

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Great Plains Quarterly

Great Plains Studies, Center for

---

Spring 1982

## Review of *The Indians in Oklahoma* By Rennard Strickland

Arrell Morgan Gibson  
*University of Oklahoma*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsquarterly>



Part of the [Other International and Area Studies Commons](#)

---

Gibson, Arrell Morgan, "Review of *The Indians in Oklahoma* By Rennard Strickland" (1982). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 1642.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsquarterly/1642>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Great Plains Studies, Center for at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Great Plains Quarterly by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

each period Indians have suffered as casualties of national expansion and progress and from an Indian policy tailored to accommodate the Anglo-American interest. He contends that well-intentioned but naive Christian reformers, "Friends of the Indian," in their attempts to "civilize" and "Americanize" Oklahoma Indians created "conditions ripe for the 'evil deeds' of the Indian exploiters," and he concludes that "a self-proclaimed purity of heart has not automatically guaranteed wisdom of policy."

Certainly one of the blackest periods for Oklahoma Indians was the "dark winter" of settlement and statehood. The author found that at the turn of the century "there was not a pauper Indian among the Five Civilized Tribes." After they were forced to submit to allotment in severalty, their 20-million-acre estate in eastern Oklahoma was partitioned, with the result that "today virtually the entire acreage of this rich domain of prosperous agricultural and mineral lands has passed from Indian hands," and "the heartlands of these once powerful tribes are filled with unemployment and destitution" and pose "primary battle-grounds for any war on poverty."

Features of *The Indians of Oklahoma* include bibliographical notes with critical comment at the close of each chapter, a bibliographical essay on the Indian tribes of Oklahoma, descriptive and interpretive demographic tables and maps showing original homeland, reservation assignments in Oklahoma during the nineteenth century, and present distribution of Indians in Oklahoma and status of their lands. The book is illuminated with fresh illustrations and comprises the foundation volume for the series *Newcomers to a New Land*.

ARRELL MORGAN GIBSON  
Department of History  
University of Oklahoma

*The Indians in Oklahoma.* By Rennard Strickland. *Newcomers in a New Land.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980. Illustrations, bibliographical essay, notes, tables, maps. 171 pp. \$9.95 cloth, \$3.95 paper.

*The Indians of Oklahoma*, a survey of the sixty-seven tribes residing in the state, explains the colonizing process that populated Indian Territory (the future Oklahoma) with Native Americans from all parts of the United States during the nineteenth century and interprets the striking cultural diversity of the Indian communities thus formed. The author separates the Native American experience in Oklahoma into four periods: "The Bright Autumn of Indian Nationhood"; "The Dark Winter of Settlement and Statehood"; "The Long Spring of Tribal Renewal"; and "The Spirit of a Modern Indian Summer." The point is made that in