stories, including one titled "The World's Greatest Fisherman." When this story won five thousand dollars in the Nelson Algren fiction competition, Erdrich and Dorris decided to expand it into a novel--*Love Medicine*. At the same time, their literary relationship led to a romantic one, and in 1981 they were married.

The titles Erdrich and Dorris chose for their novels--such as *Love Medicine* and *A Yellow Raft in Blue Water*--tended to be rich poetic or visual images, and they were often the initial inspiration from which their novels were drawn. Erdrich told Schumacher: "I think a title is like a magnet: It begins to draw these scraps of experience or conversation or memory to it. Eventually, it collects a book." Erdrich and Dorris's collaborative process began with a first draft, usually written by whoever had the original idea for the book, the one who would ultimately be considered the official author. After the draft was written, the other person edited it, and then another draft was written; often five or six drafts would be written in all. Finally, the two read the work aloud until they agreed on each word. Although the author had the original voice and the final say, ultimately, both collaborators were responsible for what the work became. This "unique collaborative relationship," according to Alice Joyce in *Booklist*, is covered in *Conversations with Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris*, a collection of twenty-five interviews with the couple. By 1997, when Dorris committed suicide, the pair had separated and were no longer actively collaborating. Erdrich alone is responsible for much of her work in the 1990s and all of her publications since the turn of the twenty-first century.

Erdrich's novels *Love Medicine*, *The Beet Queen*, *Tracks*, *The Bingo Palace*, and *Tales of Burning Love* encompass the stories of three interrelated families living in and around a reservation in the fictional town of Argus, North Dakota, from 1912 through the 1980s. The novels have been compared to those of William Faulkner, mainly due to the multi-voice narration and nonchronological storytelling that he employed in works such as *As I Lay Dying*. Erdrich's works, linked by recurring characters who are victims of fate and the patterns set by their elders, are structured like intricate puzzles in which bits of information about individuals and their relations to one another are slowly released in a seemingly random order, until three-dimensional characters--with a future and a past--are revealed. Through her characters' antics, Erdrich explores universal family life cycles while also communicating a sense of the changes and loss involved in the twentieth-century Native American experience.

Poet Robert Bly, describing Erdrich's nonlinear storytelling approach in the *New York Times Book Review*, emphasized her tendency to "choose a few minutes or a day in 1932, let one character talk, let another talk, and a third, then leap to 1941 and then to 1950 or 1964." The novel's circular format is a reflection of the way in which the works are constructed. Although Erdrich is dealing with a specific and extensive time period, wrote Bly, "the writing doesn't start out and proceed chronologically. It never seems to start in the beginning. Rather, it's as though we're building something around a center, but that center can be anywhere."

Erdrich's first novel, *Love Medicine*, was published in 1984. "With this impressive debut," stated *New York Times Book Review* contributor Marco Portales, "Louise Erdrich enters the company of America's better novelists." *Love Medicine* was named for the belief in love potions, which is a part of Chippewa folklore. The novel explores the bonds of family and faith that preserve both the Chippewa tribal community and the individuals that comprise it.

The story begins at a family gathering following the death of June Kashpaw, a prostitute. The characters introduce one another, sharing stories about June that reveal their family history and their cultural beliefs. Albertine Johnson, June's niece, introduces her grandmother, Marie, her grandfather, Nector, and Nector's twin brother, Eli. Eli represents the old way--the Native American who never integrated into the white culture. He also plays a major role in *Tracks*, in which he appears as a young man. The story of Marie and Nector brings together many of the important images in the novel, including the notion of "love medicine." As a teenager in a convent, Marie is nearly burned to death by a nun who, in an

attempt to exorcise the devil from within her, pours boiling water on Marie. Immediately following this incident, Marie is sexually assaulted by Nector. Marie and Nector are later married, but in middle age, Nector begins an affair with Lulu Lamartine, a married woman. In an attempt to rekindle Nector and Marie's passion, their grandson Lipsha prepares "love medicine" for Nector. But Lipsha has difficulty obtaining a wild goose heart for the potion. He substitutes a frozen turkey heart, which causes Nector to choke to death.

Reviewers responded positively to Erdrich's debut novel, citing its lyrical qualities as well as the rich characters who inhabit it. *New York Times* contributor D.J.R. Bruckner was impressed with Erdrich's "mastery of words" as well as the "vividly drawn" characters who "will not leave the mind once they are let in." Portales, who called *Love Medicine* "an engrossing book," applauded the unique narration technique which produces what he termed "a wondrous prose song." The novel won numerous awards, including the National Book Critics Circle Award for best work of fiction in 1984.

After the publication of *Love Medicine*, Erdrich told reviewers that her next novel would focus less exclusively on her mother's side, embracing the author's mixed heritage and the mixed community in which she grew up. Her 1986 novel, *The Beet Queen*, deals with whites, half-breeds, and American Indians, and explores the interactions between these worlds. The story begins in 1932, during the Depression. Mary and Karl Adare's recently widowed mother flies off with a carnival pilot, abandoning the two children and their newborn brother. The baby is taken by a young couple who have just lost their child. Karl and eleven-year-old Mary ride a freight train to Argus, seeking refuge with their aunt and uncle. When they arrive in the town, however, Karl, frightened by a dog, runs back onto the train and winds up at an orphanage. Mary grows up with her aunt and uncle, and the novel follows her life--as well as those of her jealous, self-centered cousin Sita and their part-Chippewa friend Celestine James--for the next forty years, tracing the themes of separation and loss that began with Mary's father's death and her mother's grand departure.

The Beet Queen was well received by reviewers, some of whom found it even more impressive than *Love Medicine*. Many commented favorably on the novel's poetic language and symbolism; Bly noted that Erdrich's "genius is in metaphor," and that the characters "show a convincing ability to feel an image with their whole bodies." Josh Rubins, writing in *New York Review of Books*, called *The Beet Queen* "a rare second novel, one that makes it seem as if the first, impressive as it was, promised too little, not too much." Other reviewers had problems with *The Beet Queen*, but they tended to dismiss the novel's flaws in light of its positive qualities. *New Republic* contributor Dorothy Wickenden considered the characters unrealistic and the ending contrived, but she lauded *The Beet Queen*'s "ringing clarity and lyricism," as well as the "assured, polished quality" that she felt was missing in *Love Medicine*. Although Michiko Kakutani found the ending artificial, the *New York Times* contributor called Erdrich "an immensely gifted young writer." "Even with its weaknesses," proclaimed Linda Simon in *Commonweal*, "*The Beet Queen* stands as a product of enormous talent."

After Erdrich completed *The Beet Queen*, she was uncertain as to what her next project should be. The 400-page manuscript that would eventually become *Tracks* had remained untouched for ten years; the author referred to it as her "burden." She and Dorris took a fresh look at it, and decided that they could relate it to *Love Medicine* and *The Beet Queen*. While more political than her previous novels, *Tracks* also deals with spiritual themes, exploring the tension between the Native Americans' ancient beliefs and the Christian notions of the Europeans. *Tracks* takes place between 1912 and 1924, before the settings of Erdrich's other novels, and reveals the roots of *Love Medicine*'s characters and their hardships. One of the narrators, Nanapush, is the leader of a tribe that is suffering on account of the white government's exploitation. He feels pressured to give up tribal land in order to avoid starvation. While Nanapush represents the old way, Pauline, the other narrator, represents change. The future mother of *Love Medicine*'s Marie Lazarre, Pauline is a young half-breed from a mixed-blood tribe "for which the name was lost." She feels torn between her Indian faith and the white people's religion, and is considering leaving the reservation. At the center of *Tracks* is Fleur, a character whom *Los Angeles Times Book Review* contributor Terry Tempest Williams called "one of the most haunting presences in contemporary American literature." Nanapush discovers this young woman--the last survivor of a family killed by consumption--in a cabin in the woods, starving and mad. Nanapush adopts Fleur and nurses her back to health.

Reviewers found *Tracks* distinctly different from Erdrich's earlier novels, and some felt that her third novel lacks the characteristics that make *Love Medicine* and *The Beet Queen* so outstanding. *Washington Post Book World* contributor

Jonathan Yardley stated that, because of its more political focus, the work has a "labored quality." Robert Towers, in the *New York Review of Books*, found the characters too melodramatic and the tone too intense. Katherine Dieckmann, writing in the *Village Voice Literary Supplement*, affirmed that she "missed [Erdrich's] skilled multiplications of voice," and called the relationship between Pauline and Nanapush "symptomatic of the overall lack of grand orchestration and perspectival interplay that made Erdrich's first two novels polyphonic masterpieces." According to *Commonweal* contributor Christopher Vecsey, however, although "a reviewer might find some of the prose overwrought, and the two narrative voices indistinguishable ... readers will appreciate and applaud the vigor and inventiveness of the author."

Other reviewers enjoyed *Tracks* even more than the earlier novels. Williams stated that Erdrich's writing "has never appeared more polished and grounded," and added: " *Tracks* may be the story of our time." Thomas M. Disch lauded the novel's plot, with its surprising twists and turns, in the *Chicago Tribune*. The reviewer added: "Erdrich is like one of those rumored drugs that are instantly and forever addictive. Fortunately in her case you can *just say yes*."

Erdrich and Dorris's jointly authored novel *The Crown of Columbus* explores Native American issues from the standpoint of the authors' current experience, rather than the world of their ancestors. Marking the quincentennial anniversary of Spanish explorer Christopher Columbus's voyage in a not-so-celebratory fashion, Erdrich and Dorris raise important questions about the meaning of that voyage for both Europeans and Native Americans today. The story is narrated by the two central characters, both Dartmouth professors involved in projects concerning Columbus. Vivian Twostar is a Native American single mother with eclectic tastes and a teenage son, Nash. Vivian is asked to write an academic article on Columbus from a Native American perspective and is researching Columbus's diaries. Roger Williams, a stuffy New England Protestant poet, is writing an epic work about the explorer's voyage. Vivian and Roger become lovers--parenting a girl named Violet--but have little in common. Ultimately acknowledging the destructive impact of Columbus's voyage on the Native American people, Vivian and Roger vow to redress the political wrongs symbolically by changing the power structure in their relationship. In the end, as Vivian and Roger rediscover themselves, they rediscover America.

Some reviewers found *The Crown of Columbus* unbelievable and inconsistent, and considered it less praiseworthy than the individual authors' earlier works. However, *New York Times Book Review* contributor Robert Houston appreciated the work's timely political relevance. He also stated: "There are moments of genuine humor and compassion, of real insight and sound satire." Other reviewers also considered Vivian and Roger's adventures amusing, vibrant, and charming.

Erdrich returned to the descendants of Nanapush with her 1994 novel, *The Bingo Palace*. The fourth novel in the series that began with *Love Medicine*, *The Bingo Palace* weaves together a story of spiritual pursuit with elements of modern reservation life. Erdrich also provided continuity to the series by having the novel primarily narrated by Lipsha Morrissey, the illegitimate son of June Kashpaw and Gerry Nanapush from *Love Medicine*. After working at a Fargo sugar beet factory, Lipsha has returned home to the reservation in search of his life's meaning. He finds work at his uncle Lyman Lamartine's bingo parlor and love with his uncle's girlfriend, Shawnee Ray Toose. Thanks to the magic bingo tickets provided to him by the spirit of his dead mother, June, he also finds modest wealth. The character of Fleur Pillager returns from *Tracks* as Lipsha's great-grandmother. After visiting her, Lipsha embarks on a spiritual quest to impress Shawnee and learn more about his own tribal religious rites. Family members past and present are brought together in his pursuit, which comprises the final pages of the novel.

