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Anishinabek News, Native Nation Building, and American Indian Boarding Schools:
A Mixed Methods Frame Analysis of Mainstream and Tribal Journalism

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in American Indian Studies

by

Vanessa May Cisneros

2024

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Anishinabek News, Native Nation Building, and American Indian Boarding Schools:

A Mixed Methods Frame Analysis of Mainstream and Tribal Journalism

by

Vanessa May Cisneros

Master of Arts in American Indian Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor Randall K. Akee, Chair

Centering the role of Anishinabe storytelling, this thesis aims to interrogate the kinds of worlds that the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe’s *Tribal Observer* and mainstream media throughout Michigan create with the stories each tells about boarding schools. I deploy quantitative and qualitative methods of frame analysis to confirm which elements are most prevalent in each source. Quantitative data reveals that the *Tribal Observer* and mainstream media vary in the frequency of publishing and most visible frames. Qualitative data reveals a “Federal Fix:” frame in mainstream media and an “Interconnected” frame in the *Tribal Observer*. In conclusion, this thesis finds that Tribal journalism is an integral component of Native Nation building.

The thesis of Vanessa May Cisneros is approved.

Jessica R. Cattelino

Kyle T. Mays

Randall K. Akee, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2024

To Cinci, Anna Mae, Mabel,
and the generations of Anishinabekweg before me
who continued to tell our stories.

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INTRODUCTION

Tribal journalism is frequently discussed for what it *does not*, rather than what it *does*. One theme is independence: Shoshone-Bannock media scholar and *Indian Country Today* editor Mark Trahant (2001) has noted that “Most tribal newspapers are divisions of government and editors act as public extensions of tribal councils. Some tribal editors are even charged with a ‘public relations’ role as part of their job description.” (p. 121). Another important critique concerns accountability: as Jodi Rave (2018) explains, “with the majority of Native media being owned by tribal governments, Native American media often act to promote tribal government messages to Native people rather than work to hold those governments accountable to the communities they serve.” (p. 2) These statements imply that Tribal journalism is less trustworthy and less valuable if it is funded by a Tribal government, and/or that it avoids investigative reporting on issues that are important for the Tribal community or Indigenous people more broadly.

Agreeing with Trahant, Rave, and others within the Native American Journalist Association that Tribal newspaper and media content is susceptible to bias, does not always uphold the principle of freedom of speech, and may not hold Tribally elected officials and institutions accountable (Rave, 2018; Trahant, 2001), I ask a different question. Having grown up as a first-generation Saginaw Chippewa¹ descendant “at-large”² in Saginaw, Ypsilanti, and

¹ I use the term Saginaw Chippewa to evoke Native Nationhood and Anishinabe (singular), Anishinabek (plural), or Ojibwe to elicit cultural or intellectual traditions. There are alternative spellings based on regional differences; for example, Anishinaabe, Anishinaabeg, Anishinaubae, Anishinaubaeg. These can be used interchangeably by the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan, Tribal members, descendants, and community members, etc. I use Anishinabe and Anishinabek through this text in alignment with The Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways and their publications. I follow alternative spellings as used by others when referencing their work or Tribal affiliation.

² At-large is a term used to describe Saginaw Chippewa citizens and descendants who live outside of the Isabella and Saganing voting districts/reservations.

Ann Arbor, Michigan, I am personally familiar with how popular our Tribal newspaper, the *Tribal Observer*, was and is for Tribal members and descendants. But, why? If the *Tribal Observer* isn't a source for robust journalism within the community, then what is it? How does it compare to mainstream media in coverage of issues important to our Tribal community?

This question reminds me of a common story told by Anishinaubae writer, knowledge holder, and scholar Basil Johnston about a young child who was studying “indians” in school. After weeks of research at school, an exasperated child asks Johnston, “Is that all there is to indians?” (Johnston, 2013, pp. 3-5). To Johnston’s point: while the information the child has learned is in fact true, the child also feels there must be something more. Johnston uses this story to highlight the importance of knowing the spiritual, intellectual, and aesthetic components of a people, their worldviews, and languages to fully understand their literature and material productions (Johnston, 2013, p. 5). Much of Johnston’s academic and professional career was then spent writing on Anishinabek practices through an Anishinabe lens. The ode³, or heart, of this thesis, then asks and attempts to answer, “Is that all there is?” to Tribal journalism by using the Anishinabe intellectual tradition of storytelling to ground a comparative analysis of Tribal and mainstream journalism.

For centuries, newspapers of many types have had the ability to impact the lives of Indigenous people and land across Turtle Island. Media studies scholars have established that media production by Native people has been one way for Indigenous people to “talk back” to oppressive institutions and structures (Wilson & Stewart, 2008). While there is robust research on how issues are framed in Indigenous newspapers more generally, there is little research on

³ Heart in Anishinabemowin (Ojibwe Language).

newspapers published by individual Native nations. To expand on current research, this thesis focuses on one Tribal newspaper, the *Tribal Observer*, in relation to local mainstream media.

In addition to limiting this study to specific newspapers, I aim to identify and evaluate the ways in which the topic of boarding schools, specifically, is framed in mainstream media and the Saginaw Chippewa *Tribal Observer* for several reasons. First, coverage of Boarding Schools has the potential to demonstrate values of care for community and land. Second, with the recent discoveries of mass graves in Canada, the issue of Boarding Schools has shed more light on the need for a Truth and Healing commission in the United States. As a result of the increased coverage, there is sufficient coverage in both types of newspapers for review. Finally, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan (SCIT) has a Boarding School on its reservation, which has deeply affected the past, present, and future of many tribal members and their descendants in matters of Indigenous life and death.

In Chapter 1, I introduce the background to situate the topic in context. In Chapter 2, I advance the purpose and value of this study. Chapter 3 will review the literature to identify key media frame analysis approaches and strategies, especially for newspapers. Chapter 4 will review the methodology of this thesis in detail. Chapter 5 will present the findings, and Chapter 6 will add a discussion of the findings. Chapter 7 then provides recommendations for moving forward and future research.

BACKGROUND

To begin the background section I will outline a brief history of natives in the news as it pertains to the nation and citizen-building projects of the United States. To emphasize the importance of Tribally-specific research, I will then provide a summary of the history of the *Tribal Observer* and the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School. At the end of the background section,

I center the power of Anishinabe storytelling and its usefulness in understanding the significance and impacts of Saginaw Anishinabe journalism.

Natives in the News

Newspapers and journalism have been critical to the nation-building project of the United States, in relation to Indigenous peoples and Indigenous territory, in two critical ways. First, since the earliest stages of settler colonization in what we now call the U.S., media has been used as a means of Indigenous dispossession through the development of settler belonging. Benedict Anderson writes that in the early colonies of the new world, newspapers used by settlers arriving in the new world had to have a way of creating connection to places and people that previously hadn't been identified with. Anderson argues that newspapers, in particular, played a key role in disseminating news, shaping public discourse, and reinforcing a sense of national identity across the "new world." The imposition of settler nationalism and the construction of new imagined communities across the Americas also necessitated the suppression and erasure of Indigenous peoples, narratives, and relationships to land.

