

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Neebinnaukzhik Southall for the degree of Honors Bachelor of Fine Arts in Applied Visual Arts presented on May 19, 2011. Title: Then and Now: Asserting Anishinabek Identity Through Indigenized Apparel.

Abstract approved:

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Andrea Marks

The work deals with the subject of designing for Native Americans. The first part of the project broadly examines the field of graphic design as it relates to Native Americans, discussing the lack of Native voices in graphic design, what designing for Native Americans can entail, the role of Native lifeways in design, design barriers and solutions, as well as opportunities and examples. The second part of the project explores designing for a specific Native American audience: Anishinabek youth. A need for positive representation via clothing is discussed, establishing the goal of infusing modern urban wear with a Native perspective. Anishinabek culture is examined, culminating in a series of clothing designs.

Key Words: Graphic Design, Design, Art, Native Americans, First Nations, American Indians, Marketing, Advertising, Tribal Sovereignty, Tribes, Equality, Representation, Anishinabek, Anishinaabe, Ojibway, Chippewa, Apparel, Clothing, Minorities

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Then And Now: Asserting Anishinabek Identity Through Indigenized Apparel

by

Neebinnaukzhik Southall

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presented on May 19, 2011.

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I understand that my project will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University, University Honors College. My signature below authorizes release of my project to any reader upon request.

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Neebinnaukzhik Southall, Author

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## **THEN AND NOW: ASSERTING ANISHINABEK IDENTITY THROUGH INDIGENIZED APPAREL**

### **INTRODUCTION**

I am Anishinabek (specifically Ojibway, also known as Chippewa), White, and a portion of Iroquois. I am a member of the Chippewas of Rama First Nation. My usage of the term Native American includes Alaskan Natives and Indigenous people residing in Canada, as well as individuals of mixed ancestry. It is my passion to learn about Native American culture and history and share what I know. I see myself as part of the revival of Native American culture spoken of in the Anishinabek prophecy of the Seventh Fire. In times that reside only too recently in the past, Native American voices and perspectives were heavily suppressed. It is my duty to speak as I can on behalf of these silenced people, as well as for the benefit of present and future generations.

This undertaking, which is part of my senior graphic design project for my major, began with the realization that I could not name a single well-known Native American graphic designer. Little has been written about the subject of Native Americans in the graphic design world, and there is a lack, or at least low visibility, of Native American graphic designers. This surprised me, given the richness of Native American creative cultures and the general respect towards artists within Native American communities. Consequently, the first part of the project broadly examines the field of graphic design as it relates to Native Americans. For the second part of the project, to illustrate what designing for a Native American audience can entail, I heavily delved into research focusing on my own Anishinabek culture in order to develop clothing designs that promote a positive sense of identity among Anishinabek youth. My university attendance

has been strongly supported by the Chippewas of Rama First Nation – the focus of my project allows me to give something back to my people.

## **Part 1: Graphic Design for Native Americans: An Overview**

### **What is Graphic Design?**

Graphic design is a form of visual language dealing with the creation and organization of text and images, alternatively listed under the headings of marketing, advertising, and more broadly, communication. The results of graphic design are found everywhere. Graphic design is employed on media such as books, posters, pamphlets, business cards, letterheads, flyers, banners, and even receipts. It is used on t-shirts, product tags, makeup, and shampoo. Graphic design is used in digital media such as the opening credits in movies, commercials, email ads, and in the layout and imagery of websites. Graphic design is used in developing a brand, also known as the look and feel of a company, organization, or person, and includes the logo, a significant marker of identity. Graphic design can be purely functional. It can be artistic mastery. In any combination, it is a valuable process for creating and distributing messages and ideas, potentially playing a large role in how people view the world.