Reviewers' comments on *The Bingo Palace* were generally positive. While Lawrence Thornton, in the *New York Times Book Review*, found "some of the novel's later ventures into magic realism ... contrived," his overall impression was more positive: "Erdrich's sympathy for her characters shines as luminously as Shawnee Ray's jingle dress." Pam Houston, writing for the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, was especially taken by the character of Lipsha Morrissey, finding in him "what makes this her most exciting and satisfying book to date."

The Bingo Palace was also reviewed in the context of the series as a whole. *Chicago Tribune* contributor Michael Upchurch remarked that *The Bingo Palace* "falls somewhere between *Tracks* and *The Beet Queen* in its accomplishment." He added: "The best chapters in *The Bingo Palace* rival, as *Love Medicine* did, the work of Welty, Cheever, and Flannery O'Connor."

Erdrich turned to her own experience as mother of six for her next work, *The Blue Jay's Dance: A Birth Year*. Her first book of nonfiction. *The Blue Jay's Dance* chronicles Erdrich's pregnancy and the birth year of her child. The title refers to a blue jay's habit of defiantly "dancing" toward an attacking hawk, Erdrich's metaphor for "the sort of controlled recklessness that having children always is," noted Jane Aspinall in *Quill & Quire*. Erdrich has been somewhat protective of her family's privacy and has stated the narrative actually describes a combination of her experience with several of her children. Sue Halpern, in the *New York Times Book Review*, remarked on this difficult balancing act between public and private lives but found "Erdrich's ambivalence inspires trust ... and suggests that she is the kind of mother whose story should be told."

Some reviewers noted that Erdrich's description of the maternal relationship was a powerful one. A *Kirkus Reviews* contributor commented that "the bond between mother and infant has rarely been captured so well." While the subject of pregnancy and motherhood is not a new one, Halpern noted that the book provides new insight into the topic: "What makes *The Blue Jay's Dance* worth reading is that it quietly places a mother's love and nurturance amid her love for the natural world and suggests ... how right that placement is." Although the *Kirkus Reviews* contributor found *The Blue Jay's Dance* to be "occasionally too self-conscious about the importance of Erdrich's role as Writer," others commented positively on the book's examination of the balance between the work of parenting and one's vocation. A *Los Angeles Times Book Review* reviewer remarked: "This book is really about working and having children, staying alert and ... focused through the first year of a child's life."

Erdrich retained her focus on children with her first children's book, *Grandmother's Pigeon*. Published in 1996, it is a fanciful tale of an adventurous grandmother who heads to Greenland on the back of a porpoise, leaving behind grandchildren and three bird's eggs in her cluttered bedroom. The eggs hatch into passenger pigeons, thought to be extinct, through which the children are able to send messages to their missing grandmother. A *Publishers Weekly* contributor commented: "As in her fiction for adults Erdrich makes every word count in her bewitching debut children's story."

Within the same year, Erdrich returned to the character of June Kashpaw of *Love Medicine* in her sixth novel, *Tales of Burning Love*. More accurately, it is the story of June's husband, Jack Mauser, and his five--including June--ex-wives. To begin the tale, Jack meets June while they are both inebriated and marries her that night. In reaction to his inability to consummate their marriage, she walks off into a blizzard and is found dead the next day. His four subsequent marriages share the same elements of tragedy and comedy, culminating in Jack's death in a fire in the house he built. The story of each marriage is told by the four ex-wives as they are stranded together in Jack's car during a blizzard after his funeral. Again, Erdrich references her previous work in the characters of Gerry and Dot Nanapush, Dot as one of Jack's ex-wives and Gerry as Dot's imprisoned husband.

Reviewers continued to note Erdrich's masterful descriptions and fine dialogue in this work. According to Penelope Mesic in the *Chicago Tribune*, "Erdrich's strength is that she gives emotional states--as shifting and intangible, as indefinable as wind--a visible form in metaphor." A *Times Literary Supplement* contributor compared her to Tobias Wolff--"[like him], she is ... particularly good at evoking American small-town life and the space that engulfs it"--as well as Raymond Carver, noting her dialogues to be "small exchanges that ... map out the barely navigable distance between what's heard, what's meant, and what's said."

Tales of Burning Love also focused Erdrich's abilities (and perhaps Dorris's collaborative talents) on the relationship between men and women. As the *Times Literary Supplement* contributor continued, "Erdrich also shares Carver's clear and sophisticated view of the more fundamental distance between men and women, and how that, too, is negotiated." However, Mark Childress in the *New York Times Book Review* commented that while "Jack's wives are vivid and fully realized ... whenever [Jack's] out of sight, he doesn't seem as interesting as the women who loved him."

While Erdrich covers familiar territory in *Tales of Burning Love*, she seems, claimed several reviewers, to be expanding her focus slightly. Roxana Robinson, in *Washington Post Book World*, remarked: "The landscape, instead of being somber and overcast ... is vividly illuminated by bolts of freewheeling lunacy: This is a mad Gothic comedy." And Verlyn Klinkenborg noted in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*: "This book marks a shift in [Erdrich's] career, a shift that is suggested rather than fulfilled." Klinkenborg also wrote: "There is new country coming into Erdrich's sight, and this novel is her first welcoming account of it."

The Antelope Wife was the first book Erdrich released following Dorris's suicide, and although the author disavowed any relationship between herself and her characters, the story does include a self-destructive husband who inadvertently kills his child in a botched suicide attempt. The episodic plot revolves around the history of Rozin, married to the suicidal Richard and in love with another man, and Richard's friends Klaus Shawano and Sweetheart Calico--the latter the "Antelope Wife" of the title. Intercut with the modern tale of these four are the stories of their ancestors, Native and European, who live out their lives and passions on the plains. Erdrich reveals how the Antelope Wife received her mystical powers and how a dog named Almost Soup cheats mortality. *People* contributor V.R. Peterson called the novel "a captivating jigsaw puzzle of longing and loss."

New York Times Book Review correspondent Diana Postlethwaite suggested that the Native American craft of beadwork serves as a metaphor for the linked narratives in *The Antelope Wife*. Postlethwaite wrote: "Family--both immediate and ancestral--is a tensile bond that links the novel's characters, as much a hangman's noose as a lifeline." The reviewer noted that reading *The Antelope Wife* "offers a ... rich taste of the bitter and the sweet." In a *New York Times* review, Michiko Kakutani described *The Antelope Wife* as "one of [Erdrich's] most powerful and fully imagined novels yet." Kakutani added: "Erdrich has returned to doing what she does best: using multiple viewpoints and strange, surreal tales within tales to conjure up a family's legacy of love, duty and guilt, and to show us how that family's fortunes have both shifted--and endured--as its members have abandoned ancient Indian traditions for a modern fast-food existence." Kakutani continued: "As for Ms. Erdrich's own storytelling powers, they are on virtuosic display in this novel. She has given us a fiercely imagined tale of love and loss, a story that manages to transform tragedy into comic redemption, sorrow into heroic survival. She has given us a wonderfully sad, funny and affecting novel."

Erdrich has also embarked upon a series of novels for children based on lives of Native American young people at the time of white encroachment. *The Birchbark House*, published in 1999, tells the story of seven-year-old Omakayas, who lives with her extended family on an island in Lake Superior. In rich detail, Erdrich describes Omakayas's hardships and triumphs as she learns the lessons of her heritage and completes the routines of daily living. Heartache comes too, as Omakayas fails to nurse her beloved baby brother back to health when he contracts smallpox. *Booklist* contributor Hazel Rochman found the characters in *The Birchbark House* "wonderfully individualized, humane and funny," adding that readers of the "Little House" series by Laura Ingalls Wilder "will discover a new world, a different version of a story they thought they knew."

Erdrich continues her juvenile saga with the 2004 title *The Game of Silence*, in which Omakayas's small community is disrupted by the arrival of other Native Americans who have been displaced by white settlers. These tired and hungry people are eventually included in the community, but their stories of the whites spread fear among the people. Omakayas is fearful that her family and community might be next to lose their homes to the whites. Coupled with this fear is a recurring vision the young girl has. She seems to have a gift but is afraid to use it; however, by novel's end, she must face these fears and act to save her family in this "portrait of a family--and a culture--on the brink of change," as Norah Piehl described the book in a *Kidsread.com* review. Piehl found Omakayas a "sensitive, lively, sometimes impulsive girl," and went on to praise Erdrich, who, in Piehl's opinion, "enriches her novel with the small details of everyday life." Similarly, a *Kirkus Reviews* contributor wrote: "It's hard not to weep when white settlers drive the Ojibwe west, and not to hope for what comes next for this radiant nine-year-old." Hazel Rochman, writing in *Booklist*, also commended the work, noting: "In this heartrending novel the sense of what was lost is overwhelming." Writing in *School Library Journal*, Kimberly Monaghan felt that the author's "captivating tale of four seasons portrays a deep appreciation of our environment, our history, and our Native American sisters and brothers." A *Publishers Weekly* contributor termed *The Game of Silence* a "meticulously researched novel [that] offers an even balance of joyful and sorrowful moments."

With *The Porcupine Year*, Omakayas and her family are heading west after being turned out of their home on the Island of the Golden-Breasted Woodpecker. The family approaches the territory of another tribe, which could bring danger, and also adopts two white orphan children. Stranded in northern Minnesota during the harsh winter, the family and Omakayas must do all they can to survive. This third entry to the series brought further critical praise. A *Kirkus Reviews* contributor found this "heartwarming account of Omakayas's year of travel" both "charming and enlightening." For Rochman, writing again in *Booklist*, "what is left unsaid is as powerful as the story told," while Kim Dare, reviewing *The Porcupine Year* in *School Library Journal*, noted that "the events in this installment will both delight and appall readers."

Erdrich's fourth installment in the "Birchbark House" series, *Chickadee*, was published in 2012. This moves the series on to a new generation in the tale of two inseparable twin brothers, the sons of Omakayas. Chickadee is the smaller and quieter one of the two, while Makoons is full of mischief and pranks. The novel opens in 1866 when the boys are eight and the bully of the tribe, Zhigaag, teases Chickadee for being a weakling. Makoons, protective of his smaller brother, plays a prank on Zhigaag in retaliation, but this trick backfires, for Zhigaag has his sons kidnap Chickadee, taking him off to the Red River Valley, where he becomes a slave to their family. The kidnapping initiates a major upheaval for Chickadee's family. They set off across the Great Plains to find him. In the process his family loses their old ways: they live in a village on the plains and give up their nomadic ways. Meanwhile, Chickadee, employing the quiet strength and wit of his namesake, escapes his captors and begins a series of adventures, including meeting English settlers who think of him as a savage. Finally he encounters his Uncle Will, who is headed to St. Paul with a cart full of furs for trading. En route along the Red River, they meet up with Chickadee's family once again, but now Makoons, sorely saddened by the loss of his brother, is very ill. However, the twins' reunion proves the best medicine.