Colonists and settlers also had to legitimize their presence in the Americas in order to justify the dispossession of Native lands (Berkhofer, 1978). This was often facilitated by local narratives and histories that wrote Indigenous people out of history altogether. Jean O'Brien (2010) writes that American history is a collection of stories both real and imagined. Local narratives circulating in colonial England stated that Native people had altogether disappeared. O'Brien (2010) argues that local narratives had more extensive repercussions than is often recognized by scholars:

These local stories were leashed to a larger national narrative of the "vanishing Indian" as a generalized trope... These scripts inculcated particular stories about Indian past, present,

and future into their audiences. The collective story these texts told insisted that non-indians held exclusive sway over modernity, denied modernity to Indians, and in the process created a narrative of Indian extinction that has stubbornly remained in the consciousness and unconsciousness of Americans. (p. xiii)

This situated Indigenous people in the past, making way for settlers and colonists to envision, or imagine, themselves in the present and future of a place.

Journalism also legitimized settler presence by establishing stereotypes that persist in the media today. The first recognized newspaper in America, *Publick Occurances Both Forreign and Domestick*, built upon the already established tropes of Native people as violent savages (Sanchez, 2012). Sanchez (2012) writes that we can see the origins of the monolithic “good indian” and “bad indian” stereotypes in the very first eight stories containing references to Native people (p. 34). Sanchez establishes that from the very beginning of journalism in the US, Native peoples only existed in their perceived friendliness or hostility towards colonists.

The previous examples illustrate how journalism and related local narratives were used to ideologically erase Native presence in the imaginations of settlers. But newspapers also worked to actively incite violence against Native people. Madley (2016) documents how during the California gold rush of 1848–1855, sensationalism in newspapers incited a genocide against California Natives. Newspapers portrayed California as an untamed wilderness ripe for exploitation, contributing to a sense of manifest destiny and encouraging settlers to come. The influx of settlers and the demand for land and resources led to violence against Native people, which newspapers often glamorized and justified. Ultimately, the state of California, influenced by prevailing attitudes, implemented genocidal policies, including forced removals and massacres. Newspapers were instrumental in shaping public opinion that, in turn, influenced the

adoption of laws and policies that facilitated the dispossession of Native lands and the physical elimination and removal of Indigenous peoples.

In summary, national newspapers and related local narratives have contributed to the political, cultural, societal, and historical landscapes that Indigenous media, and specifically Tribal Journalism, is produced within. US Settlers have used media as a means to facilitate both the ideological and physical elimination of the Native.⁴

The Tribal Observer

Our mission is to

Inform those who want to know

Remind those who should have known

And enlighten those who never knew...

The Saginaw Chippewa *Tribal Observer* began in 1975 as a one-page, double-sided informational sheet produced with a mimeograph by then Tribal member and high school student Joseph V. Somick. Like many Tribal newspapers, the *Tribal Observer* was born during a time of significant change for the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan. The *Tribal Observer* would eventually transition from a newsletter to a fully funded newspaper. Today, the paper is an integral part of the Public Relations department housed within Tribal Operations and funded by Tribal Council. In this section, I assert that studying Tribal newspapers from a Tribally specific lens is necessary by describing the specific origins of the *Tribal Observer* and where it is today.

⁴ Media has not only been used for the elimination of Indigenous peoples. There are exceptions to how media has been used in other capacities and there has been complexity throughout the history of the United States.

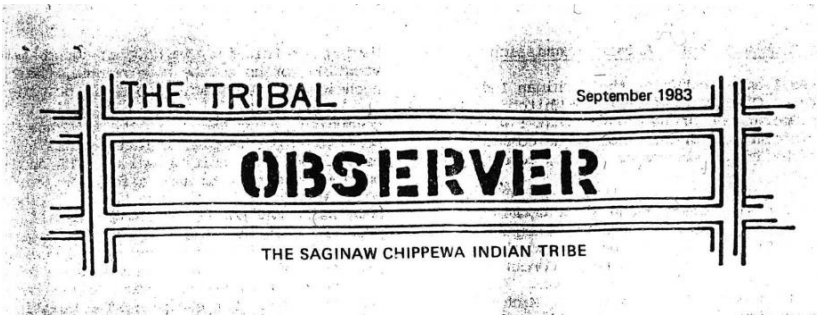


Figure 1.1 Header of the *Tribal Observer*. 1983. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

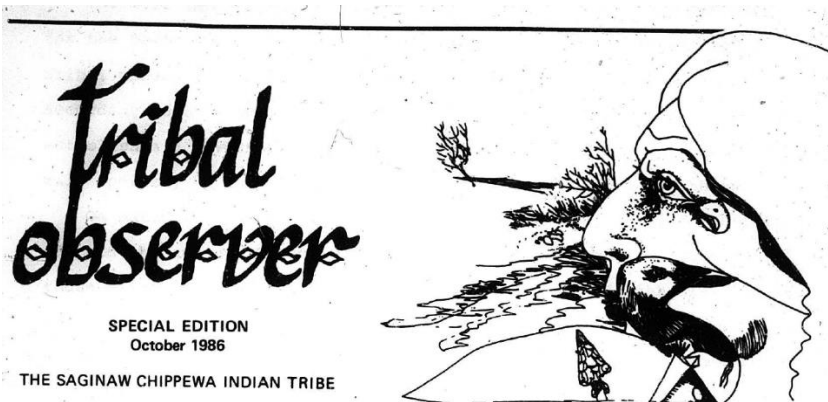


Figure 1.2 Header of the *Tribal Observer*. 1986. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

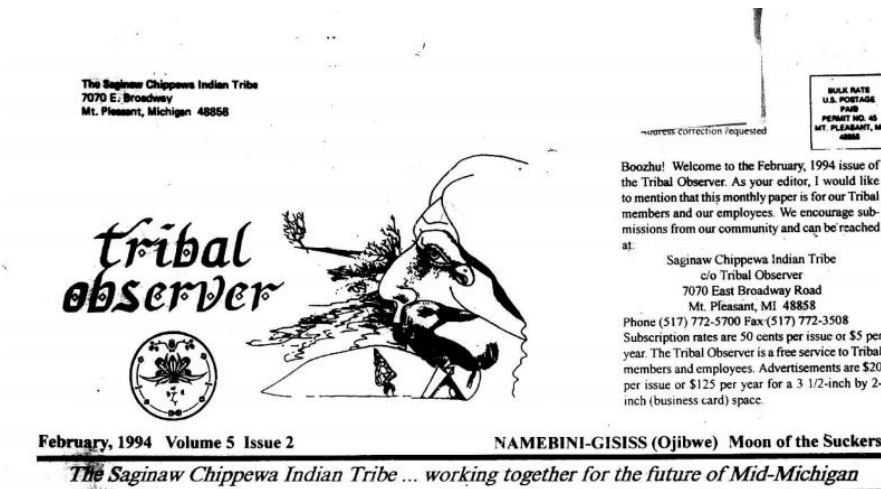


Figure 1.3 Header of the *Tribal Observer*. 1994. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

