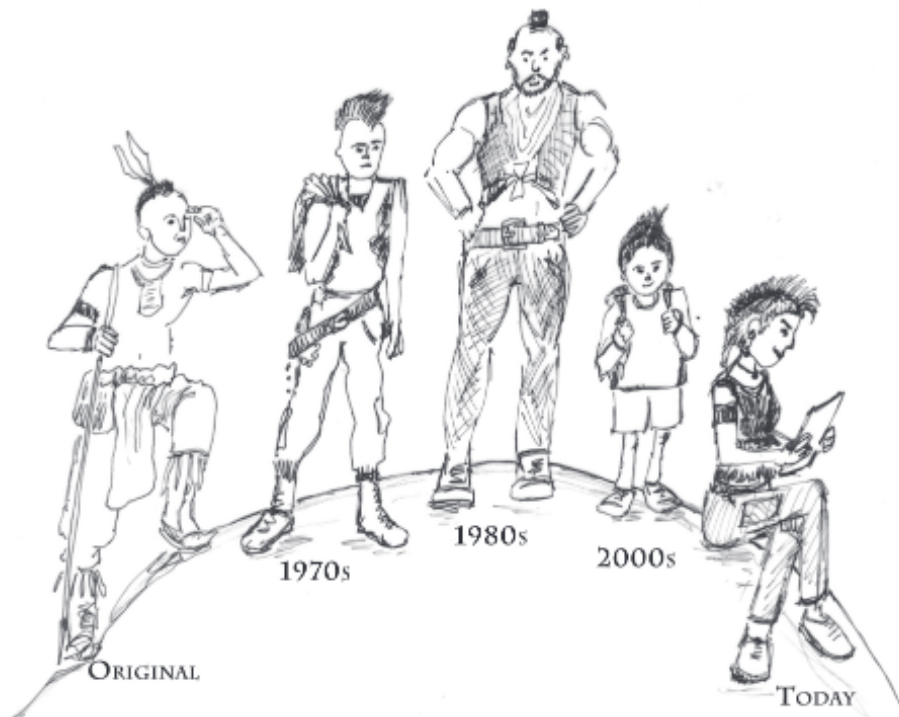


# Mohawk Culture

## The History Behind the Hairdo

by Simone T. Ribke



**These days, lots of kids have mohawks. But did you know there's a history behind the hairdo?**

The mohawk hairstyle is named after the Native American tribe. Before battle, Mohawk warriors shaved the sides of their heads. They left a thin strip of hair down the middle.

“Mohawk” is what their enemies called them. It meant

“man-eaters.” This does not mean that they ate people. It means they were fierce warriors. The Mohawk have a different name for themselves. It means “people of the flint.”

Mohawks were part of the Iroquois Confederacy. This nation formed in the 1600s. It

---

# Mohawk Culture

---

was made up of five tribes. A sixth tribe joined in 1722. Each tribe lived in one region. The regions spanned Pennsylvania, New York, and Canada.

In the book *Eagle Song*, Danny Bigtree's family was probably Mohawk. Danny misses his old home in Akwesasne. This is a town in New York. It is located in Mohawk territory.

## A Fierce Reputation



Punks and punk rock began in the 1970s. Many punks had mohawks. They rebelled against “normal” ways of dressing and behaving. Punks wore their hair, clothes, and makeup in shocking new ways.

Punk music was shocking, too. It was also fierce.

By the 1980s, a lot more people had mohawks. People with mohawks were considered fierce.

Why was a person with a mohawk considered fierce? Was it the way that punks acted? Or is it because of the origin of the hairstyle? The answer is: probably both.