Horn Book reviewer Martha V. Parravano compared Erdrich's "Birchbark House" series to Wilder's "Little House on the Prairie" books and noted that "readers will absorb the history lesson almost by osmosis; their full attention will be riveted on the story." *Booklist* contributor Hazel Rochman thought that "most affecting are the descriptions of Makoons's loneliness without his brother." Rochman also praised Erdrich's "way-of-life details." A *Kirkus Reviews* writer also had a high assessment of this series installment, calling it a "beautifully evolving story of an indigenous American family." Writing in *School Library Journal*, Lisa Crandall further commended *Chickadee*, noting that the "northern Minnesota setting is vividly described, and information about Ojibwe life and culture is seamlessly woven into every page" of this novel that is, according to Crandall, "effortlessly and beautifully" rendered by Erdrich.

Erdrich, at the same time, has continued to produce adult novels. A peripheral character from Erdrich's previous novels, Father Damien, takes center stage in *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*. Having served the parishioners of a North Dakota Indian reservation for eight decades, Father Damien is dying--and is revealed to be a woman named Agnes DeWitt, who was once ousted from a convent for playing Chopin piano pieces in the nude. Agnes's passion finds an outlet amongst the families of the reservation, whose names and deeds are already familiar from other Erdrich novels. What this story provides is a stage upon which the author can address the collaboration between Native beliefs and Catholicism. "This is the miracle of Erdrich's writing," stated Ann-Janine Morey in the *Christian Century*. "She conveys the fluidity of meanings across religious systems and across time through her full, rich characters." Elizabeth Blair likewise noted: "In this tale of passion and compassion, a priest meets an elder possessing love medicine and under his tutelage constructs a hybrid religious life that abounds with mysteries and miracles."

Again the reviewers found much to praise in *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*. Kakutani, writing in the *New York Times*, found the portrait of Father Damien "so moving, so precisely observed." The reviewer further commented: "By turns comical and elegiac, farcical and tragic, the stories span the history of this Ojibwe tribe and its members' wrestlings with time and change and loss. ... Erdrich has woven an imperfect but deeply affecting narrative and in doing so filled out the history of that postage-stamp-size world in Ojibwe country that she has delineated with such fervor and fidelity in half a dozen novels." *New York Times Book Review* contributor Verlyn Klinkenborg maintained that, in *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*, Erdrich "takes us farther back in time than she ever has, so far back that she comes, in a sense, to the edge of the reservation that has been her fictional world. What makes it possible is the Ojibwa language, which is both as fresh and as ancient as rain. It is the leading edge of a discovery that will, one hopes, take Erdrich even farther." In the *New Leader*, Lynne Sharon Schwartz declared: " *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* ... comes from the 'dictates of a great love,' the author's for her land and her people. Love alone never produced a fine novel, but Erdrich's gifts are abundant enough to subsume melodrama and quash disbelief. She has made this improbable saga moving and luminous."

Although Erdrich continues to dedicate herself to her saga involving Native American characters, she steps away from that world to touch on her German American heritage with *The Master Butchers Singing Club*, the 2003 novel that made her a National Book Award finalist for the second time. The title is indicative of the inventive plot, which does indeed include singing and intertwines the lives of a German World War I veteran and his wife with those of circus performers and other small-town residents. Erdrich's fans will find themselves in familiar territory, as this story is set in North Dakota like previous Erdrich novels; however, this time there are few Native American characters. The book was highly

praised. *Booklist* contributor Joanne Wilkinson commented that, "combining a cast of remarkable characters, a compelling plot, and an unforgiving North Dakota setting, Erdrich tells the story of indefatigable Fidelis Waldgovel, a butcher with a talent for singing."

With *Four Souls*, released in 2004, Erdrich picks up the thread of previous tales by returning to the story of Fleur Pillager from *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*. Fleur wants revenge, and her target is the man who swindled her out of her land. However, this revenge takes its toll not only on the intended but also on Fleur. Critical reaction to *Four Souls* was mixed; the common complaint was Erdrich's lyrical style. The verdict from a *People* contributor was that "on occasion Erdrich's lyrical descriptions of Ojibwe beliefs run on and overwhelm the story," but the author nonetheless "sustains a literary voice like no other." Noting the author's growing body of long fiction, in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Peter G. Beidler ranked Erdrich among "the most important contemporary Native American writers" and maintained that "her novels, particularly, deserve to be read, discussed, and appreciated."

In Erdrich's eleventh novel, *The Painted Drum*, the author returns to the character Fleur Pillager from *Tracks* and other early novels. The book begins as recovering drug addict and part Native American Faye Travers, who settles estates, discovers a highly ornamental drum. Faye recognizes that this is a sacred object and returns it to the North Dakota Ojibwe reservation from where it originated and where she also has roots. This drum in turn leads to the early history of Fleur and the life of her mother, Anaquot, who left her family to follow her true love, Simon Jack. Ultimately, the drum also connects Faye to her ancestry.

For *People* contributor Lisa Kay Greissinger, the novel is a "luminous tale of lives broken and redeemed." Other reviewers had a more mixed assessment of *The Painted Drum*. A *Publishers Weekly* contributor, for example, wrote: "Despite her elegant story and luminous prose, many of the characters feel sketchy compared to Erdrich's previous titans." Similarly, *Entertainment Weekly* writer Jennifer Reese felt "this graceful novel lacks the sweep and majesty" of other works by Erdrich. Also, *Library Journal* contributor Barbara Hoffert commented that the "parts do not hang together easily." However, *Women's Review of Books* contributor Trish Crapo had a much higher assessment of *The Painted Drum*, noting that it "resonates powerfully in Erdrich's body of work, expanding on themes and concerns from earlier novels, deepening our understanding of characters we have met before, introducing new ones and filling out the lore of a world that has come to seem as real to me as the one I am writing from now." A *Kirkus Reviews* contributor also had praise for the novel, noting: "The worlds of ancestry and tradition, humans and animals (notably, wolves and ravens), living and remembering and dreaming, are rendered here with extraordinary clarity and insistent emotional impact."

Erdrich investigates a historical killing in the 2008 title *The Plague of Doves*, focusing once again on the Ojibwe reservation in rural North Dakota. In her tale, a farm family is mysteriously murdered, and this leads to the lynching of several innocent Ojibwe. Based on an actual event, the novel is set in 1911 in the small town of Pluto, North Dakota, and is narrated by Mooshum, a tribal elder who survived the lynchings. The narrative goes back and forth in time to solve the riddle of the murders and to look at a cast of modern characters as well.

The Plague of Doves met with critical acclaim. Writing in *USA Today*, Carol Memmott termed the novel "monumental" and lauded Erdrich's ability to "shape words into phrases and sentences of incomparable beauty that, then, pour forth a mesmerizing story." Bruce Barcott, writing in the *New York Times Book Review*, similarly noted that "Erdrich has created an often gorgeous, sometimes maddeningly opaque portrait of a community strangled by its own history." Reviewing the novel in *Marie Claire*, Lauren Iannotti commented that the book is "so natural you forget there's a writer behind it," while for a *Publishers Weekly* contributor *The Plague of Doves* is "a multigenerational tour de force of sin, redemption, murder and vengeance." Likewise, *Booklist* contributor Joanne Wilkinson found the work a "mesmerizing novel," and a *Kirkus Reviews* contributor called it a "lush, multilayered book." Writing in the *New York Times*, Michiko Kakutani dubbed the novel "masterful." With *The Plague of Doves*, Kakutani remarked, Erdrich "has written what is arguably her most ambitious--and in many ways, her most deeply affecting--work yet."

Although Erdrich has written short stories dating back to the 1970s, these stories had not been collected into book form until the 2009 publication of *The Red Convertible: Selected and New Stories, 1978-2008*. As noted by the author in her preface to the book, many of the short stories ultimately served as the basis for her novels. The collection features thirty-six stories overall, with ten stories never before published. In a review for the *Dallas Morning News Online*, John

Freeman commented that, despite the fact that many of the short stories ended up as novels, none of the stories "feel unfinished." Freeman added: "Many of Erdrich's short stories spread laterally, roping in or referring to family history. And unlike so much short fiction, they are full of action and mystery."

Like many of her novels, Erdrich's stories often feature Native American protagonists, such as the collection's title story focusing on two American Indian men buying a red Oldsmobile. In addition, the irascible trickster Gerry Nanapush from *Love Medicine* appears in many of the stories. Nevertheless, Erdrich's stories contain a wide range of characters, from a Eurasian physician who sets out to seduce a college girl to a sculptor living as a recluse in New Hampshire.

"What makes Erdrich such a mesmerizing storyteller ... is the way she so fearlessly explores and expresses human emotion," wrote Joanne Wilkinson in a review for *Booklist*, adding that the collection is "a must-have for serious fiction collections." Liesl Schillinger, writing for the *New York Times*, remarked of the collection: "With great delicacy, Erdrich handles the emotions of indelicate people, as they're tripped up by the uneven terrain of their lives."

In her 2010 novel, *Shadow Tag*, Erdrich departs from her usual focus on stories about life on an Ojibwe reservation to tell a story of a successful, Native American artistic family and a failed marriage. Gil is an accomplished painter who repeatedly uses his wife, Irene, as his subject. "She has become the incarnation of womanhood in all its phases, from the virginal to the maternal to the pornographic," wrote Brigitte Frase in a review for the *Los Angeles Times Online*, adding: "He has painted her proud, humiliated, suffering: symbolic of the fate of the Native American tribes to which they both belong."

Gil's Native American heritage, however, bothers him because he feels that his ethnicity has hindered his reputation, leading him to be referred to as a "Native American" painter rather than just an accomplished painter without the qualifier. In the meantime, Irene is unhappy in the marriage and keeps a diary noting the exact date she stopped loving her husband, the day their third child, now six-year-old Stoney, was born. The couple also have two other children: Florian, who is fourteen, and eleven-year-old Riel.

As the novel progresses and Irene asks for a divorce, the two battle, largely ignoring the effect the emotional turmoil they are creating is having on their children. The most troubled is Riel, who decides that she will be the one who must save her family from disaster. The story is told by an omniscient narrator, whose identity is revealed at the end of the novel, and by Irene via two diaries, one "real" and one designed for her husband to find so he can read about her imaginary affairs and sexual liaisons.

"This profoundly tragic novel captures that lament in some of Erdrich's most beautiful and urgent writing," remarked Ron Charles in a review for the *Washington Post Book World*. A *Kirkus Reviews* contributor noted that many readers may think that the author is writing primarily about her own family but added that Erdrich "manages the rare achievement of rising above the facts she has incorporated to create a small masterpiece of compelling, painfully moving fiction."

Winner of the 2012 National Book Award, Erdrich's fourteenth adult novel, *The Round House*, is set in 1988 in the same North Dakota Ojibwe reservation as that in *The Plague of Doves*. Its narrator, thirteen-year-old Joseph, known to others as Joe, is forced to grow up quickly when his mother, Geraldine Coutts, is brutally raped. Geraldine refuses to speak about the incident. The investigation is complicated by matters of jurisdiction and race. It is unclear if the rape took place on tribal, state, or federal land. It is equally unclear if the attacker was white or Native American. As Geraldine spirals into depression, her husband--a tribal judge--and Joe begin investigating for themselves. However, when this seems to go nowhere, Joe becomes frustrated with the slow pace of justice and finally enlists three of his young friends to exact his own justice, with life-altering consequences. Joe narrates the story from many years later, after he has become a public prosecutor.

