

DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIAN DISCOVERY A JOURNEY OF HEALING

The Workshops on the Doctrine of Discovery are a project of the Racial Social and Economic Justice Committee of the NEYM with technical assistance provided by the American Friends Service Committee Healing Justice Program. To schedule a workshop, contact: Rachel: rch@cape.com



HANDOUT: QUAKER INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

Since its beginning, the federal Indian boarding school policy has been a collaboration of Christian churches and the federal government since its earliest inception, starting with the Indian Civilization Fund Act of March 3, 1819. Thomas Lorraine McKenney, a Quaker, served as the first Superintendent of Indian Trade starting in 1816 and was one of the key figures in the development of American Indian policy. It was McKenney who advocated for the federal policy of education and civilization through a network of schools to be run by the missionary societies under the supervision of the Superintendent of Indian Trade. He likely was the architect of the Civilization Act to "encourage activities of benevolent societies in providing schools for the Indians ... and authorized an annual 'civilization fund' to stimulate and promote this work."

In 1829 McKenney wrote: "We believe if the Indians do not emigrate, and fly the causes, which are fixed in themselves, and which have proved so destructive in the past, they *must perish!*" (Stuart Banner, *How The Indians Lost Their Land*, p.209)



Riverside School

Sign reads "Begun by U.S. Quaker Agents 1871 This school opened at the Indian agency on Sugar Creek with 8 pupils. A new building was erected as a boarding school in 1872 for Wichita and Caddo children. Fire in 1878 destroyed the school. It soon reopened in a new building here on the Washita and



In, 1871, Jonathan Richards, the first Reservation Agent, with A.J. Standing, organized the first school at the Old Wichita Indian Agency Commissary. After much bribing, only eight students wearing traditional clothing, moccasins and braids laid the foundation for Riverside Indian School.



The following year more space was needed to accommodate students. A new building was erected to accommodate a small force of employees and about forty students. The school was then known as the Wichita-Caddo School, located at the foot of a large hill one mile east of the present school site. A fire, resulting in the tragic loss of one life, occurred in 1878. The school was then re-established at the present location. In 1893, the capacity of the institution was sixty students with only Wichita, Caddo and Delaware tribes represented.



In the fall of 1922, Kiowa tribal students began attending with the abolishment of the Rainy Mountain Indian School. With the influx of other tribes the government allotted more money to finance the school.

In 1929, new buildings were constructed accommodating one hundred-fifty-five boys, marking a new era for Riverside. New buildings, modern and fully equipped took the place of the original buildings. In 1935, the gymnasium was completed. The southern section of the present day school building was built in 1937. Seven cottage dormitories were completed in 1941 and are still in use today. In 1945, the Navajo Tribe located in the Southwest began attending Riverside.

**2013 Riverside Indian School ~ 101 Riverside Drive ~ Anadarko, OK 73005 ~ (888) 886-2029.
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HORIZONLINES.ORG

Delicate Old Injuries: The History of Native-American Boarding Schools By Ken Smith

They shoved Zitkala-Sa on the train, the first step in her journey to White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute, a Native-American boarding school in Wabash, Indiana. According to her 19th century autobiography, "The School Days of an Indian Girl," her mother complied with the government, allowing her daughter to be ripped from Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, because she wanted her to receive a Western education.

The children traveled for several days, passing across miles of sunflower-covered plains. Zitkala-Sa arrived at the school grounds in 1891. She remembered the overwhelming terror as the Quaker missionaries pushed her toward the large buildings in the distance. They chucked her into a small room, leaving her to sleep among strange faces. "I [heaved] deep, tired sobs," said the Sioux woman. "My tears were left to dry themselves in streaks, because neither my aunt nor my mother was near to wipe them away."



In the decades following the Civil War, social reformers focused their attention on the education of Native-Americans. They believed in the intrinsic superiority of Western culture, which they considered indispensable to the intellectual development of productive citizens, so they designed boarding schools to assimilate the native Indians into American society.

They stripped children from their families, ensuring the destruction of languages, religions, and cultures. The experience left a permanent scar on the Native American consciousness.