## From Punk to Funk

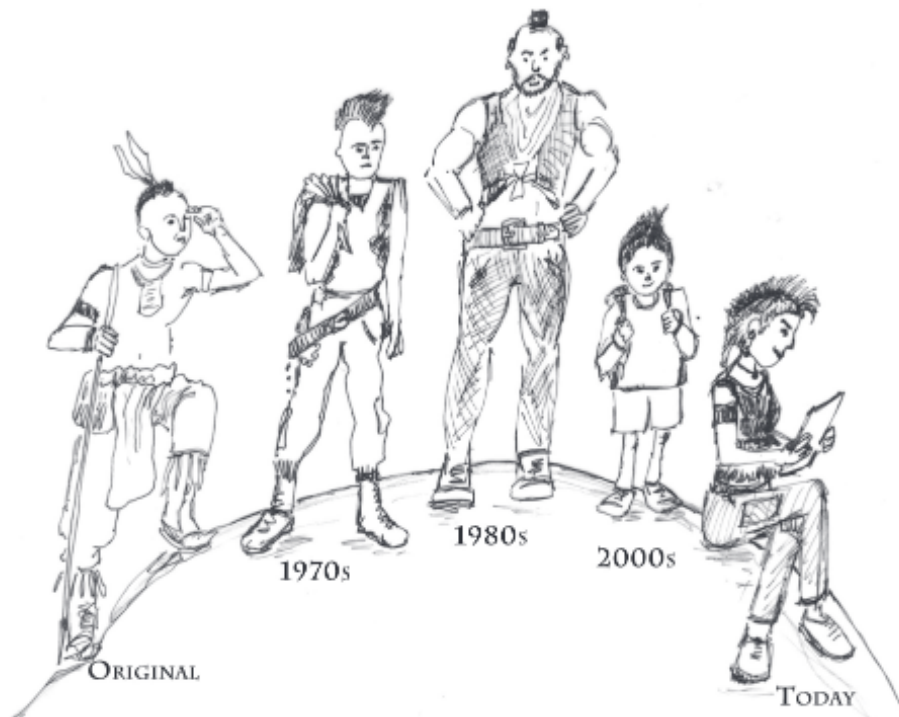
The mohawk hairstyle disappeared for about 25 years. It popped up again in the early 2000s. Suddenly everyone wanted a mohawk. Mohawks are still fierce. Lots of different types of people wear mohawks today. But these days, fierce has a new meaning. It means well-dressed and good looking. Not bad for a hairdo that dates back more than 500 years!



# Mohawk Culture

## The History Behind the Hairdo

by Simone T. Ribke



Nowadays, you probably know a few kids with a mohawk. But did you know there's a history behind the hairdo?

The mohawk hairstyle is named after the Native American tribe. Before battle, Mohawk warriors shaved the sides of their heads. They left a thin strip of hair down the middle.

The name Mohawk comes from a name their enemies called them. That name meant "man-eaters." This does not really mean that

they ate people. It means that they were fierce warriors. The Mohawk's name for themselves means "people of the flint."

Mohawks were members of the Iroquois Confederacy. This was a nation that formed in the 1600s. It was made up of five different Indian tribal nations. A sixth tribal nation

---

## Mohawk Culture

---

joined the Confederacy in 1722. Members of the Iroquois Confederacy lived in and around Pennsylvania, New York, and Canada. Tribes that were part of the Confederacy refer to themselves as Iroquois today.

In the book *Eagle Song*, Danny Bigtree's family most likely was Mohawk. Danny mentions missing his old home in a town called Akwesasne. This is a town in New York. Akwesasne is located in what once was Mohawk territory.

### A Fierce Reputation



Men (and sometimes women) began to wear mohawks in the 1970s. In those days, a mohawk was a pretty extreme hairstyle. It was usually only worn by punks.

Punks and punk rock came on the scene in the 1970s. Punks

rebelled against “normal” ways of dressing and behaving. They wore clothes, makeup, and hairstyles that were shocking and sometimes weird. Punk music was also fierce and shocking. By the 1980s, mohawks became more commonplace. But people with mohawks had a reputation for being fierce.

How did the mohawk hairstyle get a fierce reputation? Was it because of punk behavior? Or was it because of the origins of the hairdo? The answer is: probably both.