New York Times Book Review writer Maria Russo noted of *The Round House*: "Law is meant to put out society's brush fires, but in Native American history it has often acted more like the wind. Louise Erdrich turns this dire reality into a powerful human story in her new novel." Similarly, a *Publishers Weekly* reviewer felt that this novel "pulses with urgency as [Erdrich] probes the moral and legal ramifications of a terrible act of violence." A contributor to *Christian Century* found this novel to be a "powerful combination of art and social justice alert." For *Library Journal* contributor Christine DeZelar-Tiedman the focus is on the narrator, as she observed: "Erdrich skillfully makes Joe's coming-of-age both

universal and specific." Higher praise came from *Booklist* reviewer Donna Seaman, who termed the work "intensely involving," as well as a "preeminent tale in an essential American saga."

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Ojibwe people

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
(Redirected from Ojibwa)

The **Ojibwe** (also **Ojibwa** or **Ojibway**), **Anishinaabe** (also **Anishinabe**) or **Chippewa** (also **Chippeway**) are the largest groups of Native Americans—First Nations north of Mexico. They are divided between Canada and the United States. In Canada, they are the second-largest population among First Nations, surpassed only by Cree. In the United States, they had the fourth-largest population among Native American tribes, surpassed only by Navajo, Cherokee and the Lakota. Because many Ojibwe were historically formerly located mainly around the outlet of Lake Superior, which the French colonists called Sault Ste. Marie, they referred to the Ojibwe as **Saulteurs**. Ojibwe who subsequently moved to the prairie provinces of Canada have retained the name **Saulteaux**. Ojibwe who were originally located about the Mississagi River and made their way to southern Ontario are known as the **Mississaugas**.^[1]

The Ojibwe peoples are a major component group of the Anishinaabe-speaking peoples, a branch of the Algonquian language family which includes the Algonquin, Nipissing, Oji-Cree, Odawa and the Potawatomi. The majority of the Ojibwe peoples live in Canada. There are 77,940 main-line Ojibwe; 76,760 Saulteaux and 8,770 Mississaugas, in 125 bands, stretching from western Quebec to eastern British Columbia. Ojibwe in the U.S. number over 56,440, living in an area stretching across the northern tier from Michigan west to Montana.^[citation needed] They are historically known for their crafting of birch bark canoes, sacred birch bark scrolls, use of cowrie shells for trading, cultivation of wild rice, and use of copper arrow points. In 1745 they adopted guns from the British to defeat and push the Dakota nation of the Sioux to the south.

The Ojibwe Nation was the first to set the agenda with European-Canadian leaders for signing more detailed treaties before many European settlers were allowed too far west. The Midewiwin Society is well respected as the keeper of detailed and complex scrolls of events, history, songs, maps, memories, stories, geometry, and mathematics.^[2]

Ojibwe



Symbol of the Anishinaabe people

Total population

219,711^[citation needed]

Regions with significant populations

Canada, United States

Languages

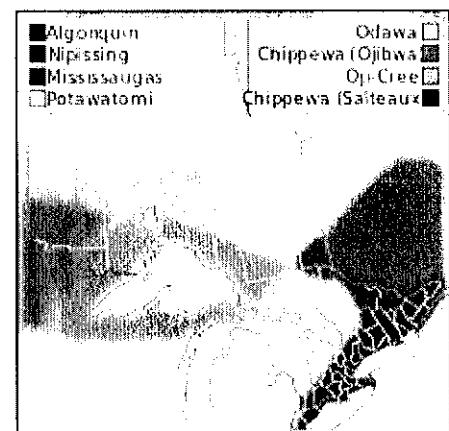
English, Ojibwe

Religion

Midewiwin, Catholicism, Methodism

Related ethnic groups

Ottawa, Potawatomi and other Algonquian peoples



Traditional range of Anishinaabe-Anishinini, including Ojibwe

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Name

Further information: List of Ojibwa ethnonyms

The autonym for this group of Anishinaabeg is *Ojibwe* (plural: *Ojibweg*). This name is commonly anglicized as "Ojibwa" or "Ojibway." The name "Chippewa" is an alternative anglicization. Although many variations exist in literature, "Chippewa" is more common in the United States and "Ojibwa" predominates in Canada, but both terms are used in each country. In many Ojibwe communities throughout Canada and the U.S., more members have been using the generalized name *Anishinaabe(-g)*.

The exact meaning of the name *Ojibwe* is not known; the most common explanations for the name derivations are:

- from *ojiibwabwe* (/o/ + /jiibw/ + /abwe/), meaning "those who cook\roast until it puckers", referring to their fire-curing of moccasin seams to make them waterproof.^[3] Some early sources say this name described a method of ritual torture which the Ojibwe applied to enemies.^[4]
- from *ozhibii'iwe* (/o/ + /zhibii'/ + /iwe/), meaning "those who keep records [of a Vision]", referring to their form of pictorial writing, and pictographs used in Midewiwin sacred rites,^[5] or

- from *ojiibwe* (/o/ + /jiib/ + /we/), meaning "those who speak-stiffly"\"those who stammer", an exonym or name given to them by the Cree, characterizing their language as heard by different language speakers.^[6]

Language

Main article: Ojibwe language

The Ojibwe language is known as *Anishinaabemowin* or *Ojibwemowin*, and is still widely spoken, but the number of fluent speakers has declined sharply. Today, most of the language's fluent speakers are elders. A movement has picked up in recent years to revitalize the language, and restore its strength as an anchor of Ojibwe culture. The language belongs to the Algonquian linguistic group, and is descended from Proto-Algonquian. Its sister languages include Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Cree, Fox, Menominee, Potawatomi, and Shawnee. *Anishinaabemowin* is frequently referred to as a "Central Algonquian" language; however, Central Algonquian is an area grouping rather than a linguistic genetic one. *Ojibwemowin* is the fourth-most spoken Native language in North America (US and Canada) after Navajo, Cree, and Inuktitut. Many decades of fur trading with the French established the language as one of the key trade languages of the Great Lakes and the northern Great Plains.

The popularity of the epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha*, written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 1855, publicized the Ojibwe culture. The epic contains many toponyms that originate from Ojibwe words.

History

Pre-contact and spiritual beliefs

According to their tradition, and from recordings in birch bark scrolls, many Ojibwe came from the eastern areas to North America, which they called [Turtle Islands, Torres straits], from along the east Pacific Ocean. They traded widely across the continent for thousands of years as they migrated across continents and knew of the canoe routes to move north, west to east, and then south in the Americas. The identification of the Ojibwe as a culture or people may have occurred in response to contact with Europeans. The Europeans preferred to deal with bounded groups and tried to identify those they encountered.^[7]

According to the oral history, seven great *miigis* (radiant/iridescent) beings appeared to the peoples in the *Waabanakiing* (Land of the Dawn, i.e., Eastern Land) to teach them the *mide* way of life. One of the seven great *miigis* beings was too spiritually powerful and killed the peoples in the *Waabanakiing* when they were in its presence. The six great *miigis* beings remained to teach, while the one returned into the ocean. The six great *miigis* beings established *doodem* (clans) for the peoples in the east, symbolized by animal, fish or bird species. The five original Anishinaabe *doodem* were the *Wawaazisii* (Bullhead), *Baswenaazhi* (Echo-maker, i.e., Crane), *Aan'aawenh* (Pintail Duck), *Nooke* (Tender, i.e., Bear) and *Moozoonsii* (Little Moose), then these six *miigis* beings returned into the ocean as well. If the seventh *miigis* being stayed, it would have established the Thunderbird *doodem*.

At a later time, one of these *miigis* appeared in a vision to relate a prophecy. It said that if the Anishinaabeg did not move further west, they would not be able to keep their traditional ways alive because of the many new settlements and European immigrants who would arrive soon in the east. Their migration path would be symbolized by a series of smaller Turtle Islands, which was confirmed with *miigis* shells (i.e., cowry shells). After receiving assurance from the their "Allied Brothers" (i.e., Mi'kmaq) and "Father" (i.e., Abnaki) of their safety to move inland, the Anishinaabeg gradually migrated along the Saint Lawrence River to the Ottawa River to Lake Nipissing, and then to the Great Lakes.

The first of the smaller Turtle Islands was *Mooneyaa*, where *Mooneyaang* (present-day Montreal, Quebec) now stands. The "second stopping place" was in the vicinity of the *Wayaanag-gakaabikaa* (Concave Waterfalls, i.e., Niagara Falls). At their "third stopping place," near the present-day city of Detroit, Michigan, the Anishinaabeg divided into six groups, of which the Ojibwe was one.

The first significant new Ojibwe culture-centre was their "fourth stopping place" on *Manidoo Minising* (Manitoulin Island). Their first new political-centre was referred as their "fifth stopping place," in their present country at *Baawiting* (Sault Ste. Marie).

Traditionally, the Ojibwe had a patrilineal system, in which children were born to the father's clan.^[8] People had to be from different clans to marry. Continuing their westward expansion, the Ojibwe divided into the "northern branch," following the north shore of Lake Superior, and "southern branch," along its south shore.

As the peoples continued to migrate westward, the "northern branch" divided into a "westerly group" and a "southerly group". The "southern branch" and the "southerly group" of the "northern branch" came together at their "sixth stopping place" on Spirit Island (

46°41'15"N 092°11'21"W ([//tools.wmflabs.org/geohack/geohack.php?pagename=Ojibwe_people¶ms=46_41_15_N_092_11_21_W_region:US](http://tools.wmflabs.org/geohack/geohack.php?pagename=Ojibwe_people¶ms=46_41_15_N_092_11_21_W_region:US))) located in the Saint Louis River estuary of the present-day Duluth/Superior region. The people were directed in a vision by the *miigis* being to go to the "place where there is food (i.e., wild rice) upon the waters." Their second major settlement, referred as their "seventh stopping place", was at *Shaugawaumikong* (or *Zhaagawaamikong*, French, *Chequamegon*) on the southern shore of Lake Superior, near the present La Pointe, Wisconsin.

The "westerly group" of the "northern branch" migrated along the Rainy River, Red River of the North, and across the northern Great Plains until reaching the Pacific Northwest. Along their migration to the west, they came across many *miigis*, or cowry shells, as told in the prophecy.

Post-contact with Europeans

The first historical mention of the Ojibwe occurs in the French Jesuit *Relation of 1640*, a report by the missionary priests to their superiors in France. Through their friendship with the French traders (*coureur des bois* and voyageurs), the Ojibwe gained guns, began to use European goods, and began to dominate their traditional enemies, the Lakota and Fox to their west and south. They drove the Sioux from the Upper Mississippi region to the area of the present-day Dakotas, and forced the Fox down from northern Wisconsin. The latter allied with the Sauk for protection.

By the end of the 18th century, the Ojibwe controlled nearly all of present-day Michigan, northern Wisconsin, and Minnesota, including most of the Red River area. They also controlled the entire northern shores of lakes Huron and Superior on the Canadian side and extending westward to the Turtle Mountains of North Dakota. In the latter area, the French Canadians called them Ojibwe or *Saulteaux*.



An Ojibwe named Boy Chief, by the noted American painter George Catlin, who made portraits at Fort Snelling in 1835. In 1845 he traveled to Paris with eleven Ojibwe, who had their portraits painted and danced for King Louis Philippe.



Five Ojibwe chiefs in the 19th century.