### **The Lack of Native Voices**

In the field of design, Native Americans are underrepresented both as audiences and as designers. Historically, Native Americans have endured intense misrepresentation, exclusion, oppression and genocide. Although we have moved forward as a society in many ways, there are still problems of inclusion and representation to be overcome. AIGA, "the professional association for design," an organization setting standards in design, has noted the need for greater diversity within the design profession. Back in 2007, they stated that: "only 10 percent of the design profession is other than white Caucasian," in spite of 42% of the United States' population being other than white.<sup>1</sup>

Also, responses to a survey conducted by AIGA led to a surprisingly low number of minorities among AIGA members, with Native Americans not mentioned by name.<sup>2</sup>

Essentially, the majority of design, which affects people of all backgrounds, is primarily conducted by people of one group, who may or may not have a good grasp on issues affecting those outside of this group. Unfortunately, the latter state occurs frequently. A lack of diverse voices leads to both intentional and unintentional biases in graphic design work. Sadly, ignorant, inappropriate and racist imagery of Indians persists to this day. For example, the name of Lakota leader Crazy Horse has been used for marketing products against the wishes of his descendants. One of the worse cases is by the Hornell Brewing Co. In spite of the reality that Crazy Horse was against the consumption of alcohol, they used him to brand their "Crazy Horse Malt Liquor."<sup>3</sup>

The book *Designing Across Cultures* (written by Ronnie Lipton in 2002) urged the increasing need to design for growing diverse audiences in the United States from a largely business standpoint, with a tone seemingly directed at white designers.<sup>4</sup> Although the book went in-depth about several groups (though certainly not all), Native Americans were not mentioned here either. However, an article originally published by American Demographics in 2001 spoke to increasing numbers (and wealth) among Native Americans -- and thusly their potential as a target for marketing.<sup>5</sup> While solid work has been done, can be done, and should be done by non-Native companies and designers for Native American groups - the best graphic designers are good listeners - it is vital that graphic design strongly emanates from within these groups as well. Lakota intellectual Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, after much discussion about the lack of Native voices and misrepresentation of Natives especially in literature, states that: "Art and literature and

storytelling are at the epicenter of all that an individual or a nation intends to be. And someone more profound than most said that a nation that does not tell its own stories cannot be said to be a nation at all. To think that the reverse of that comment is still true, that at the close of the twentieth century the ascendant power of Indian storytelling still emanates from long-held patterns of colonizing nations, is profoundly disturbing."<sup>6</sup> With this in mind, if First Nations are to assume their rights as self-governing tribes to the fullest potential, it is imperative that their members have strong control over their representation, including word and image.

### **Designing for Native Americans**

In an article about Ryan Red Corn, a prominent Native American graphic designer, the Lawrence Journal-World noted his take on non-Native companies trying to design for Natives: "Often, he said, they don't know what they're doing. They aren't connected to the culture of native tribes and struggle with the intricacies of important symbolism." He went on to say that they "don't know how to put it together right."<sup>7</sup> For those wishing to design for Native American groups, it is vital to first realize that the definition of Native American is very broad and one approach will not work for everyone. In North America, there are several regions inhabited by hundreds of tribes with their own histories and cultures. For example, the stereotypical image of a man adorned in buckskins and a headdress, which is how many visualize "Indians," is not representative of the whole. In fact, this form of dress stems from particular tribes of the Plains region, such as the Lakota. Additionally, a headdress is not to be worn by just anyone, but rather people with significant status, such as chiefs. Just as one would take French culture into account while

designing for the French, or Spanish culture while designing for the Spanish, equal care must be taken to design for groups of people spanning an area much larger than Europe, whether they are Hopi, Tlingit, Algonquin, or otherwise. Additionally, there are Native Americans living in rural, suburban and urban areas, and there are Native Americans who have mixed ancestry. Given these complexities of identity, cliché images of "Indians" should be avoided. With the historical suppression of Native voices in mind, designers should take care that their work speaks accurately on their client's behalf. Gaining an understanding of broad and local customs in Native America is important for productive relationships with clients. Designs should be sensitive to the values and culture of the Native community or tribe in question. It is important to have a good understanding of cultural imagery, especially in regards to the spiritual significance of certain objects and symbols. This ensures that a design is executed in a respectful way. A solid knowledge of the history and issues that impact Native communities can help the designer better serve these clients. Native designers should be equally attentive in all of these things, especially when designing for those from another tribe.