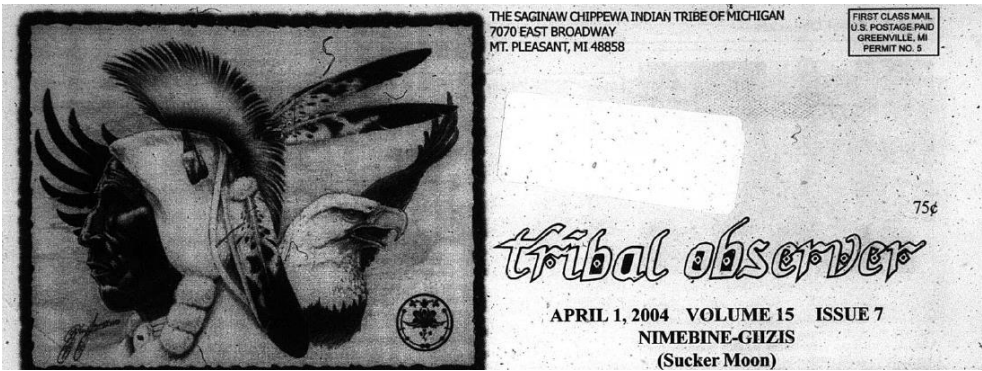


Figure 1.4 Header of the *Tribal Observer*. 2004. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.



Figure 1.5 Header of the *Tribal Observer*. 2014. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.



Figure 1.6 Header of the *Tribal Observer*. 2021. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

Lakota scholar Clementine Bordeaux (2022) has written that “tribal specificity disrupts settler logic and provides important nuances to understanding Indigenous resistance movements” (p. 4638). Tribal specificity is also critical for understanding tribally produced media. Media

anthropologist Harald Prins has defined the Indigenization of media as the appropriation and transformation of technologies of dominant society by Indigenous communities to meet their own cultural and political needs. (2004: 516) This suggests that the Indigenization of journalism is not a monolith: not all Tribal newspapers are born in the same circumstances, or have the same historical trajectory, layouts, funding, publishing/distribution patterns, or relationship to Tribal governments. Tribal specificity in this thesis allows me to use Anishinabek storytelling as a tool to analyze an Anishinabe newspaper. It also detribalizes pan-Indian assumptions about Tribal newspapers by using Anishinabe thought to inform how we think and study an Anishinabe newspaper.

Stories are wondrous because they both tell us who we are and are also impacted, shaped, and molded by the individuals, communities, and governments who tell them. This duality is confirmed in both Anishinabe scholarship and media scholarship. As Doerfler, Sinclair, and Stark write, “Anishinabeg Studies resides in and through Anishinabeg stories - past, present, and future. As before, Anishinabeg are examining our community’s offerings, adding perspectives and ideas, and making new stories in the interests of carrying forward an intellectual and collective future.” (2013). Benedict Anderson makes a similar claim in his pivotal *Imagined Communities*: that nations are imagined because they are socially constructed by the stories that are told. Native Nations exist and resist a national environment today that has been and continues to be constructed by settlers, colonists, and Americans. At the same time, Native peoples have also been storying (constructing) themselves and their nations. As federal Indian policy swung abruptly through stages of elimination, erasure, assimilation, and self-determination, Native peoples told stories to ground themselves in the present and future.

One way the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Michigan has told stories about themselves in relation to their present circumstance is through their newspaper, the *Tribal Observer*. Though officially started in the mid-1970s, its birth and significance have much earlier origins. SCIT is a historic Tribe composed of three different Ojibwe bands: Saginaw, Swan Creek, and Black River (SSCBR). These bands were in treaty negotiations with the federal government in 1819, 1837, 1855, and 1864. The Swan Creek and Black River bands were pushed further and further west until they made it to the Saginaw Valley. The chaos of confusion would go on to have consequences for Saginaw, Swan Creek, and Black River bands as they navigated the confusing and marginalizing policies of the federal government.

Ultimately, the three historic bands would be reorganized under the “Indian New Deal” or Indian Reorganization Act. The IRA paired federal resources and recognition with reorganization via the implementation of American structures of governance: a Tribal council would be elected, a constitution written, and by-laws adopted. Initially, SCIT leadership intended to include all people whose ancestors were on the treaties of 1819, 1837, 1855, and 1864 (Benz & Williamson, 2005). However, upon review of the draft constitution by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs William Zimmerman, it was sent back with the following edit to membership criteria:

Original: “*We, the members of the Saginaw, Swan Creek, and Black River Band of Chippewa Indians of the State of Michigan...*”

Edit: “*We, the Indians residing on the Isabella Reservation in the state of Michigan...*” (98).

In 1937, membership became based on residence at the time of birth. Children of members were not members unless their parents were residing on the reservation at the time of birth. This would remain a source of confusion and challenge until under the leadership of Chief

Arnold Somick a Constitutional Review Committee was established in 1984. After numerous revisions, the constitution was voted on in 1986, significantly altering membership criteria. This caused a significant increase in enrollment by people who had previously been excluded from membership criteria because of the place of their parent's birth and/or residence.

The increases in membership happened at a critical time for SCIT. Coming out of the Eisenhower administration and its termination policies, SCIT was committed to improving the lives of its members - through housing, education, employment, and health. By the 1970s, the U.S. federal government settled Indian Claims Commission Dockets in 1973, 1978, and 1979 for the significant undervaluation of land. These fueled opportunities for SCIT to develop Tribal resources. By the 1980s, gaming prospects had become a lucrative investment opportunity for the Tribe and would ultimately become a key factor in the Tribe's ability to fund the operation and production of the *Tribal Observer*.

The last four paragraphs have given a brief insight into how membership, resources, and governance quickly changed from 1937 to 1986. The SCIT was operating in contexts that were new and rapidly changing. SCIT required a means to create a collective among newly reunited kin and recently developed social and political landscapes. Simultaneously, the *Tribal Observer* was also growing and changing in significant ways during this time. Between 1984 and 1985, the format was standardized, and in 1988 SCIT published its first issue of the *Tribal Observer* in newspaper format. In 1993, the Tribe established its Public Relations department and placed the *Tribal Observer* under its operations.



Figure 2.1 Tribal Operations sign in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. 2016. Photo by author and used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.