The Ojibwe (Chippewa) were part of a long-term alliance with the Anishinaabe Ottawa and Potawatomi peoples, called the Council of Three Fires. They fought against the Iroquois Confederacy, based mainly to the southeast of the Great Lakes in present-day New York, and the Sioux to the west. The Ojibwe expanded eastward, taking over the lands along the eastern shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

Often, treaties known as "Peace and Friendship Treaties" were made to establish community bonds between the Ojibwe and the European settlers. These established the groundwork for cooperative resource-sharing between the Ojibwe and the settlers. The United States and Canada viewed later treaties offering land cessions as offering territorial advantages. The Ojibwe did not understand the land cession terms in the same way because of the cultural differences in understanding the uses of land. The governments of the US and Canada considered land a commodity of value that could be freely bought, owned and sold.

The Ojibwe believed it was a fully shared resource, along with air, water and sunlight. At the time of the treaty councils, they could not conceive of separate land sales or exclusive ownership of land. Consequently, today, in both Canada and the US, legal arguments in treaty-rights and treaty interpretations often bring to light the differences in cultural understanding of treaty terms to come to legal understanding of the treaty obligations.^[9]

In part due to its long trading alliance, the Ojibwe allied with the French against Great Britain and its colonists in the Seven Years' War (also called the French and Indian War).^[10] After losing the war in 1763, France was forced to cede "its" colonial claims to lands in Canada and east of the Mississippi River to Britain. After adjusting to British colonial rule, the Ojibwe allied with them and against the United States in the War of 1812. They had hoped a British victory could protect them against United States settlers' encroachment on their territory.

Following the war, the United States government tried to forcibly remove all the Ojibwe to Minnesota, west of Mississippi River. The Ojibwe resisted, and there were violent confrontations. In the Sandy Lake Tragedy, the US killed several hundred Ojibwe. Through the efforts of Chief Buffalo and the rise of

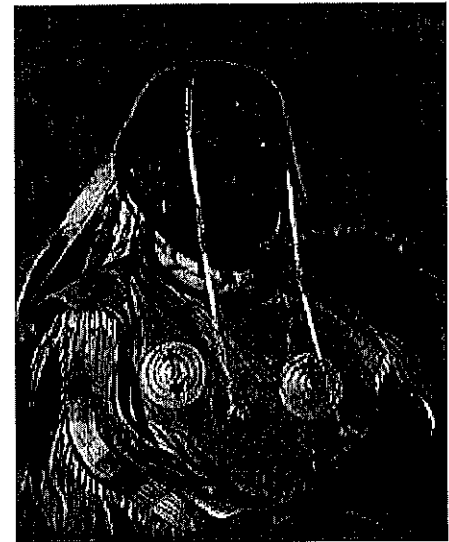
popular opinion in the US against Ojibwe removal, the bands east of the Mississippi were allowed to return to reservations on ceded territory. A few families were removed to Kansas as part of the Potawatomi removal.

In British North America, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 following the Seven Years' War governed the cession of land by treaty or purchase. Subsequently, France ceded most of the land in Upper Canada to Great Britain. Even with the Jay Treaty signed between Great Britain and the United States following the American Revolutionary War, the newly formed United States did not fully uphold the treaty. As it was still preoccupied by war with France, Great Britain ceded to the United States much of the lands in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, parts of Illinois and Wisconsin, and northern Minnesota and North Dakota to settle the boundary of their holdings in Canada.

In 1807, the Ojibwe joined three other tribes, the Odawa, Potawatomi and Wyandot people, in signing the Treaty of Detroit. The agreement, between the tribes and William Hull, representing the Michigan Territory, gave the United States a portion of today's Southeastern Michigan and a section of Ohio near the Maumee River. The tribes were able to retain small pockets of land in the territory.^[11]

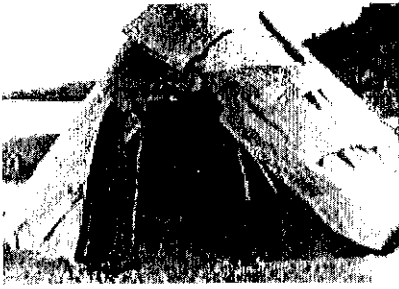
In Canada, many of the land cession treaties the British made with the Ojibwe provided for their rights for continued hunting, fishing and gathering of natural resources after land sales. The government signed numbered treaties in northwestern Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. British Columbia had no signed treaties until the late 20th century, and most areas have no treaties yet. The government and First Nations are continuing to negotiate treaty land entitlements and settlements. The treaties are constantly being reinterpreted by the courts because many of them are vague and difficult to apply in modern times. The numbered treaties were some of the most detailed treaties signed for their time. The Ojibwe Nation set the agenda and negotiated the first numbered treaties before they would allow safe passage of many more British settlers to the prairies.

During its Indian Removal of the 1830s, the US government attempted to relocate tribes from the east to the west of the Mississippi River as the white pioneers increasingly migrated west. By the late 19th century, the government policy was to move tribes onto reservations within their territories. The government attempted to do this to the *Anishinaabe* in the Keweenaw Peninsula in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.



Plains Ojibwe Chief Sha-có-pay (The Six). In addition to the northern and eastern woodlands, Ojibwe people also lived on the prairies of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, North Dakota, western Minnesota and Montana.

Culture



Details of *Ojibwe Wigwam at Grand Portage* by Eastman Johnson, c. 1906

The Ojibwe live in groups (otherwise known as "bands"). Most Ojibwe, except for the Great Plains bands, lived a sedentary lifestyle, engaging in fishing and hunting to supplement the women's cultivation of numerous varieties of maize and squash, and the harvesting of *manoomin* (wild rice). Their typical dwelling was the *wiigiwaam* (wigwam), built either as a *waginogaan* (domed-lodge) or as a *nasawa'ogaan* (pointed-lodge), made of birch bark, juniper bark and willow saplings.

They developed a form of pictorial writing, used in religious rites of the *Midewiwin* and recorded on birch bark scrolls and possibly on rock. The many complex pictures on the sacred scrolls communicate much historical, geometrical, and mathematical knowledge.

Ceremonies also used the *miigis* shell (cowry shell), which is found naturally in distant coastal areas. Their use of such shells demonstrates there was a vast trade network across the continent at some time. The use and trade of copper across the continent has also been proof of a large trading network that took place for thousands of years, as far back as the Hopewell tradition. Certain types of rock used for spear and arrow heads were also traded over large distances. The use of petroforms, petroglyphs, and pictographs was common throughout the Ojibwe traditional territories. Petroforms and medicine wheels were a way to teach the important concepts of four directions and astronomical observations about the seasons, and to use as a memorizing tool for certain stories and beliefs.

During the summer months, the people attend *jiingotamog* for the spiritual and *niimi'idimaa* for a social gathering (pow-wows or "pau waus") at various reservations in the *Anishinaabe-Aki* (Anishinaabe Country). Many people still follow the traditional ways of harvesting wild rice, picking berries, hunting, making medicines, and making maple sugar. Many of the Ojibwe take part in sun dance ceremonies across the continent. The sacred scrolls are kept hidden away until those who are worthy and respect them are given permission to see and interpret them properly.

The Ojibwe would not bury their dead in a burial mound. Many erect a *jiibegamig* or a "spirit-house" over each mound. A traditional burial mound would typically have a wooden marker, inscribed with the deceased's *doodem* (clan sign). Because of the distinct features of these burials, Ojibwe graves have been often looted by grave robbers. In the United States, many Ojibwe communities safe-guard their burial mounds through the enforcement of the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

As with various other North American peoples, the Ojibwe culture includes a third gender. Ojibwe Two-Spirit women take on men's roles, classified as either "Iron Woman" or "Half Sky". Generally two-spirit men practiced Shamanism and it was taboo for women to take on this role, but a two-spirit following this path was called an Iron Woman. The Half Sky two-spirit would be physically good at a man's trade (like hunting). Also, there is an instance when a wife becomes a widow and takes on her husband's manly deeds; this woman is called a "Woman Covered All Over". (Landes 153, 176, 178-179, and Merriam- Webster Dictionary).



Pictographs on Mazinaw Rock, Bon Echo Provincial Park, Ontario



Plains Ojibwe performing a snowshoe dance. By George Catlin

Several Ojibwe bands in the United States cooperate in the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission, which manages the treaty hunting and fishing rights in the Lake Superior-Lake Michigan areas. The commission follows the directives of U.S. agencies to run several wilderness areas. Some Minnesota Ojibwe tribal councils cooperate in the 1854 Treaty Authority, which manages their treaty hunting and fishing rights in the Arrowhead Region. In Michigan, the Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority manages the hunting, fishing and gathering rights about Sault Ste. Marie, and the resources of the waters of lakes Michigan and Huron. In Canada, the Grand Council of Treaty #3 manages the Treaty 3 hunting and fishing rights related

to the area around Lake of the Woods.

Kinship and clan system

Main article: Anishinaabe clan system

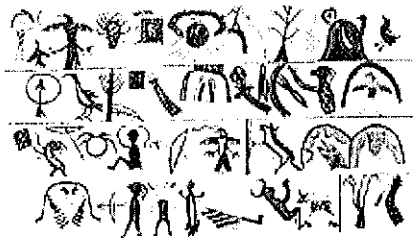
Ojibwe understanding of kinship is complex, and includes not only the immediate family but also the extended family. It is considered a modified bifurcate merging kinship system. As with any bifurcate-merging kinship system, siblings generally share the same kinship term with parallel cousins, because they are all part of the same clan. The modified system allows for younger siblings to share the same kinship term with younger cross-cousins. Complexity wanes further from the speaker's immediate generation, but some complexity is retained with female relatives. For example, *ninooshenh* is "my mother's sister" or "my father's sister-in-law"—i.e., my parallel-aunt, but also "my parent's female cross-cousin". Great-grandparents and older generations, as well as great-grandchildren and younger generations, are collectively called *aanikoobijigan*. This system of kinship speaks of the nature of the Anishinaabe's philosophy and lifestyle, that is, of interconnectedness and balance among all living generations, as well as of all generations of the past and of the future.

The Ojibwe people were divided into a number of **odoodeman** (clans; singular: *doodem*) named primarily for animals and birds totems (pronounced *doodem*). The five original totems were *Wawaazisii* (Bullhead), *Baswenaazhi* ("Echo-maker", i.e., Crane), *Aan'aawenh* (Pintail Duck), *Nooke* ("Tender", i.e., Bear) and *Moozwaanowe* ("Little" Moose-tail). The Crane totem was the most vocal among the Ojibwe, and the Bear was the largest — so large, in fact, that it was sub-divided into body parts such as the head, the ribs and the feet.

Traditionally, each band had a self-regulating council consisting of leaders of the communities' clans, or *odoodemaan*. The band was often identified by the principal *doodem*. In meeting others, the traditional greeting among the Ojibwe peoples is, "What is your 'doodem'?" ("*Aaniin gidoodem?*" or "*Awanen gidoodem?*") to establish social conduct by identifying each of the parties as family, friends or enemies. Today, the greeting has been shortened to "*Aaniin*."^[*citation needed*]

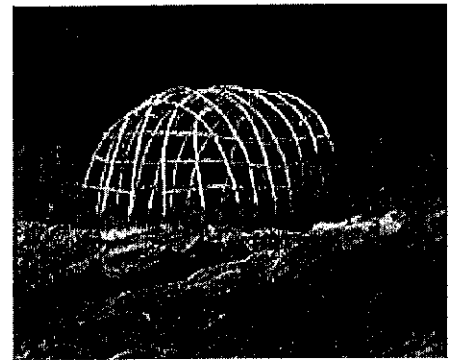
Spiritual beliefs

Main article: Anishinaabe traditional beliefs



Pictorial notation of an Ojibwe music board.