### **The Role of Native Lifeways**

*People of the Seventh Fire: Returning Lifeways of Native America* deals with the subject of cultural reclamation and strong positive identity that is taking place today among Native Americans, in the face of centuries of oppression and loss. In an interview in the book, Jim Dumont, an Ojibway who is both a member of the traditional Midewiwin Lodge and professor of Native studies at the University of Sudbury, speaks of how Native ways of being can continue to inform the future:

The lifeway that spoke to our people before, and gave our people life in all the generations before us, is still the way of life that will give us life today. How it will manifest itself and find expression in this new time comes as part of the responsibility of how we go about the revival and the renewal.

There are ceremonies, teachings, and songs that have always been and will always be. They cannot and should not be changed, but there will be new ceremonies. There will be new songs. There will be a new way of speaking but it will be a way that comes from the foundation of what has always been. It will find a new expression that speaks to the people of this time. But it will still be that which has always been.<sup>8</sup>

Jim Dumont notes that “The spiritual foundation of indigenous values, traditional knowledge and culture form the source of inspiration for contemporary paradigms of indigenous learning, development, healing, and creative expression.”<sup>9</sup> This certainly can include the practice and production of graphic design, infused with Native ways of thinking, being and creating. Graphic design can be used carry Native American culture into the future, rather than leaving it behind.

The book *Visions for the Future: A Celebration of Young Native American Artists, Volume 1*, put together by the Native American Rights Fund, speaks of the work done by NARF on behalf of Native American rights, and features a collection of work by different Native artists working in a variety of mediums, including hip-hop music and yes, graphic design. These new forms, rather than taking away from Native identities, were used to reflect and assert Native American experiences, viewpoints, and tribal sovereignty. The book frames both NARF's attorneys and the artists as modern day warriors acting for the

betterment of those in Indian Country.<sup>10</sup>

Philip Janze, a Gitxsan carver and jewelry maker who strongly embraces tradition, said the following: "I know for a fact that when I was a kid there wasn't a proud Indian anywhere, and now we've got a whole bunch of proud Indians. It is the artists that have changed that."<sup>11</sup> Graphic design, as a visual medium, can continue to promote this positive sense of identity.

### **Barriers to Design & Potential Solutions**

There are decidedly a number of barriers to the inclusion of design in Native communities and the inclusion of Native Americans in the field of design. Poverty and educational access are two related issues. According to a report on American Indians and Alaskan Natives by the US Census in 2006, poverty levels were twice that of the total population among Native Americans, who were earning less full-time and were less employed in professional occupations. The percentage of Native Americans aged 25 and over with a Bachelor's degree was 11%, contrasting with 24% of the US's total population.<sup>12</sup> Naturally, a lack of funding impedes the ability to attend institutions of higher education, where many receive their training in design. It is important that potential students are made aware of scholarships, and that scholarships are more widely available to them.

In addition to monetary concerns, a plausible factor impeding a college education is the culture shock of a member of a small community coming to a large university. As the census report noted, one third of Natives live on "American Indian areas," including reservations which can be quite small.<sup>13</sup> While not speaking about Native Americans

specifically, John Maeda, the president of the Rhode Island School of Design, stated: "at MIT, when I was chair of the culture and race committee, I noticed that you can bring a student with a diverse background to a school, but if you don't have a culture that actually makes them feel comfortable they are going to leave."<sup>14</sup> In order to retain students, there must be strong systems in place that support the students and are sensitive to their backgrounds. One place that is strongly supportive of its largely Native student body is the Institute of American Indian Arts, which offers a number of degrees, including Associate's and Bachelor's degrees in New Media Arts.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, over thirty tribal colleges exist in North America that incorporate Native culture into their programs.<sup>16</sup>

A number of Native communities and individuals may be unaware of what graphic design is as well as the employment opportunities it provides for individuals. In order to address this, the value of graphic design could be promoted through outreach efforts. Successful designers willing to donate their time could provide lectures and workshops to Native communities and schools. Universities and design schools could increase their efforts to reach and recruit Native American students. With an understanding of the possibilities, communities are more likely to be supportive and encouraging of their members entering the field.