Figure 2.2 The Tribal Observer Office in the Tribal Operations Building. 2016. Photo by author and used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.



Figure 2.3 Tribal Observer Administrative Assistant Denise Cantu and Managing Editor Natalie Shattuck in the Tribal Operations Building. 2016. Photo by author and used with permission of those photographed.

The *Tribal Observer* is significant because of its development during times of transition for the Tribe, but also because of who would be reading it. The Tribe has long been committed to using mailers and flyers to distribute information to Tribal Members. However, with the addition of 800 members in 1986 who lived outside of reservation boundaries, it was even more vital to

develop a robust means of communication.⁵ To this day, more tribal members live at-Large outside of the Isabella and Saganing Reservations. As of 2016, 62.98% of total households and 58.03% of total members live in District Three, otherwise referred to as At-Large. The *Tribal Observer* continues to be mailed to every Tribal household today and makes its archive publicly accessible online.

This portion of the background was intended to orient the reader to the Tribally specific circumstances of the *Tribal Observer* including its origins, role in community, and significance today. It highlighted the critical role the *Tribal Observer* played in constructing the modern SCIT with an expanding membership.

Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School

As a second and third-generation survivor of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School (MIIBS), I have a responsibility to discuss the context of this boarding school with care and concern for my family, community, and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan. I avoid exploiting Native experiences or oversimplifying the concept of trauma that intertwines with the legacies of boarding schools across the United States by excluding graphic details and facts. For the purpose of reader orientation, this section will briefly outline important facts and a timeline for Indian boarding schools generally and MIIBS specifically. Not all boarding schools in the United States have the same history, timelines, or contexts. As a result, this thesis cannot speak to every angle and aspect of boarding schools. It can, however, provide a general context to understand why this topic is important for readers of the *Tribal Observer* and of media within Michigan.

⁵ I am careful to not insinuate that living at-large, or outside of the reservation, means that you are disconnected from your Indigeneity or less connected culturally.

It is critical to understand boarding schools in the context of settler colonialism which is defined as Indigenous dispossession by settlers which is a “structure, not event” (Wolfe, 2006) Boarding schools did not form independently of the sentiments, policies, and structures of U.S. settlers and society. They were, instead, a function and reflection of it.

For Native people, the experience of becoming “civilized” through settler institutions of education dates as far back as the first colonial settlements (Lomawaima, 1999). Protestants, Catholics, and faiths in between, frequently built independent schools to educate the “heathen” indian child on rearing, religion, and farming. Later, missionary assimilation through education was first formally funded by the United States Government in 1819 with the Indian Civilization Act. The Indian Civilization Act was followed by the creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) under the Department of War in 1824 as a means of managing funds funneled to churches running schools under the Civilization Act. Not much later, in 1830, Congress passed, and President Andrew Jackson signed into law, the Indian Removal Act. The federal government's policy of removal paved the way for the Indian Appropriations Act in 1851, creating reservations so that displaced Natives could be placed in areas undesirable for settlers. 1869 saw Ulysses Grant’s peace policy in which the BIA gave Christian organizations and groups even more power over Indian programs on reservations, creating a sharp increase in the number of Indian boarding schools across the United States. Then, the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 declared that the federal government could no longer establish treaties with Indigenous people. The 19th century culminated with the General Allotment Act of 1887 which divided Tribal lands into Individual allotments. This policy ultimately resulted in a loss of 60 million acres; 2/3 of the Indian land base at the time.

The first federal off-reservation boarding school, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, opened in 1879. Ultimately, there have been more than 523 government-funded, and often church-run, Indian Boarding schools across the U.S. (Truth and Healing Commission, 2020): by 1900, 20,000 children were enrolled in boarding schools, by 1925, 60,889 children were enrolled in boarding schools (Wallace-Adams, 1995). Following the template of Carlisle, the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School (MIIBS) opened in 1893. It was built near the original Methodist mission and cemetery on the western side of Mt. Pleasant. MIIBS remained open until 1934 and on average had approximately 300 students in attendance annually (Ziibiiwing, 2011). Like Carlisle, MIIBS required that students in attendance be removed from their communities and live in the school dormitories full-time year-round. At MIIBS, students largely received vocational training. Like other boarding schools, this prepared Anishinabe youth for menial labor jobs. While there is documentation of resiliency, agency, and success at the school, many accounts are traumatic. They include what one might expect when hearing about boarding schools: cultural, linguistic, and community loss in combination with physical, emotional, sexual, and psychological abuse. Nearly all Tribal members and descendants today are only one or two generations out of the boarding school. The legacy of MIIBS impacts the Tribe, members, and descendants directly and intimately.

In addition to being an extension of the settler colonial project by the U.S., MIIBS also a site of Anishinabek self-governance, resistance, and diplomacy. By the time MIIBS had opened in 1893, Anishinabek around Michigan had been attending Methodist day schools since as early as the 1840s. The first methodist mission in the Saginaw Valley was built in 1841 and led by Madivagivunayaush, an Anishinabe preacher. Madivagivunayaush continued to preach to Ojibwe bands across mid and eastern Michigan, recruiting over 300 members by 1846. For

Saginaw, Swan Creek, and Black River Ojibwe bands, the Methodist faith was a means to exercise governance through the building of homes, additional churches, and schools. It was also a way to facilitate large camp meetings, more traditional forms of Anishinabe governance, where Anishinabek from across Michigan would organize socially and politically.

The Methodist schools were so effective in literacy that even before the idea of MIIBS was conceived, Mark Stevens, the U.S. Indian Agent appointed to the state of Michigan, reported in 1886 that “the majority of Indians upon the reservations can read the English language and can converse in the same sufficient to transact the ordinary business of life” and “as a rule are familiar with the current events of the day” as rates of newspaper readership were high among Michigan Natives (Benz & Williamson, 2005). Steven’s correspondence discredited the claim by previous Indian Agents that Natives in Michigan were lazy and unwilling to learn the ways of the dominant society. As evidenced by the SSCBR methodist schools, the Anishinabe had been engaging with the changing world around them and had already developed a relationship with the western style of education and understood the power it would play in their transforming landscapes.