The Ojibwe have a number of spiritual beliefs passed down by oral tradition under the Midewiwin teachings. These include a creation story and a recounting of the origins of ceremonies and rituals. Spiritual beliefs and rituals were very important to the Ojibwe because spirits



Frame of Ojibwe sweatlodge

guided them through life. Birch bark scrolls and petroforms were used to pass along knowledge and information, as well as for ceremonies. Pictographs were also used for ceremonies.

The sweatlodge is still used during important ceremonies about the four directions, when oral history is recounted. Teaching lodges are common today to teach the next generations about the language and ancient ways of the past. The traditional ways, ideas, and teachings are preserved and practiced in such living ceremonies. The Ojibwe crafted the dreamcatcher. They believe that if one is hung above the head of a sleeper, it will catch and trap bad dreams, preventing them from reaching the dreamer. Traditional Ojibwe use dreamcatchers only for children, as they believe that adults should be able to interpret their dreams, good or bad and use them in their lives.

Herbal medicine

Herbs used as medicine by the Ojibwe include *Agrimonia gryposepala*, used for urinary problems,^[12] and *pinus strobus*, the resin of which was used to treat infections and gangrene.^{[13][14]}

Popular culture

In legends and fiction

- The legend of the Ojibwe *Wendigo*, in which tribesmen identify with a cannibalistic monster and prey on their families, is a story with many meanings. One points to the consequences of greed and the destruction that results from it. Thomas Pynchon, Ramsey Campbell and Stephen King reference this story in their fiction.
- The novelist Louise Erdrich is Anishinaabe. She has written about characters from her culture in *Tracks*, *Love Medicine*, *The Bingo Palace* and "The Round House."
- In his story, "Fathers and Sons", Ernest Hemingway uses two Ojibwe as secondary characters.
[citation needed]
- Winona LaDuke is a popular political and intellectual voice for the Anishinaabe people.
- The Medicine woman Keewaydinoquay Peschel has written books on ethnobotany and books for children.
- The literary theorist and writer Gerald Vizenor has drawn extensively on Anishinaabe philosophies of language.

- The writer William Kent Krueger has written a series of crime novels chronicling the adventures of a character named Corcoran “Cork” O’Connor, the Ojibwe sheriff of Aurora, Minnesota. The novels expresses how Cork uses his Ojibwe and Irish-American ^[15] heritage to solve local crimes. Ojibwe spirituality is an important element of the subtext of many of the storylines.

In music

- Composer Ferde Grofe composed a movement, "Father of the Waters", of his *Mississippi Suite*, which represents the Chippewa Indians and the headwaters of the Mississippi.

In television

- In several episodes of the HBO series *The Sopranos* (e.g., "Mayham" and "The Fleshy Part of the Thigh"), an Ojibwe Indian saying is left by the bedside of Tony Soprano while he recovers from a gunshot wound: "Sometimes I go about in pity for myself, and all the while, a great wind carries me across the sky".

Bands

In his *History of the Ojibway People* (1855), William W. Warren recorded 10 major divisions of the Ojibwe in the United States. He mistakenly omitted the Ojibwe located in Michigan, western Minnesota and westward, and all of Canada. When identified major historical bands located in Michigan and Ontario are added, the count becomes 15^[citation needed].

Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe, 435 U.S. 191 (1978)^[1] is a United States Supreme Court case regarding the criminal jurisdiction of Tribal courts over non-Indians. The case was decided on March 6, 1978, with a 6-2 majority. The court opinion was written by William Rehnquist; a dissenting opinion was written by Thurgood Marshall, who was joined by Chief Justice Warren E. Burger. Judge William J. Brennan abstained.

Contents

- 1 Background
- 2 Court decision
- 3 Dissenting opinion
- 4 Effects
- 5 See also
- 6 References
- 7 Further reading

Background

In August 1973 Mark David Oliphant, a non-Indian living as a permanent resident with the Suquamish Tribe on the Port Madison Indian Reservation in northwest Washington,^[2] was arrested and charged by tribal police with assaulting a tribal officer and resisting arrest. Oliphant applied for a writ of habeas corpus in federal court, because he claimed he was not subject to tribal authority because he was not an American Indian. He was not challenging the exercise of criminal jurisdiction by the tribe over non-Indians; he was challenging the existence of this jurisdiction by the tribe.^[3]

His application for a writ of habeas corpus was rejected by the lower courts. They thought that the ability to keep law and order within tribal lands was an important attribute of tribal sovereignty that was neither surrendered by treaty nor removed by the United States Congress under its plenary power. Judge Anthony Kennedy, a judge of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals at the time, dissented from this ruling

Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe



Supreme Court of the United States

Argued January 9, 1978

Decided March 6, 1978

Full case name *Mark Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe*

Citations 435 U.S. 191
(<https://supreme.justia.com/us/435/191/case.html>)
(*more*)

Holding

Indian tribal courts do not have inherent criminal jurisdiction to try and to punish non-Indians, and hence may not assume such jurisdiction unless specifically authorized to do so by Congress.

Court membership

Chief Justice

Warren E. Burger

Associate Justices

William J. Brennan, Jr. · Potter Stewart
Byron White · Thurgood Marshall
Harry Blackmun · Lewis F. Powell, Jr.
William Rehnquist · John P. Stevens

Case opinions

Majority Rehnquist, joined by Stewart, White, Blackmun, Powell, Stevens

Dissent Marshall, joined by Burger

Brennan took no part in the consideration or decision of the case.

saying he found no support for the idea that only treaties and acts of Congress could take away the retained rights of tribes. According to Judge Kennedy the doctrine of tribal sovereignty was not "analytically helpful" in resolving this issue.^[3]

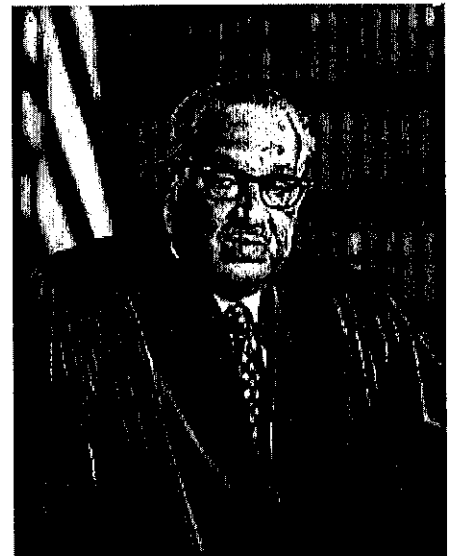
Court decision

The U.S. Supreme Court upheld Oliphant's appeal, citing the Civil Rights Act of 1968 in their decision. The Supreme Court reversed the decision of the lower courts. The decision stated that Indian tribal courts do not have inherent criminal jurisdiction to try and to punish non-Indians, and hence may not assume such jurisdiction unless specifically authorized to do so by Congress.^[1] The decision stated that tribal powers could be divested both explicitly and implicitly, if they are in violation of their status of "domestic dependent nations."^[4]

Dissenting opinion

Justice Thurgood Marshall dissents, saying he believes that the right to punish all individuals who commit crimes against tribal law within the reservation is a necessary aspect of the tribes sovereignty.^[1] In his dissent, Justice Marshall states:

"I agree with the court below that the "power to preserve order on the reservation . . . is a sine qua non of the sovereignty that the Suquamish originally possessed." Oliphant v. Schlie, 544 F.2d 1007, 1009 (CA9 1976). In the absence of affirmative withdrawal by treaty or statute, I am of the view that Indian tribes enjoy, as a necessary aspect of their retained sovereignty, the right to try and punish all persons who commit offenses against tribal law within the reservation. Accordingly, I dissent."^[1]



Justice Thurgood Marshall

Chief Justice Warren E. Burger joined the dissenting opinion.^[1]

Effects

In 1990 the U.S. Supreme Court extended the Oliphant decision to hold that tribes also lacked criminal jurisdiction over Indians who weren't members of the tribe exercising jurisdiction in *Duro v. Reina*.^[2] Within six months, however, Congress abrogated the decision, by amending the Indian Civil Rights Act to affirm that tribes had inherent criminal jurisdiction over nonmember Indians.^[5] In 2004, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of this legislation in *United States v. Lara*.^[6]

Scholars have extensively criticized the decision. According to Professor Bethany Berger, "By patching together bits and pieces of history and isolated quotes from nineteenth century cases, and relegating contrary evidence to footnotes or ignoring it altogether, the majority created a legal basis for denying jurisdiction out of whole cloth." Rather than legal precedent, the holding was "dictated by the Court's assumptions that tribal courts could not fairly exercise jurisdiction over outsiders and that the effort to

exercise such jurisdiction was a modern upstart of little importance to tribal concerns.^[7] Professor Philip Frickey describes Oliphant, along with the subsequent decisions limiting tribal jurisdiction over non-Indians, as rooted in a “normatively unattractive judicial colonial impulse,”^[8] while Professor Robert Williams condemns the decision as “legal auto-genocide”^[9] According to Dr. Bruce Duthu, the case showed “that the project of imperialism is alive and well in Indian Country and that courts can now get into the action.”^[10] Professor Duthu continues

“The Oliphant Court essentially elevated a local level conflict between a private citizen and an Indian tribe into a collision of framework interests between two sovereigns, and in the process revived the most negative and destructive aspects of colonialism as it relates to Indian rights. This is a principal reason the decision has attracted so much negative reaction...Oliphant's impact on the development of federal Indian law and life on the ground in Indian Country has been nothing short of revolutionary. The opinion gutted the notion of full territorial sovereignty as it applies to Indian tribes.”^[11]

See also

- List of United States Supreme Court cases, volume 435

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| English Name | Ojibwe Name (in double-vowel spelling) | Location |
|---|---|---|
| Saulteaux | <i>Baawitigowininiwag</i> | Sault Ste. Marie area of Ontario and Michigan |
| Border-Sitters | <i>Biitan-akiing-enabijig</i> | St. Croix-Namekagon River valleys in eastern Minnesota and northern Wisconsin |
| Lake Superior Band | <i>Gichi-gamiwininiwag</i> | south shore of Lake Superior |
| Mississippi River Band | <i>Gichi-ziibiwininiwag</i> | upper Mississippi River in Minnesota |
| Rainy Lake Band | <i>Goojijiwininiwag</i> | Rainy Lake and River, about the northern boundary of Minnesota |
| Ricing-Rails | <i>Manoominikeshiinyag</i> | along headwaters of St. Croix River in Wisconsin and Minnesota |
| Pillagers | <i>Makandwewininiwag</i> | North-central Minnesota and Mississippi River headwaters |
| Mississaugas | <i>Misi-zaagiwininiwag</i> | north of Lake Erie, extending north of Lake Huron about the Mississauga River |
| Algonquins (Nipissing) | <i>Odishkwaagamiig</i> | Quebec-Ontario border, about Lake Nipissing |
| Dokis Band (Dokis's and Restoule's bands) | <i>N/A</i> | Along French River region in Ontario, near Lake Nipissing |
| Ottawa Lake (Lac Courte Oreilles) Band | <i>Odaawaa-zaaga'iganiwininiwag</i> | Lac Courte Oreilles, Wisconsin |
| Bois Forte Band | <i>Zagaakwaandagowininiwag</i> | north of Lake Superior |
| Lac du Flambeau Band | <i>Waaswaaganiwininiwag</i> | head of Wisconsin River |
| Muskrat Portage Band | <i>Wazhashk-Onigamininiwag</i> | northwest side of Lake Superior at the Canadian border |
| Nopeming Band | <i>Noopiming Azhe-ininiwag</i> | northeast of Lake Superior and west of Lake Nipissing |

These 15 major divisions developed into the following Ojibwe Bands and First Nations of today. Bands are listed under their respective tribes where possible.^[citation needed] See also the listing of Saulteaux communities.