As noted earlier, poverty is high among Native Americans. By extension, many tribes and organizations are not rich and presumably possess only small budgets for design, if at all. This impedes the hiring of outside graphic designers, the development of potential graphic designers, and the internal practice of design. Realistically, if there is to be a steady output of good graphic design, at least some of the work would likely need to be *pro bono* with the designer holding another job. As for equipment, considering that

design programs and the computers that run them may be unaffordable, building an awareness of low-cost and open source programs would be useful. Realizing that the designer may need to devote the majority of his or her time elsewhere, there is value in projects that enable Native entities to self-publish without the constant input of the designer. Examples would include templates and overall branding.

### **Design Opportunities & Examples**

There are a number of design opportunities in Indian Country. While the content may be different than what some designers are used to, the forms of media employed are the same as anywhere else. Potential areas for design include branding for entities such as Native-owned businesses and tribal colleges, web design (for artists, actors, writers, tribes, businesses, organizations, and causes), annual reports, film and video, books, flyers for events such as concerts and powwows, informational packets, health campaigns, newsletters, advertisements, newspapers, and much more.

Wieden+Kennedy, a high-profile, non-Indian advertising agency that has produced work for big names such as Old Spice, Coca Cola, Chrysler, and Nike, has also created a wealth of design work for over 15 years for the American Indian College Fund, which supports tribal colleges and provides scholarships to Native students to attend them.<sup>17</sup> Their work for the Fund, which has been mostly pro-bono, includes the wide-reaching campaigns "Have You Ever Seen a Real Indian," "If I Stay on the Rez," "Hope on the Rez," and "Think Indian."<sup>18</sup> These projects, which include print ads and PSAs, have dismantled stereotypes, sending strong positive messages while staying true to Native American identities.

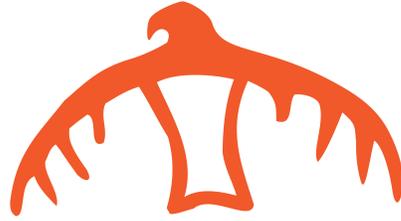
Mark Rutledge, an Ojibway designer and traditional dancer located in Ontario, Canada, has done a number of branding projects for both native and non-native clients. He has worked on the rebranding of The First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres to have a more traditional feel.<sup>19</sup> Another project is the Concrete Indians 2010 promo for Ojibwe/French photographer Nadya Kwandibens, who seeks to represent Indians living in urban populations. He has collaborated with illustrator Rocco Baviera for the Aboriginal Children's Mental Health Project, creating characters and materials to be used among children, as well as promotional materials for those who would be working in the program.<sup>20</sup>

Buffalo Nickel Creative, co-founded by Ryan Red Corn (Osage) and Joseph Brown Thunder (Ho-chunk and Lakota Oglala), slickly redesigned the Native American Community Development Institute's website to have "one foot in the traditional and one foot in the modern." They are also responsible for the colorful, hip-hop-infused site redesign of Nvision, which is geared towards developing creative leaders among Native American youth while promoting "traditional and contemporary expressions of Native art, culture, education, and media."<sup>21</sup>

DGTL/NVJO, run by Victor Pascual (Navajo and Mayan), has a very impressive portfolio involving branding, web design, and print work such as ads, brochures and posters. Some clients include the Native American Rights Fund, the aforementioned photographer Nadya Kwandibens, the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Muckleshoot Tribal College, University of Arizona Press, Puyallup Tribal Health Authority, Red Eagle Soaring (a youth theatre program), and Longhouse Media, which is very involved with promoting Native voices particularly in the areas of film and video

and includes Victor Pascual on its staff.<sup>2223</sup>

Design for and by Native Americans is steadily growing alongside the growth of Native cultural reclamation, and will continue to develop as more become involved in its production.