After the Treaty of Detroit in 1855, which negotiated education for Anishinabek children in future generations, a government day school was built on the newly established Isabella reservation. However, because the mission and government schools were day schools, Indian Agents complained students still used Anishinabemowin as a dominant language at home and would often be absent to assist their families with hunting, fishing, and gathering responsibilities (Benz & Williamson, 2005). Though later countered by Indian Agent Stevens, this sentiment would fuel the idea that in order to fully integrate into American society, Native students would

need to attend a boarding school in which they stayed for long periods of time, isolating them from the linguistic, cultural, and social practices which allegedly impeded their abilities to learn. The provisions of the 1855 treaty also established two reservations for the SSCBR bands. These reservations were then allotted to Anishinabek who met the criteria outlined in the treaty. This system of allotment began an era of land dispossession of Natives on the Isabella and Saganing reservation. As Native people lost their land to dishonest and predatory settlers and businesses, many were forced to scatter for work and to make ends meet (Benz & Williamson, 2005). As the community was disenfranchised from their territory, they were also disenfranchised from school. Attending public schools was difficult for Anishinabe children: the non-native children could be mean, and distances were long, making attendance inconsistent (Benz & Williamson, 2005). This comes after an era of significant schooling, making the acceptance of the boarding school more likely. The conditions of poverty and disenfranchisement facilitated by the process of allotment created an environment where many Anishinabek were unable to care for their young ones adequately, so the opening of the school was welcomed by some as a means for young ones to be cared for. This was also uplifted by the historic desire of the Anishinabek to have their children in school.

After MIIBS's closure in 1934, the State of Michigan maintained ownership of the school and cemetery. It wasn't until April 24, 2011, via a land conveyance from the State of Michigan, that the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan acquired 8 acres (of the original 320) of the former Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School and Mission Creek Cemetery through a \$1 deed. This was Phase 1 of a multi-phase process as planned and organized by the MIIBS Committee. MIIBS's Commitment/Mission Statement states:

We are committed to sustaining the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan and our partners' efforts to transform, preserve, and finance the development of

the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School to become a place for healing, education, wellness, and empowerment to a local, national, and global level.(Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Historic Preservation Office, p. 2)

After acquiring the MIIBS property, the MIIBS Committee has subsequently coordinated community feedback, educational displays, expositions at Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways, funds to study and protect the MIIBS site, and the Honoring, Healing, and Remembering Annual Ceremony.⁶

This section was intended to give a brief overview of different eras of federal Indian policy and to connect boarding schools to a larger project of land and political dispossession. It also provided a Tribally specific context to demonstrate how the MIIBS is also an extension of SSCBR agency, particularly in diplomacy and self-governance. The next section will provide insight into recent events that have thrust boarding schools into mainstream media and have prompted nationwide news coverage in both Canada and the United States.

Boarding Schools in Recent News

Like the United States, Canada has used boarding schools, referred to as residential schools, as a form of settler colonial violence. Though there are distinctions between residential schools in Canada and boarding schools in the United States, it is sufficient for the purpose of this thesis to understand them as parallel structures and institutions in their respective nations. A point of difference, however, is the relationship of the state to the narrative of the boarding schools. Unlike the United States, prior to 2021, Canada, for better or worse, has been publicly grappling with the legacy of state-funded and supported residential schools. The section below

⁶ The Honoring, Healing, and Remembering Annual Ceremony is held annually on June 6, all day 7am-4pm, to commemorate the anniversary of the school's closing. This event is a collaboration between SCIT and non-native partners and is open to all - SCIT members, descendants, and non-native community members.

will trace the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) to recent media coverage of residential schools in 2021, media coverage of boarding schools in the United States, and the potential impacts of the unprecedented coverage of boarding schools in U.S. mainstream media.

The legacy of residential schools across Canada finally led to a settlement in 2007 reached between survivors, the federal government, and churches after decades of struggle. In 2015, the TRC released a summary report of its findings and "94 Calls to Action" (CTA) intended to address the legacy of residential schools and their ongoing impact on survivors and their families through policy recommendations. CTA 71 to 76, known as "Missing Children and Burial Information," seek to:

- Inform families of the burial locations of children who died at residential schools
- Respond to families' wishes for commemoration ceremonies and markers
- Reburial in home communities
- Delivering residential school death records to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
- Developing a National Residential School Death Register
- Establishing an online registry of residential school cemeteries (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015)

The CTA are also meant to facilitate reconciliation between First Nations and the Canadian government. However, even with the TRC and CTA, First Nations often do the work of caring for residential school sites, stories, and relatives (past and present) themselves.

On May 27, 2021, Kukpi7 (Chief) Rosanne Casimir of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation released a press statement confirming the well-known, but undocumented loss of life at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. Specifically, ground penetrating radar located the remains of 215 children, some as young as three, on the site of Kamloops Indian Residential School. At the end of the release, Kukpi7 Rosanne Casimir offered gratitude to the Pathway to Healing grant from the Southern Chiefs' Organization which made accessibility to technology

possible. It is also made clear that not only the technology had an impact on this recovery. The work of finding and caring for the remains of relatives also required collaboration with language, culture, and Knowledge Keepers to ensure “that the work was conducted respectfully in light of the serious nature of the investigation with cultural protocols being upheld” (Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc Office of the Chief, 2021).

Canadian media were quick to publish stories about the children located at the former residential school in Kamloops, B.C. Within a matter of days, the headlines expanded nationally and internationally:

“Remains of 215 children found at former Kamloops, B.C. residential school”

- *The Globe and Mail*, May 27, 2021

“Mass grave of 215 children in Canada a stark reminder of the dark history of Native American boarding schools in US”

- *USA Today*, May 30, 2021

“There’s another Kamloops coming’: Here are some Canadian sites believed to hold more unmarked graves of Indigenous children”

- *Toronto Star*, June 1, 2021

“How Thousands of Indigenous Children Vanished in Canada”

- *The New York Times*, June 7, 2021

No more than a month after the first headlines were published across Canada passed before the following headlines were published across the United States:

“Interior Department will investigate Indigenous boarding schools and identify burial Sites”

- *CNN*, June 22, 2021

“Interior Secretary Deb Haaland on the dark history of Indigenous boarding schools”

- *The Washington Post*, June 25, 2021

“US to investigate ‘unspoken traumas’ of Native American boarding schools”

- *The Guardian*, June 23, 2021

“A Federal Probe into Indian Boarding School Gravesites Seeks To Bring Healing”

- *NPR*, July 11, 2021

The news coming from Canada in the Spring/Summer of 2021 had a profound impact on awareness and policy discussions in the U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland announced a Department of Interior Federal Indian Boarding School Truth Initiative on June 22, 2021, in an address to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). This initiative would be the first federal investigation and reporting on American Indian Boarding Schools - first established in United States policy in 1819 through the Indian Civilization Act. Haaland's announcement was not the first time that Indigenous politicians, academics, and organizations have lobbied the federal government to investigate the legacy of boarding schools.

Formally Congresswoman Deb Haaland introduced H.R.8420 - Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policy Act on September 29, 2020. The bill was introduced yet failed to pass during the 2019-2020 session. On April 7, 2021, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) announced, "As Secretary Haaland has moved to the Department of the Interior, she has signaled that she remains committed to this legislation that she introduced in 2020. We have been informed that Senator Warren is preparing for the re-introduction of the bill this session."