From Wikipedia: Zitkala-Ša was born on February 22, 1876 on the Yankton Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Until 1884 Zitkala-Ša lived on the reservation, describing those days as ones of freedom and happiness spent in the care of her tribe.[4] In 1884, when Zitkala-Ša was eight, missionaries came to the Yankton Reservation and brought several of the Native American children, including Zitkala-Ša, to the White's Manual Labor Institute in Wabash, Indiana, a manual training school founded by Quaker Josiah White for the education of "poor children, white, colored, and Indian". She described both the deep misery of the experience of having her heritage stripped from her as she was forced to pray in the manner of the Quakers and cut her hair, and the joy she felt in learning to read, write, and play the violin.

In 1887 Zitkala-Ša returned to the Yankton Reservation to live with her mother. She spent three years there, dismayed to find that while she still longed for the native Sioux traditions she no longer fully belonged to them.

Walter Echo-Hawk

In re Can-ah-couqua: Guardianship Alaska-Style

The poignant case of *In Can-ah-couqua* (1887) shows how guardianship can run roughshod over personal liberty and parental rights.⁶⁸ Can-ah-couqua was a Tlingit mother who placed her five-year-old son into a Presbyterian mission school in Sitka, Alaska, supported by a BIA contract paying \$11.25 per month to the school for each Indian student. She surrendered her son, Can-ca-dach, to the missionary school so he could be educated, but changed her mind three years later. When school officials refused to release him, Can-ah-couqua filed a petition for habeas corpus against the superintendent and chaplain alleging they were unlawfully restraining his liberty, contrary to her will and wishes as his mother.

The federal court denied the petition, stating, "the policy of the government is to aid these mission schools in the great Christian enterprise of rescuing from lives of barbarism and savagery these Indians, and conferring upon them the benefits of an educated civilization. Case closed. The best interests of Can-ca-dach dictated that the child be detained by missionaries. If parents can simply withdraw their children from federally funded mission schools "at their own pleasure, this would render all efforts of both the government and missions to civilize them abortive."



Indian Country
TODAY MEDIA NETWORK.com

**Sexual Trauma: One Legacy of
the Boarding School Era**

Ruth Hopkins 3/30/13



Every American Indian alive today has been affected by the policy of assimilation implemented by the United States government not that long ago.

... In the late 1800s, a new idea arose as to how to deal with the "Indian problem." Popular opinion, decided it was better to "kill the Indian and save the man." In other words, they desired to strip us of our cultures and languages and make us over in their image. They wanted to "civilize" Natives, and they would use religious based education to do it.

Pre-1900, 25 boarding schools were built off-reservation and a minimum of 30,000 Native children, about 10% of the entire Native population at the time, were pushed through the system. These boarding schools were run by religious organizations, and funded by the Federal government. By the end of the boarding school era, over 100,000 Native children had passed through the boarding school system.

Many Native children were snatched from their mother's arms and stolen away to attend boarding schools. Stella Pretty Sounding Flute was forced to go to boarding school, as were her brothers. She described the intense trauma children experienced when they were taken away from everything and everyone they know and placed in a strange, cold, impersonal environment cut off from nature. One of the first events upon arrival to the boarding school laid the groundwork for the years of psychological damage that would be inflicted on the children for years to come. Their hair would be cut. Traditionally, Native men wore long hair. Stella recalled seeing boys' spirits broken as their braids, literal ties to their identity and holding spiritual power, fell to the floor.

Children were forbidden to speak their language, and beaten for doing so. The implementation of this English-only policy at boarding schools is the primary reason so many Native languages are on the brink of extinction now. My father, also a boarding school survivor, told stories of his willful older brother, who would not stop speaking the Dakota language despite the abuse he received for refusing to give it up.

Life at boarding school was punishing of its own accord. Children were not allowed to return home to visit their families for years at a time. Conditions were harsh. During particularly cold winters, some children froze to death in their beds. Days were long, and usually consisted of difficult, and occasionally dangerous, industrial work.

Despite all of those horrors, none of them compares to the shocking level of inhumane physical brutality, sexual abuse and child rape that took place at boarding schools. Child molestation was rampant. ...

There are thousands of Native children in both the United States and Canada who never returned home from boarding and residential schools; their small, bruised, and broken bodies yet unaccounted for. There are reports of children who were murdered while still newborns, that their families never knew existed. These babies, who died without names, were the product of rape. The souls of these murdered children cry out for justice.