## Part 2: Anishinabek Design

### Audience

We have seen that Native Americans are overlooked as an audience, and Anishinabek youth are no exception. The Anishinabek are Native American people comprised of the Ojibway (also known as Chippewa), Potawatomi, Odawa, Algonquin, and other closely related tribes. While there are differences among the tribes, they have many cultural commonalities. They reside around the Great Lakes, on both sides of the relatively recent U.S./Canadian border.



**Figure 1.** Map by Charles Jirô Lippert. indicating places with Anishinabek and Anishininiwag populations, with diffusion rings signifying “communities speaking an Anishinaabe language.” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anishinaabewaki.jpg>

Broadly speaking, Anishinabek youth are my target audience. More specifically, I am designing with young people from the Chippewas of Rama First Nation in mind. The Chippewas of Rama First Nation are located in Ontario, Canada, on the shores of Lake Couchiching. As noted earlier, negative representations of Native Americans continue to exist today. One startling example is seen in a monument near Rama First Nation, located in Couchiching Beach Park in the nearby town of Orillia, where Rama youth attend high school. The monument, which glorifies the explorer and colonizer Samuel de Champlain at the top of the monument, places Native American men at the foot of the monument in a very passive role, where they are seated at the feet of a fur trader and a missionary who stand over them.<sup>24</sup> A plaque on the monument further emphasizes its Eurocentric, racist message. That such a statue is seen as acceptable in a place where families take their children, in a place located next to a First Nation, indicates ongoing problems of prejudice.

As a class exercise to jumpstart creativity, my graphic design instructors had the students select random numbers, find an entry in a dictionary that would correspond to those numbers, then create a piece based on these words that related back to their chosen subjects. I chose an additional entry then wrote a poem based on these entries about the aforementioned monument. The poem, as follows, speaks to the heart of my project:

## **Four Hundred Twenty Four, Four Hundred Twenty Eight**

Webster's New World College Dictionary, fourth edition

Webster's New World? The ancient home of my ancestors.

Page 4, Entry 24

Abraham, Plains of.

plateau in the city of Quebec, on the St. Lawrence: site of a battle (1759) in which the British under Wolfe defeated the French under Montcalm, leading to British control of Canada.

Page 4, Entry 28

abrasive. adjective. definition 1: causing abrasion. definition 2: tending to provoke anger, ill will, etc; aggressively annoying, irritating -- noun. something that is used for grinding, polishing, etc,  
as sandpaper or emery.

Up in Canada, In Ontario, in the small town of Orillia,

In Couchiching Beach Park, where children play

Colonialism is alive to this day.

Raised like a middle finger, a statue stands on the side of the lake

Opposite the sovereign Chippewas of Rama First Nation.

The great Samuel de Champlain towers above on a stone pedestal,

Boldly stepping forth with cape billowing behind.

On the second tier of this monumental piece, there are two figures.

On one side, a fur trader.

On the other, a missionary, brandishing his cross.

Beneath the deified Champlain,

At the feet of the trader and missionary,

Sit the Indians.

There is also a plaque in the stone, reading as follows:

1615-1915

ERECTED TO COMMEMORATE THE ADVENT INTO ONTARIO OF  
THE WHITE RACE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF SAMUEL  
CHAMPLAIN, THE INTREPID FRENCH EXPLORER AND  
COLONIZER WHO, WITH FIFTEEN COMPANIONS ARRIVED IN  
THESE PARTS IN THE SUMMER OF 1615 AND SPENT THE  
FOLLOWING WINTER WITH THE INDIANS MAKING HIS  
HEADQUARTERS AT CAHIAGUE, THE CHIEF VILLAGE OF THE  
HURONS, WHICH WAS NEAR THIS PLACE.

A SYMBOL OF GOOD WILL BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND  
ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLE OF CANADA

But not the Ojibway-speaking people across the lake?

Who gets to be seen and heard?