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland would make the announcement of the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative just weeks after the recovery of hundreds of youth at Kamloops Indian Residential School on Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nation territory in British Columbia, Canada. The sweeping and graphic media coverage after May 27 created a moment of momentum for Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. With the topic fresh in the press, and shocking to Americans unfamiliar with the legacy of boarding schools, the timing was as strong as it would ever be to make the case that the time has come to investigate the United States' own

involvement with the development and implementation of these types of institutions. The relationship between the headlines above and Madam Secretary's announcement illustrates the power of the press, particularly when it comes to the potential to impact policy. It is also demonstrative of what is important to discuss, or frame, about boarding schools in mainstream media in Canada, as the next section will demonstrate, and in Michigan, U.S., as the findings of this study will outline.

The World Through Anishinabe Storytelling

Anishinaabeg stories teach us how to survive in an ever-changing environment. There is so much change and adaptation going on in many of these stories. The power of them resides in these abilities, they are the greatest tools our people have to survive and live

-Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark (Turtle Mountain Ojibwe), Centering Anishinaabeg Studies

Following the work of generations of Anishinabe thinkers before me, this work firmly centers Anishinabe storytelling. I assert that a comparative analysis of mainstream and Tribal journalism can begin within Anishinabe thought. Specifically, that stories hold within them the power to create and/or destroy our worlds and understandings of self. When we think of an Anishinabe newspaper from Anishinabe thought, we can understand it as informing its readership of who they are. I start this section with a story of beginnings, a piece of a popular version of Creation Story as both an offering and an invitation for the reader.⁷ As you spend time with this story, please reflect on how disaster is presented and resolved, how relationships are formed, and how land and community are cared for. From Basil Johnston's *Ojibway heritage*:

⁷ This story, in this form, has been shared by Anishinaubae elder, scholar, and knowledge keeper Basil Johnston in different texts and talks, making it appropriate to share as it does not reveal ceremonial or sacred knowledge.

DESTRUCTION

Disaster fell upon the world. Great clouds formed in the sky and spilled water upon the earth, until the mountain tops were covered. All that was left was one vast sea. All men died. All the land creatures perished. All the plants were covered by the sea. Only the water animals and birds and fishes lived on. What was once earth was a huge unbroken stretch of water whipped into foam and wave by the ferocious winds.

The world remained a sea for many generations.

RE-CREATION

At length the rains ceased, the clouds vanished, and the sun shone.

High in the heavens there lived alone a woman, a spirit. Without a companion she grew despondent. In her solitude she asked Kitche Manitou for some means to dispel her loneliness. Taking compassion on the sky-woman, Kitche Manitou sent a spirit to become her consort.

Sky-woman and her companion were happy together. In time the spirit woman conceived. Before she gave birth her consort left. Alone she bore two children, one pure spirit, and the other pure physical being.

The new beings of opposite natures and substances hated one another. In a fiery sky battle they fought and destroyed each other.

After the destruction of her children, the spirit woman again lived in solitude. Kitche Manitou knowing her dissolution once more sent her a companion. Again sky-woman conceived. As before her consort left but sky-woman remained content.

The water creatures observed what was happening in the heavens, sensed the weariness of the spirit women, and pitied her. In their compassion, they sought ways to provide relief for her. Eventually they persuaded a giant turtle to rise to the surface of the waters and offer his back as a heaven. When the great turtle agreed, the water beings invited the sky-woman to come down.

The sky-woman accepted the invitation, left her abode in the skies, and came down to rest on the back of the great turtle. When sky-woman had settled on the turtle, she asked the water animals to get some soil from the bottom of the sea.

Gladly all the animals tried to serve the spirit woman. The beaver was one of the first to plunge into the depths. He soon surfaced, out of breath and without the precious soil. The fisher tried, but he too failed. The marten went down, came up empty handed, reporting that the water was too deep. The loon tried. Although he remained out of sight for a long time, he too emerged, gasping for air. He said that it was too dark. All tried to fulfill the spirit woman's request. All failed. All were ashamed.

Finally, the least of the water creatures, the muskrat, volunteered to dive. At his announcement, the other creatures laughed in scorn, because they doubted this little creature's strength and endurance. Had not they, who were strong and able, been unable

to grasp soil from the bottom of the sea? How could he, a muskrat, the most humble among them, succeed when they could not?

Nevertheless, the little muskrat was determined to dive. Undaunted, he disappeared into the waves. The onlookers smiled. They waited for the muskrat to emerge as empty handed as they had done. Time passed. Smiles turned into worried frowns. The small hope that each had nurtured for the success of the muskrat turned into despair. When the waiting creatures had given up, the muskrat floated to the surface more dead than alive, but he clutched in his paws a small morsel of soil. Where the great had failed, the small succeeded.

While the muskrat was tended and restored to health, the spirit woman painted the rim of the turtle's back with the small amount of soil that had been brought to her. She breathed upon it and into it the breath of life. Immediately the soil grew, covered the turtle's back, and formed an island. The turtle had given his service, which was no longer required and he swam away. The island formed in this was called Mishee Mackinakong, the place of the Great Turtle's back, now known as Michilimackinac.

For his service to mankind and the spirit woman, the turtle became the messenger of thought and feeling that flows and flashes between beings of different natures and orders. He became a symbol of thought given and received. The turtle, slowest of all creatures, represented celerity and communication between beings.

The island home grew in size. As the waters subsided, the animal beings brought grasses, flowers, trees, and food-bearing plants to the sky-woman. Into each she infused her life-giving breath and they lived once more. In the same way were the animals who had drowned revised. Everything was restored on that island home. (pp. 13-15)

One component of the power of Anishinabe storytelling lies in the fact that there is never a singular lesson to be learned. Stories speak to people differently at different points in their lives depending on their age, their experiences, or maybe what a story is trying to teach them. In the story above, different elements may be more apparent to a reader than another. Perhaps while reading this story, it stood out that sometimes it is the most underestimated among us who have the most significant impact. Maybe it was the interdependence between spiritual and physical beings that was meaningful. The repeating presence of destruction and re-creation are prominent features when thinking through the role and power of Tribal journalism and mainstream journalism. By using Anishinabe thought, and storytelling specifically, this thesis tries to

uncover what kinds of worlds are created and/or destroyed in the *Tribal Observer* and mainstream media.

Another critical aspect of Anishinabe storytelling is that we learn not only from Aadzookaan, or traditional stories, but also Dibaajimowinan, which are histories, narratives, and news. Turtle Mountain Ojibwe political scientist Heidi Stark (2010) has written about encounters between Anishinabe and settler stories (in law, newspapers, literature, family histories, etc). Stark has pointed to the ways that two versions of the same event can exist, but their existence embodies the duality of creation and destruction. Stark uses the complexity of Anishinabe storytelling to articulate different versions of national narratives. In Stark's work, stories, like the ones codified in law, have the power to either create or destroy. I understand journalism to be akin to Stark's understanding of law. Anishinabe journalism, like law, brushes against and amongst non-native journalism and contains within in it the ability to tell different versions of national narratives. This thesis asks what kinds of worlds do mainstream and Tribal journalism build?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This chapter will discuss current gaps in research and how this project makes an intervention and contribution, then describe research significance, research objectives, and finally outline some of the limitations of this study.