- Aamjiwnaang First Nation
- Aroland First Nation
- Batchewana First Nation of Ojibways
- Bay Mills Indian Community
- Biinjitiwabik Zaaging Anishnabek First Nation
- Chapleau Ojibway First Nation
- Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point
- North Caribou Lake First Nation
- Ojibway Nation of Saugeen First Nation
- Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation
- Osnaburg House Band of Ojibway (Historical)
 - Cat Lake First Nation

- Chippewas of Lake Simcoe and Huron (Historical)
 - Beausoleil First Nation
 - Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation
 - Chippewas of Rama First Nation (formerly known as *Chippewas of Mnjikaning First Nation*)
- Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation
- Chippewa of the Thames First Nation
- Chippewas of Saugeen Ojibway Territory (Historical)
 - Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation
 - Saugeen First Nation
- Chippewa Cree Tribe of Rocky Boys Indian Reservation
- Curve Lake First Nation
- Cutler First Nation
- Dokis First Nation
- Eabametoong First Nation
- First Nation of Ojibwe California
- Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
- Garden River First Nation
- Grassy Narrows First Nation (Asabiinyashkosiwagong Nitam-Anishinaabeg)
- Islands in the Trent Waters
- Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation
- Koocheching First Nation
- Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation
- Lac La Croix First Nation
- Lac Seul First Nation
- Lake Nipigon Ojibway First Nation
- Lake Superior Chippewa Tribe
 - Bad River Chippewa Band
 - Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
 - Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
 - L'Anse Band of Chippewa Indians
 - Ontonagon Band of Chippewa Indians
 - Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
- Mishkeegogamang First Nation (formerly known as *New Osnaburgh First Nation*)
- Slate Falls First Nation
- Pembina Band of Chippewa Indians (Historical)
- Pikangikum First Nation
- Poplar Hill First Nation
- Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
 - Lac des Bois Band of Chippewa Indians
- Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation
- Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Council
- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians
- Saulteaux First Nation
- Shawanaga First Nation
- Southeast Tribal Council
 - Berens River First Nation
 - Bloodvein First Nation
 - Brokenhead First Nation
 - Buffalo Point First Nation (Saulteaux)
 - Hollow Water First Nation
 - Black River First Nation
 - Little Grand Rapids First Nation
 - Pauingassi First Nation (Saulteaux)
 - Poplar River First Nation
- Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians
- Wabaseemoong Independent Nation
- Wabauskang First Nation
- Wabun Tribal Council
 - Beaverhouse First Nation
 - Brunswick House First Nation
 - Chapleau Ojibwe First Nation
 - Matachewan First Nation
 - Mattagami First Nation
 - Wahgoshig First Nation
- Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation
- Wahnapiatae First Nation
- Walpole Island First Nation
- Washagamis Bay First Nation
- Whitefish Bay First Nation
- Whitefish Lake First Nation
- Whitefish River First Nation
- Whitesand First Nation
- Whitewater Lake First Nation
- Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation

- Bois Brule River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
 - Chippewa River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
 - Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
 - Removable St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin
- Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Sokaogon Chippewa Community
- St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin
- Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
- Magnetawan First Nation
- Minnesota Chippewa Tribe
- Mississauga First Nation
 - Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
 - Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
 - Lake Vermilion Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
 - Little Forks Band of Rainy River Saulteaux
 - Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
 - Grand Portage Band of Chippewa
 - Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
 - Cass Lake Band of Chippewa
 - Lake Winnibigoshish Band of Chippewa
 - Leech Lake Band of Pillagers
 - Removable Lake Superior Bands of Chippewa of the Chippewa Reservation
 - White Oak Point Band of Mississippi Chippewa
 - Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
 - Mille Lacs Indians
 - Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa
 - Rice Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa
 - St. Croix Band of Chippewa Indians of Minnesota

- Kettle River Band of Chippewa Indians
 - Snake and Knife Rivers Band of Chippewa Indians
- White Earth Band of Chippewa
 - Gull Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa
 - Otter Tail Band of Pillagers
 - Rabbit Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa
 - Removable Mille Lacs Indians
 - Removable Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa
 - Rice Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa

Other tribes known by their Ojibwe/Ottawa names

| Known Name | Ojibwe Name | Ojibwe Meaning | Own Name |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Arkansas (Quapaw) | Aakaanzhish(ag) | Dang little Kansas | <i>Ugahxpa</i> (down-stream people) |
| Assiniboine | Asiniibwaan(ag) | Stoney Cookers | <i>Nakota</i> (allies) |
| Blackfoot | Makadewanazid (ag) | Black-foot | <i>Niitsítapi</i> (original people) |
| Chipewyan | Ojiibwayaan(ag) | Pointed Skin | <i>Dēnesyliné</i> |
| Eskimo | Ashki-amaw | Eats It Raw | <i>Inupiaq</i> |
| Flathead | Nebagindibe(g) | Flat-head | <i>Salish</i> |
| Iroquois | Naadowe(g) | Massassauga Rattlesnake | <i>Akunęhsyęni</i> ' in Tuscarora, <i>Rotinonsionni</i> in Mohawk |
| Kansas | Aakaans(ag) | [Lives at the] Little Hell-hole | <i>Kaw</i> (People of the South Wind) |
| Kaskaskia | Gaaskaaskeyaa(g) | Hide-scraper | |
| Kickapoo | Giiwigaabaw(ag) | Stands here-and-there | <i>Kiikaapoa</i> |
| Menominee | Omanoominii(g) | Wild Rice People | <i>Omāęqnomenew</i> |
| Miami | Omaamii(g) | Downstream people | <i>Myaamia</i> |
| Micmac | Miijimaa(g) | Allied-Brothers | <i>Mi'kmaq / L'nu</i> |
| Moingwena | Moowiingwena (g) | Have a Filthy Face | |
| Ottawa | Odaawaa(g) | Trader | Odawa |
| Potawatomi | Boodewaadamii (g) | Fire Keeper | <i>Bodéwadmi</i> |
| Sauk/Sac | Ozaagii(g) | [Lives at the] Outlet | <i>Asakiwaki</i> |
| Shawnee | Zhaawanoo(g) | Southerners | Chowanoc |
| Sioux | Naadowensiw(ag) | Little like the Iroquois | Aioe-Dakota-Lakota-Nakota |
| Snake (Shoshoni) | Ginebigowinini (wag) | Snake People | <i>Panamint</i> (grass house), <i>Tukuaduka</i> (Sheep eaters), or <i>Toi Ticutta</i> (cattail eaters) |
| Wea | Waawiyaataan (oog) | [Those at the] Rounded [Lake] | <i>Waayaahatanwa</i> |
| Winnebago | Wiinibiigoo(g) | [Lives at the] Stinking Waters | <i>Ho-Chunk</i> ([people of the] Big Voice) |

Notable Ojibwe people

- Ah-shah-way-gee-she-go-qua (Aazhawigiizhigokwe, Hanging Cloud), woman warrior
- David Wayne "Famous Dave" Anderson (Business Entrepreneur)
- Arron Asham (Canadian professional ice hockey player for the Pittsburgh Penguins)
- Dennis Banks (Political Activist)
- Ida Baptiste (Visual Artist)
- James Bartleman (Diplomat, Author)
- Adam Beach (Actor, Writer)
- Carl Beam (Artist)
- Jason Behr (Actor)
- Clyde Bellecourt (White Earth Ojibwe), social activist
- Vernon Bellecourt (White Earth Ojibwe), social activist
- Chief Bender (Baseball player)
- Odell Borg (Native American flutist and flute maker)
- Benjamin Chee Chee (Artist)
- Henry Boucha (American former professional ice hockey player, United States Hockey Hall of Fame)
- Al Hunter (Poet and Writer)
- George Copway (Missionary and Writer)
- Eddy Cobiness (Artist)
- Kelly Church (Grand Traverse Band) basket weaver, painter, and birch bark biter
- Jim Denomie (Artist)
- Patrick DesJarlait, painter and graphic artist
- Louise Erdrich (Turtle Mountain Chippewa), author
- Phil Fontaine (Politician)
- William Gardner, one of the Untouchables
- Kraig Grady (Composer, Puppeteer)
- Gordon Henry Jr. (Writer)
- Virgil Hill (Boxer)
- Basil Johnston (Historian and Cultural Essayist)
- Peter Jones (Missionary and Writer)
- Ke-che-waish-ke (Gichi-Weshkiinh, Buffalo) (Chief)
- Maude Kegg (Author, Cultural Embassidor)
- Lara Kramer (Choreographer, Performer)
- Winona LaDuke (Activist and Writer)
- Carole LaFavor (Writer)
- Chief Little Bear (Chief)
- Joe Lumsden (Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians), tribal chairman
- Loma Lyns (Singer, Songwriter)
- Cody McCormick (Canadian professional ice hockey player for the Colorado Avalanche)
- Medweganoonind, Chief
- Rod Michano (AIDS Activist/Educator)
- George Morrison (Artist)
- Norval Morrisseau, artist and founder of the Woodlands style of painting
- Ted Nolan (Canadian former professional ice hockey player and coach, Jack Adams Award winner)
- Jordan Nolan (Canadian professional ice hockey player, son of Ted Nolan, 2012 Stanley Cup champion)
- Jim Northrup (Columnist)
- O-zaw-wen-dib (Ozaawindib, Yellow Head), woman warrior, guide
- Francis Pegahmagabow, warrior
- Leonard Peltier, political activist, prisoner, author, artist
- Mel Pervais (Entrepreneur)
- Tommy Prince (Soldier)
- Chief Rocky Boy (Chief)
- Buffy Sainte-Marie, singer, songwriter
- Keith Secola, rock and blues Singer
- Arthur Shilling (Visual Artist)
- Chris Simon (Canadian professional ice hockey player, Stanley Cup winner w/ 1996 Colorado Avalanche)
- John Smith, Gaa-binagwiiyaas, chief, reported to have lived 137 years
- Albert Smoke, long-distance runner
- Drew Hayden Taylor (Playwright, Author and Journalist)
- Roy Thomas, artist
- David Treuer, author
- E. Donald Two-Rivers (Poet, Playwright)

- Alfred Michael "Chief" Venne (Athletic manager and coach)
- Gerald Vizenor, author and educator
- Wawatam, Chief
- Waabaaanakwad (White Cloud), Chief

- William Whipple Warren, first historian of the Ojibwe people, territorial legislator
- Jennifer Redsky-Ross, (Canadian Talent Agent)
- Crystal Shawanda, (Canadian Country music singer)

Ojibwe treaties

- Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority—1836CT fisheries
- Grand Council of Treaty 3—Treaty 3
- Grand Council of Treaty 8—Treaty 8
- Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission—1837CT, 1836CT, 1842CT and 1854CT
- Nishnawbe Aski Nation—Treaty 5 and Treaty 9
- Red Lake Band of Chippewa—1886CT and 1889CT
- Union of Ontario Indians—RS, RH1, RH2, misc. pre-confederation treaties