### **Clothing Style Among Rama Youth**

To get a better sense of the tastes of my audience, I looked at the overall sense of style found among youth from Rama First Nation, with the intent of producing apparel designs of my own. Clothing frequently seen among young adults from Rama include caps, hooded sweatshirts, jackets, jeans, bandanas, sports jerseys & caps, and t-shirts. Big-name brands such as G-Unit, Tapout, and Burton were present. Many t-shirts & hoodies employed large, bold graphics and imagery, both for females and males. This urban flair can be seen not only among individuals from Rama, but also among many Native youth from other nations.

### **Goal**

The goal of the project is to create clothing for Anishinabek youth that promotes a positive sense of identity, by infusing modern apparel with a Native American perspective. Many young Anishinabek are very proud to be Anishinabek, but often do not have everyday clothing to directly express this feeling. (As a side note, a number of individuals do have traditionally-based regalia reserved for ceremonial purposes.) In regards to Anishinabek designs on clothing such as t-shirts, they do exist, but there is not a broad selection to choose from and some of these designs could be stronger visually. While many of the mainstream urban designs mentioned earlier are well-made, they are not made with Native American audiences in mind and do not reflect Native American culture. However, the appeal of urban clothes among youth serves as a stylistic cue for new clothing designs. By modifying such clothing as hooded sweatshirts and t-shirts, which are commonly worn by people everywhere, Anishinabek culture can take on a very

accessible form, blending the old and the new to resonate with today's Anishinabek youth. The clothing will serve as a way for young people to connect with their heritage. In short, the designs will be a blending of urban and Native American cultures.

### **Anishinabek Cultural Research**

In order to have a solid knowledge base on which I could draw to make my designs, I did in-depth research on Anishinabek history and culture. I consulted online sources such as online museum collections and a wide variety of books. Anishinabek philosophy, cosmology, forms of dress, and other material culture were all subjects I examined. As an Ojibway interested in learning more about my own culture, my research often leaned towards the Ojibway, but it has also been informed by people who do not identify as Anishinabek, but have close cultural ties, such as the Cree. Much of the work I looked at was from the latter half of the 1800s to the early 1900s, which had stylistic shifts compared to earlier forms of clothing. The more I learned about the contexts of change in visual expressions found among the Anishinabek, the more important it became to reflect these aspects of history in the clothing I was to design.

### **Selected Components for Design**

Following research, I decided to focus on the following particular motifs and forms as inspiration for my designs: floral beadwork, Thunderbird and Underwater Panther imagery, ribbonwork, hoods, beaded yokes, cuffs, and vests.

Floral beadwork is a form of decoration that is ubiquitous among the Anishinabek to this day. As Ruth B. Phillips explains in *Trading Identities*, floral imagery has a very complex history as a post-contact phenomenon, and was developed in the context of

intense suppression and oppression of Native people and their cultures. To a European mindset, the use of floral imagery by Native Americans made them more palatable, symbolizing a move toward “civilization.”<sup>25</sup> By contrast, older imagery such as Thunderbirds and Underwater Panthers (to be further explained later), due to their otherness, were discouraged as pagan.<sup>26</sup> On the less negative spectrum of things, Native designers were naturally inspired by new items brought in by Europeans and created unique designs. Many of these designs appeared on souvenirs aimed to appeal to a European audience.<sup>27</sup> Floral beadwork served as a way to subtly express Anishinabek identities and worldviews in a way that was not obvious to Europeans.<sup>28</sup> The depiction of natural life is in keeping with a cultural respect for nature and has spiritual element.<sup>29</sup> Designs frequently have divisions of four, referencing the sacred four directions.<sup>30</sup> The designs often feature symmetry, balance, and opposing designs, which is in keeping with Anishinabek cosmological ideas otherwise symbolized by Thunderbirds and Underwater Panthers.<sup>31</sup> The amount of time invested in floral beadwork, such as is seen on a bandolier bag, which was even worn by leaders such as medicine men and chiefs, emphasizes floral beadwork as a legitimate Anishinabek expression.<sup>32</sup>

As previously mentioned, imagery of Thunderbirds and Underwater Panthers were suppressed. Thunderbirds are powerful creatures with the sound of thunder and the ability to shoot lightning from their eyes that symbolize the upper world. The Underwater Panther, a dangerous creature living in lakes and waterways that has both serpentine and feline aspects, as well as horns and copper scales, symbolizes the lower world. These two forces are continually locked in battle, symbolizing the concept of balance. Images of these creatures can be seen on woven fiber bags intended to hold ceremonially significant

items.<sup>33</sup> They also appear in the form of quillwork (an indigenous method of decoration using porcupine quills). Depictions range in their abstraction. Today, images of Thunderbirds and Underwater Panthers are more widely used by Anishinabek artists. Given the cultural significance of Thunderbirds and Underwater Panthers, they will be included in my designs.