Research Gap

The Reclaiming Native Truth project is a research campaign dedicated to understanding and challenging myths and misconceptions about Native peoples in the U.S. In 2018, they found that media continue to be the primary means by which non-native people learn about and engage with Native peoples. As a result, the media continues to heavily impact people's perceptions of

Native people and Native Nations. Reclaiming Native Truth (2018) found that perceptions created by the media have tangible consequences for Indigenous people:

“on a daily basis, tribes and Native individuals experience fallout from negative stereotypes in the media and the general public’s misperceptions. Ignorance, bias, stereotyping, overt racism and outright invisibility fuel attacks on tribes. They limit our ability to protect sovereignty and treaty rights, shape and inform public policy, celebrate cultural identity, access resources, and protect the dignity and humanity of Native peoples.” (p.5).

Mainstream media also impacts Native perceptions of self: “By promoting limited, homogeneous prototypes of Native Americans, the media inhibits the development of characteristics or abilities beyond those supported by these Native American prototypes and inadvertently promotes maladaptive self-strategies (e.g., deindividuation and self-stereotyping) that undermine individual potential (Leavitt, Covarrubias, Perez, & Fryberg, 2015, p. 47). In summary, both Natives and non-natives develop expectations about Indigenous people and navigate intergroup relations through mainstream media (Leavitt et al., 2015).

Despite how widespread boarding schools were across the U.S. and how many Native people they have impacted, to date there is no research on the framing of boarding schools in mainstream and/or Tribal media in the U.S. Available research is based in Canada and on residential schools. In *Representing Reconciliation: A News Frame Analysis of Print Media Coverage of Indian Residential Schools* (2015) Nagy and Gillespie found that Indigenous voices in mainstream media were used in tandem with techniques of decontextualization and tokenization to suggest that residential schools are an Indigenous issue (p. 19). They also found that survivors of residential schools are portrayed as broken individuals and passive victims who

are more emotional and less rational than non-Indigenous people (p. 22). This pathologizes survivors and individualizes violence and its remedies (Chrisjohn and Young, p. 94). Green (2012) found that “residential school syndrome” in media suggests that the impacts of boarding schools can be cured, are firmly in the past, and the process of healing and reconciliation is a means to move on (p. 129-48).

Discussions of residential schools are also often framed in the psychological discourse of trauma, which pathologizes survivors (limiting impacts to the individual mind) and limits accountability for the individual harm caused by boarding, or residential, schools (Niezen, 2013). Psychocentric self-orientation of Indigenous distress, described as the detailing of atrocities, the individual psychological impacts, and individual monetary compensation does not “wholly encompass Indigenous understandings of the nuances of the adverse effects of colonization” (Burrage, Momper, & Gone, 2022, p.30). The sociocentric self-orientation, often used by survivors of residential schools, is much more expansive including “effects on families, communities, and subsequent generations” (Burrage et al., 2022). This confirms there is a “critical divergence” between Indigenous and non-Indigenous discourses surrounding distress and healing. Thus, it’s necessary to ask how Indigenous people frame their experiences and healing in comparison with mainstream society.

This thesis contributes to closing significant gaps in existing literature in three ways. First, the majority of research related to this topic focuses on general, non-tribally-specific Indigenous media. Indigenous media might include pan-Indian media news sources like *Indian Country Today Media Network*, *Native News Online*, or *News from Native California*. These news sources are vital to the larger Native community across the U.S., their audience and content being more expansive and less specific to one Native Nation. Tribal media, when less commonly

presented in research, is usually a combination of different Tribally produced media outlets. Lack of funding and resources, turnover, and management are all challenges that impact the longevity and consistency of Tribal media. This often requires pulling from more than one source to get a sufficient sample for analysis. This research project elected to use one Tribal newspaper, produced by one Native Nation. By attempting to “reTribalize” Tribal media, this study aims to center the importance of a localized analysis in a specific context. Native Nations and Native people are not a monolith, and neither is their production of media; this thesis aims to provide one approach to looking at Tribal specific media production in media studies.

Second, this thesis also focuses on local, regional, and state media as the point of mainstream comparison to Tribal news coverage. As Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000) have written, the locality of a text matters because it can expose specific societal power structures and imbalances. Collins (1998) and Fabian (1991) have also demonstrated how narratives of group (or local geographical) history can yield traces of past relationships between political, cognitive, and ideological hegemonies and patterns of resistance. Often, comparative media analysis on Indigenous and non-indigenous media does not differentiate the locality of its non-Indigenous sources. As an example, when a research study is looking at how a specific topic is covered in mainstream/non-indigenous media, data is usually pulled from a search engine, like Proquest, and doesn't aggregate for location. By prioritizing the place of production for the mainstream media in this thesis, this work is able to more specifically consider power structures and social inequalities. As Jean O'Brien has researched and written, specific time periods in specific places, construct their relationship to Indigenous people by the context of those two intersections. That means time period (in this thesis, 2021) and place (in this thesis, Michigan) are important

considerations when analyzing the dialectic between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and communities.

Finally, as previously outlined, conversations around residential schools tend to “pathologize” boarding schools, their victims, survivors, and attendees by focusing on individual trauma and the government’s responsibility to fix them by supporting their individual healing. This thesis offers an alternative to pathologizing Native people in relation to the boarding school experience by inquiring about how the Saginaw Chippewa *Tribal Observer* frames MIIBS.

Research Objectives

Little formal research has been done on how boarding schools are framed in mainstream and Tribal media. Boarding schools have recently been launched into the press, and the U.S. federal government has committed to truth and healing through a federal investigative body. Research from Canada on the framing of residential schools has shown that how an issue is framed impacts non-native audiences and that the framing of boarding schools is different depending on Native or non-native news sources. Therefore, to apply and expand upon what can be learned from a Canadian boarding school context, this study asks the following question: How does the *Tribal Observer* frame boarding schools in comparison with mainstream media throughout Michigan? To investigate this question, this project employed both deductive and inductive forms of framing analysis that incorporate both quantitative and qualitative research. A combination of deductive and inductive methods can strengthen the diversity of audiences across different fields of study. In this case, a quantitative, deductive form of inquiry that investigates predetermined news frames, derived from existing literature, helps to connect this research project to broader trends and the “larger implications of framing theory” (Borah, 2011, p. 249).

A qualitative, inductive approach, on the other hand, allows for greater flexibility and thoroughness by investigating unique frames as they emerge from the data.