### From Punk to Funk

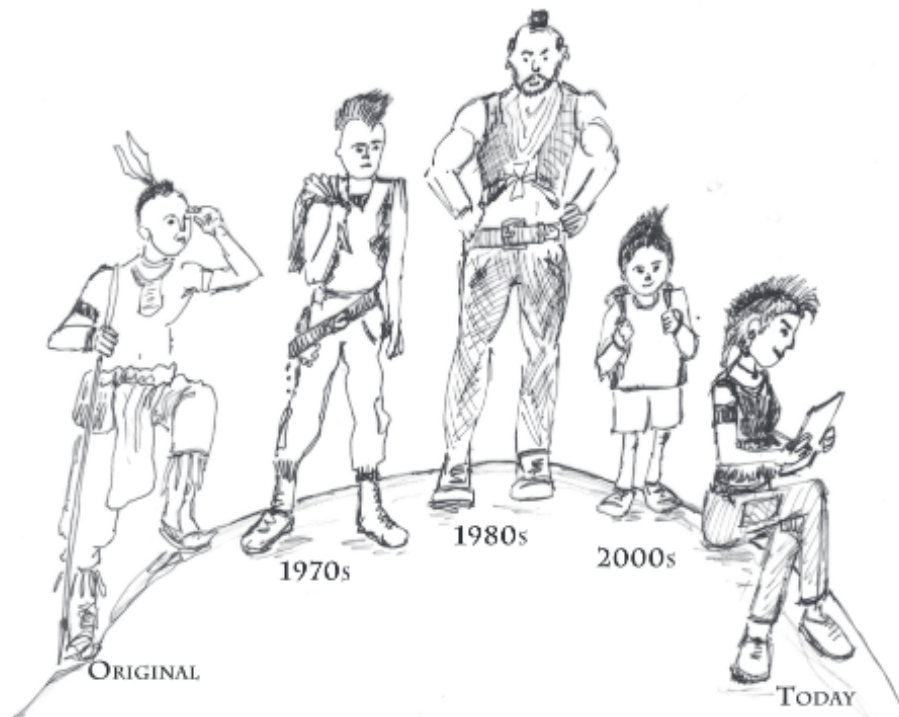
The mohawk hairstyle all but disappeared for nearly 25 years. It popped up again in the early 2000s. Suddenly everyone—kids, adults, even grandparents—wanted a mohawk. The mohawk was still considered fierce. But the word fierce now has a new meaning: well-dressed and good looking. Not bad for a hairdo that dates back before the discovery of America!



# Mohawk Culture

## The History Behind the Hairdo

by Simone T. Ribke



**Nowadays, you're bound to see a handful of kids at school with a mohawk. But did you know there's a history behind the hairdo?**

The mohawk hairstyle is named after the Native American tribe. Before battle, Mohawk warriors shaved the sides of their heads, leaving a thin strip of hair down the middle.

The name Mohawk comes from a name their enemies called them, meaning "man-eaters." The term man-eaters does not really mean

that they ate people. It means that they were fierce warriors. The Mohawk's name for themselves means "people of the flint."

Mohawks were members of the Iroquois Confederacy. This was a nation that formed in the 1600s and was made up of five different Indian tribal nations. A sixth tribal nation joined the Confederacy in

---

# Mohawk Culture

---

1722. Members of the Iroquois Confederacy lived in and around Pennsylvania, New York, and Canada. Tribes that were part of the Confederacy largely refer to themselves as Iroquois today.

In the book *Eagle Song*, Danny Bigtree's family most likely was Mohawk. Danny mentions missing his old home in a town called Akwesasne, which is in New York. Akwesasne is located in what once was Mohawk territory.

## A Fierce Reputation



Men (and sometimes women) began to wear mohawks starting in the 1970s. In those days, a mohawk was a pretty extreme hairstyle, usually only worn by punks. Punks

and punk rock were a cultural and musical movement. Punks rebelled against “normal” ways of dressing and behaving. They wore clothes, makeup, and hairstyles that were shocking and sometimes weird. Punk music was also fierce, shocking, and different. By the 1980s, people with mohawks had a reputation for being fierce as well.

Was it punk behavior or the origins of the hairstyle that gave mohawks a fierce reputation? The answer is that it was probably both.

## From Punk to Funk

The mohawk hairstyle all but disappeared for nearly 25 years, but then it made a comeback in the early 2000s. Suddenly everyone—kids, adults, even grandparents—wanted a mohawk. The mohawk was still considered fierce, but the word fierce now has a new meaning: well-dressed and good looking. Not bad for a hairdo that dates back before the discovery of America!