Ribbonwork is a post-contact form of clothing decoration, along with beadwork and quillwork, that is found among the Anishinabek. Among the examples I found by the Ojibway, ribbon often appears as a simple edging of color, frequently in red, around elaborate beadwork designs. Among the Potawatomi and the Odawa, the ribbonwork is often more elaborate, becoming the primary method of decoration. For my designs, I opted for simple ribbon edging.

Anishinabek hood forms elaborately decorated with ribbon and beadwork visually lend themselves well to interpretations on contemporary hooded sweatshirts. I was not able to find extensive information or many examples of the hoods that were worn by the Anishinabek, but on the Royal Ontario museum website I did find an entry accompanying a James Bay Cree hood from the earlier half of the 1800s that implied that they were suppressed. Given the following information, a reference to these hoods seems even more important as a statement of Native identity:

Decorated hoods, worn by both men and women, displayed wealth. The beadwork embroidery exhibited a woman's artistic skills as well as pride in her husband's abilities as a good provider. The hoods played a role in showing respect to the spirits of the hunted animals. Anglican missionaries discouraged Native beliefs and by the late 1800s the hoods were no longer worn.<sup>34</sup>

Other clothing forms I am referencing include yokes, attached over European-style shirts, as well as cuffs and vests, all of which often featured a ribbonwork edge and elaborate beadwork. Black, dark blue, red, and sometimes green are common fabric colors, which I have chosen to reference.

## Clothing Designs



*Figure 2. Red lines indicate ribbon edging*



**Figure 3.** Black areas reference the forms of capes, yokes, and cuffs, which were often made with a black material such as velvet. The pockets reference vests worn by Anishinabek men.



*Figure 4. Silver design featuring studs on the yoke area, with screenprinted floral designs referencing beadwork on the sleeves and pockets.*



*Figure 5. Design featuring ribbonwork and a reference to bandolier bags worn over the shoulders.*



*Figure 6. Screenprinted floral designs highlight floral beadwork. Bottom-left hooded sweatshirt features metal cones. T-shirt design at the bottom brings together a thunderbird, underwater panthers, and floral beadwork.*



**Figure 7.** More explorations of floral designs. The top right design incorporates a graffiti-style “Anishinabek.” The deer head on the design at the bottom is a nod to the deer in Rama First Nation’s logo.



**Figure 8.** All three designs employ thunderbird imagery. Zigzag on bottom references waves created by an Underwater Panther. Top design and bottom right designs explore ribbon application. Bottom left design plays with shoulder decoration on bandolier bags.



*Figure 9. Explorations of abstract references to the Thunderbird and Underwater Panther, with a hip-hop inspired example at the bottom.*



*Figure 10. Hooded sweatshirts and t-shirt reference the thunderbird forms found on woven ceremonial bags.*

## CONCLUSION

The first part of the project highlighted graphic design for Native Americans, a topic which requires wider recognition and further development. Having lent a measure of insight into the subject, I hope that my words will provide a stepping stone for further discussion of the topic, both by myself, other graphic designers, and the Native American community as a whole.

The second part of the project, built on the foundation of ideas discussed of the first chapter, identifies the need for clothing which promotes a positive Anishinabek identity among Anishinabek youth. A number of potential designs are explored within the project. While the project is limited by the time available in a term, I intend to continue developing work beyond the class with the intent of presenting the physical creations to Rama First Nation and its young people.

My hope is that the work I have begun will prove to be inspiration to others interested in designing for Native Americans.

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