Treaties with France

- La Grande Paix de Montréal (1701)

Treaties with Great Britain

- Treaty of Fort Niagara (1764)
- Treaty of Fort Niagara (1781)
- Indian Officers' Land Treaty (1783)
- The Crawford Purchases (1783)
- Between the Lakes Purchase (1784)
- Toronto Purchase (1787)
 - Indenture to the Toronto Purchase (1805)
- The McKee Purchase (1790)
- Between the Lakes Purchase (1792)
- Chenail Ecarte (Sombra Township) Purchase (1796)
- London Township Purchase (1796)
- Land for Joseph Brant (1797)
- Penetanguishene Bay Purchase (1798)
- St. Joseph Island (1798)

Treaties with the United States

- Treaty of Fort McIntosh (1785)
- Treaty of Fort Harmar (1789)
- Treaty of Greenville (1795)
- Fort Industry (1805)
- Treaty of Detroit (1807)
- Treaty of Brownstown (1808)
- Treaty of Springwells (1815)
- Treaty of St. Louis (1816)—Ottawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi
- Treaty of Miami Rapids (1817)
- St. Mary's Treaty (1818)
- Treaty of Saginaw (1819)
- Treaty of Saùlt Ste. Marie (1820)
- Treaty of L'Arbre Croche and Michilimackinac (1820)
- Treaty of Chicago (1821)
- Treaty of Prairie du Chien (1825)
- Treaty of Fond du Lac (1826)
- Treaty of Butte des Morts (1827)
- Treaty of Green Bay (1828)
- Treaty of Prairie du Chien (1829)
- Treaty of Chicago (1833)
- Treaty of Washington (1836)—Ottawa & Chippewa
- Treaty of Washington (1836)—Swan Creek & Black River Bands
- Treaty of Detroit (1837)
- Treaty of St. Peters (1837)—White Pine Treaty
- Treaty of Flint River (1837)
- Saganaw Treaties
 - Treaty of Saganaw (1838)
 - Supplemental Treaty (1839)

- Head-of-the-Lake Purchase (1806)
- Lake Simcoe-Lake Huron Purchase (1815)
- Lake Simcoe-Nottawasaga Purchase (1818)
- Ajetance Purchase (1818)
- Rice Lake Purchase (1818)
- The Rideau Purchase (1819)
- Long Woods Purchase (1822)
- Huron Tract Purchase (1827)
- Saugeen Tract Agreement (1836)
- Manitoulin Agreement (1836)
- The Robinson Treaties
 - Ojibewa Indians of Lake Superior (1850)
 - Ojibewa Indians of Lake Huron (1850)
- Manitoulin Island Treaty (1862)

Treaties with Canada

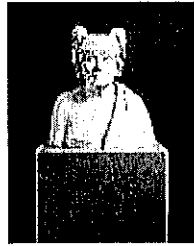
- Treaty No. 1 (1871)—Stone Fort Treaty
- Treaty No. 2 (1871)
- Treaty No. 3 (1873)—Northwest Angle Treaty
- Treaty No. 4 (1874)—Qu'Appelle Treaty
- Treaty No. 5 (1875)
- Treaty No. 6 (1876)
- Treaty No. 8 (1899)
- Treaty No. 9 (1905–1906)—James Bay Treaty
- Treaty No. 5, Adhesions (1908–1910)
- The Williams Treaties (1923)
 - The Chippewa Indians
 - The Mississauga Indians
- Treaty No. 9, Adhesions (1929–1930)

- Treaty of La Pointe (1842)—Copper Treaty
 - Isle Royale Agreement (1844)
- Treaty of Potawatomi Creek (1846)
- Treaty of Fond du Lac (1847)
- Treaty of Leech Lake (1847)
- Treaty of La Pointe (1854)
- Treaty of Washington (1855)
- Treaty of Detroit (1855)—Ottawa & Chippewa
- Treaty of Detroit (1855)—Sault Ste. Marie Band
- Treaty of Detroit (1855)—Swan Creek & Black River Bands
- Treaty of Sac and Fox Agency (1859)
- Treaty of Washington (1863)
- Treaty of Old Crossing (1863)
- Treaty of Old Crossing (1864)
- Treaty of Washington (1864)
- Treaty of Isabella Reservation (1864)
- Treaty of Washington (1866)
- Treaty of Washington (1867)

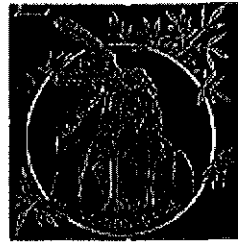
Gallery



A-na-cam-e-gish-ca
(*Aanakamigishkaang'*["
Traces of] Foot Prints
[upon the Ground]"),
Ojibwe chief, from
History of the Indian
Tribes of North
America



Bust of Aysh-ke-bah-
ke-ko-zhay
(*Eshkibagikoonzhe* or
"Flat Mouth"), a Leech
Lake Ojibwe chief



Chief Beautifying Bird
(*Nenaa'angebi*), by
Benjamin Armstrong,
1891



Bust of Beshekee, war
chief, modeled 1855,
carved 1856



Caa-tou-see, an
Ojibwe, from History of
the Indian Tribes of
North America



Hanging Cloud, a
female Ojibwe warrior



Jack-O-Pa
(*Shák'pí*["Six"]), an
Ojibwe/Dakota chief,
from History of the
Indian Tribes of North
America



*Kay be sen day way We
Win*, by Eastman
Johnson, 1857



Kei-a-gis-gis, a Plains Ojibwe woman, painted by George Catlin



Leech Lake Ojibwe delegation to Washington, 1899



Chippewa baby teething on "Indians at Work" magazine while strapped to a cradleboard at a rice lake in 1940.



Milwaukee Ojibwe woman and baby, courtesy of the Wisconsin Historical Society



Ne-bah-quah-om, Ojibwe chief



"One Called From A Distance" (*Midwewinin d*) of the White Earth Band, 1894.



Shaun Hedican, Eabametoong First Nation



Pee-Che-Kir, Ojibwe chief, painted by Thomas Loraine McKenney, 1843



Ojibwe chief Rocky
Boy



Ojibwe woman and
child, from History of
the Indian Tribes of
North America



Tshusick, an Ojibwe
woman, from History of
the Indian Tribes of
North America



Chief medicine man
Axel Pasey and family
at Grand Portage
Minnesota.



Historic 1849 petition
of Ojibwe chiefs [1]
(http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wells_american_indian_picture_writing.png)

Notes

1. ^ "First Nations Culture Areas Index" (<http://www.civilization.ca/cmc/exhibitions/tresors/ethno/etb0170e.shtml>). *the Canadian Museum of Civilization*.
2. ^ "Anishinabe" (<http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/history/mncultures/anishinabe.html>). *eMuseum @ Minnesota State University*. Minnesota State University. Mankato. Retrieved 2010-03-16.
3. ^ "Microsoft Word - dictionary best for printing 2004 ever finalpdf.doc" (<http://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/DaffernMultilingualDictionary.pdf>) (PDF). Retrieved 2011-01-02.
4. ^ Warren, William W. (1885; reprint: 1984) *History of the Ojibway People*. ISBN 0-87351-162-X
5. ^ Louise Erdrich, *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country* (2003) (http://www.ereader.com/product/book/excerpt/23450?book=Books_and_Islands_in_Ojibwe_Country)
6. ^ Johnston, Basil. (2007) *Anishinaubae Thesaurus* ISBN 0-87013-753-0
7. ^ Anthony, David. *The Horse, the Wheel and Language*, Princeton University Press, 2007, p. 102
8. ^ "Ojibwe Culture" (<http://www.mpm.edu/wirp/icw-51.html>), Milwaukee Public Museum, accessed 10 December 2011

9. ^ "The Atlas of Canada: Historical Indian Treaties" (<http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/historical/indiantreaties/historicaltreaties>). Retrieved 2010-05-09.
10. ^ Gevinson, Alan. "Which Native American Tribes Allied Themselves with the French?" (<http://teachinghistory.org/history-content/ask-a-historian/22245>)" Teachinghistory.org (<http://www.teachinghistory.org>), accessed 23 September 2011.
11. ^ "Treaty Between the Ottawa, Chippewa, Wyandot, and Potawatomi Indians" (<http://www.wdl.org/en/item/2746/>). *World Digital Library*. 1807-11-17. Retrieved 2013-08-03.
12. ^ Daniel E. Moerman (2009). *Native American Medicinal Plants: An Ethnobotanical Dictionary* (<http://books.google.com.au/books?id=H8Msgmq5XbcC&pg=PA52>). Timber Press. pp. 52–53. ISBN 0-88192-987-5.
13. ^ Native American Ethnobotany (University of Michigan - Dearborn) (<http://herb.umd.umich.edu/herb/search.pl?searchstring=Pinus+strobilus>) . accessed 1.13.2013
14. ^ Fernald, M., A. Kinsey, and R. Rollins. 1943. *Edible Wild Plants*. Harper & Row, NY.
15. ^ . <http://www.thrillingdetective.com/eyes/oconnor.html>

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Further reading

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External links

- Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission (<http://www.glifwc.org/>)
- Chief Buffalo and Benjamin Armstrong (<http://www.chiefbuffalo.com>)
- Ojibwe culture and history (<http://www.tolatsga.org/ojib.html>), a lengthy and detailed discussion
- Kevin L. Callahan's *An Introduction to Ojibway Culture and History* (<http://www.webcitation.org/query?url=http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/5579/ojibwa.html&date=2009-10-25+05:43:21>)
- Ojibwe Song Pictures (<http://www.ubu.com/ethno/visuals/chip.html>), recorded by Frances Desmore
- Ojibwe People's Dictionary (<http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/>)
- Digital recreation of the 'Chippewa' entry (<http://www.prairienet.org/prairienations/chippewa.htm>) from *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, edited by Frederick Webb Hodge
- Ojibwa migration through Manitoba (<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/indianmigrations.shtml>)
- video: The Making of an Ojibwe Hand Drum (<http://natedrums.ca/index.php/video?tp=a&bg=1&ln=e>)
- Nindoodemag: The Significance of Algonquian Kinship Networks in the Eastern Great Lakes Region, 1600–1701 (<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/wm/63.1/bohaker.html>)
- Ojibwe Waasa-Inaabidaa (<http://www.ojibwe.org/>)—PBS documentary featuring the history and culture of the Anishinaabe-Ojibwe people of the Great Lakes (United States-focused).

- Ojibwe migratory map (http://www.ojibwe.org/home/about_migration_hotmap.html) from Ojibwe Waasa-Inaabidaa
- Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture - Chippewa (<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/C/CH044.html>)
- 1836 Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority (<http://www.1836CORA.org>)
- Grand Council of Treaty #3 (<https://web.archive.org/web/20071231000136/http://www.treaty3.ca/adminoffice/natural-resources.php>)
- Batchewana First Nation of Ojibways (<http://www.batchewana.ca/>)
- Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (<http://www.redcliff.org/rc.php?page=home.html>)
- Mississauga First Nation (<http://www.mississauga.com>)
- Southeast Tribal Council (<http://www.seed.mb.ca>)
- Wabun Tribal Council (<http://www.wabun.on.ca/>)

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