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PRONOUNS ©

Pronoun – A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun.

Aawi

'One who supposed to be who they're supposed to be'

In Algonquian Languages such as Cree and Ojibwe, pronouns have no gender as in he or she as they do in other languages such as English. Instead, they have 'proximates', which are understood to be either he/she or something alive. This is the reason that some speakers in these aboriginal languages may interchange the terms when referring to a third person whether they are male, female or other. In Cree '*wína*' – he/she or other, in Ojibwe '*wiin*' – he she or other.

When these aboriginal peoples are speakers in their respective languages, the only indication of any reference to gender is by other nouns as in the following examples; 'he is a big man', '*mindido inini*', 'she is a tall woman', '*ginoози ikwe*.' The other ways of gender qualifiers are adjectives. Adjectives define nouns or things. Although a man may be referred to as '*beautiful*,' as it's done in English, but, the term is often associated with describing women or people of the feminine persuasion. It is also the same as the term '*handsome - minwaabeke*' where it may be used to describe a woman's appearance as in '*a handsome woman*.' Again, 'handsome' is usually attributed to a man's appearance, however, with Algonquian speakers; the terms beautiful and handsome are referred to a woman and a man respectively.

The following are examples in Ojibwe grammar for nouns, pronouns and prepositions which may indicate or designate as close to a person's gender.

Moozhikwe (n.) - single woman, bachelorette

Moozhaabe (n.) - single man, bachelor

Ikwewayaa'ii (prep.) – something feminine, of a woman

Ininiwayaa'ii (prep.) – something masculine, of a man

Wemitigoozhiikwe (n.) – white woman

Wemitigoozhi (n.) – white man (person)

Ikwewing (adj.) – of a woman, in the area of s.t. womanly

Ininiwing (adj.) – of a man, in the area of s.t. manly

For all intents and purpose, the Algonquian Languages do not necessarily focus on the gender of the third person or 'other.' Not only does such a language lessen the speaker to presume or make judgements, but, the listener is expected to extrapolate or come to a conclusion for themselves on the qualities, gender or other attributes of the one spoken about.

The term 'aawi' is an Ojibwe word which literally means 'he/she is who he/she supposed to be.' Because Ojibwe and Cree have animate and inanimate designations in place for gender, the inanimate form would be 'aawiwaa', or it is what it's supposed to be. The former is used more often the latter due to its practical usage.

Exhibit: National Inquiry into Missing and
Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Location/Phase: Part III: Toronto

Witness: Albert McLeod

Submitted by: Christa Big Canoe

Add'l info: P03P03P0101 (Commission)

Date: JUN 11 2018

Initials

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