Research Significance

As an interdisciplinary and mixed methods research project, this thesis hopes to contribute to a few different bodies of knowledge. First, by using Critical Indigenous Theory and Anishinabe thought to frame a mixed-method comparative study, I strived to put two areas of research into conversation with one another that aren't in standard media studies. It is my hope that this can serve as an example for Native and non-Native media studies scholars alike to think about understanding Tribally produced media in the context of the Nations which produce it. In addition to applying framing theory and methodology to Native media, this thesis also applies Native ways of knowing to mainstream media. Ultimately, this work puts Anishinabe thought and academic theories into a mutually respectful relationship with the aim of encouraging more conversations, with one another.

This research also contributes to the limited amount of research done on Tribal media specifically, especially newspapers. Very few studies have been done on Tribal journalism extensively outside of the *Cherokee Phoenix*, and none have used a comparative study to put it into a local/regional context. Often, Tribal journalism is regarded as being important for community and cultural connections, events, and updates. This thesis raises the stakes a little higher by adding that Tribal journalism is critical for Native Nations as they grow and change within the context of settler colonialism. In *The History of News*, Pettegree (2014) argues that the value and significance of news are evaluated in the time and place it is being produced. This thesis then contributes to the bodies of scholarship that study Native Nation building and the

possible contributions of Tribal newspapers despite not always meeting western standards of investigative journalism. It provides one model for how to study Tribal journalism.

Finally, I hope that this research contributes to the body of literature on Native representations in media, especially on the topic of boarding schools. We can learn from our neighbors' (Canada's) mistakes and promote alternatives that are reflective of Native orientations on truth and healing. Works like this can impact how mainstream media decides to frame them and the trauma associated by promoting how Native Nations frame it themselves. There is a lot for our non-native peers to learn about how to frame boarding schools, survivor testimonies/experiences, and potential policy in non-pathologizing ways.

Limitations

Though this thesis adds to significant gaps in literature and bodies of knowledge, it is also limited. First, the lack of comparative research on mainstream and Tribal journalism makes it difficult to cross reference or inform findings. Second, the sample size is small as it only focuses on one Tribal newspaper and local/regional mainstream media and is limited to a very specific topic, boarding schools. Third, the method of data collection relied on the online archive of various newspapers which might have inconsistent algorithms and search engine set-ups. The same terms were searched in each database to encourage consistency. Finally, with any research, personal bias can inform the coding and reading of data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews and summarizes the two main bodies of scholarship that are integral to this study: critical Indigenous theory and framing theory. Media studies is heavily influenced by framing theory, and there is a growing field of media analysis that thinks through Indigenous representation in media and the production of media by Indigenous people. This work uses

critical Indigenous theory as a lens to center Indigenous, and Anishinabe specifically, epistemologies in a comparative media study. Framing theory is the primary framework used to design the methods portion of this thesis. As a popular method in media studies, framing theory will engage with and contribute to a vast body of literature in the field of media and communication studies.

Framing Theory

The concept of framing has been used across the social sciences, such as the fields of sociology, psychology, and communications, as both a theory and a method of analysis (Reese, 2001). Erving Goffman first introduced framing in 1974 to conceptualize the way in which mental constructs are used to make sense of reality. In other words, “Frames help people to contextualize and filter meaning from their everyday social experience, much in the way that a picture frame is used to add structure and meaningful context to an image” (Francoeur, 2018). Media scholar Entman (1993) explains framing in media communication happens in four different locations which determine how an issue is understood in any given interaction. The four framing sites are *communicators*, *texts*, *receivers*, and *culture*. In all the locations where framing occurs, “frames highlight some bits of information about an item that is the subject of a communication, thereby elevating them in salience (i.e., more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences)” (Entman, 1993, p. 53). Fiske & Taylor (1991) found that increasing the salience of information increases the likelihood that receivers will perceive, discern, process, and remember it. Furthermore, when certain elements are highlighted or downplayed, frames encourage particular perceptions and meanings. With the use of selective framing — i.e., highlighting or downplaying certain information — “frames invite a particular way to

perceive information and distill meaning” (Francoeur, 2018). Ultimately, frames influence how issues are defined, judged, and potentially solved.

In addition to social sciences more generally, frames and framing are standard organizing functions in journalism. They are so prevalent, in fact, that media framing is among the most popular areas of research for researchers in communication and media studies today (Cacciatore, Scheufele, & Iyengar, 2016) Framing is such a studied area because media scholars, like Gamson & Modigliani (1987), have written that every news story has a theme, or frame, which is a "central organizing idea or storyline” that provides meaning.

Media frames are not categorized as “true” or “objective.” Rather, as Chong and Druckman (2007a) write, “the major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and be construed as having implications for multiple values or considerations” (p.104). At the core, any issue can be viewed from a variety of frames, each having its own values, perceptions, and attitudes (Chong and Druckman, 2007b). The conscious or unconscious selection of a particular frame by writers and editors, as Nagy and Gillespie (2015) have synthesized, “alerts us to the ways in which writers and editors give some aspects of a newspaper story greater meaning over other components” (p. 7). Framing literature further suggests that framing decisions can reflect as much as they can shape mainstream culture; “news frames and media are culturally embedded and thus it stands to reason that mainstream media will largely reproduce or invoke dominant cultural patterns, values, and norms” (Nagy & Gillespie, 2015, p. 8).

As An & Gower (2009) write, “News-framing research examines how frames are constructed by journalists to shape particular interpretations of complex social and political issues.” Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) have also written that “how an issue is characterized in

news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences" (p. 11). Therefore, by using framing and its ability to influence the understanding of an issue, media makers can mold people's perceptions of crime, politics, education, and other complex social phenomena (Fleras, 2011). Furthermore, research on media framing considers how frames are constructed and thereby influence interpretations of what an issue is, who/what is responsible, and what can be done about it (Muhamad and Yang, 2017; Nisbet, 2010).

There is no consensus on how to research news frames. There are, however, two distinct methods commonly used in inductive and deductive research. Generally inductive research uncovers issue-specific news frames and as they appear from the data. This method can yield a range of diverse frames any singular issue can have (Cacciatore, Scheufele, and Iyengar, 2016). Critiques argue that these frames are typically only applicable to the topic or issue in that specific study. Other scholars suggest that useful for theory building more broadly. It is also critiqued for its inability to be utilized or replicated by other studies (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Deductive frame analysis, on the other hand, emphasizes generic news frames and uses predetermined categories to code the data and determine the frame(s) without importance to time, location, or subject (Dirikx & Gelders, 2010). While studying generic news frames can be "replicated easily, can cope with large samples, and can easily detect differences in framing between and within media" (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95), a critique of this method highlights deductive frame research as limited in identifying important frames that exist outside of predetermined ones (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). Further, applying generic frames that have been established by non-Indigenous analysis to Indigenous media risks omitting themes that make research valuable to Indigenous communities. This thesis employs both methods with an attempt

to harness the advantages and mitigate the limitations of both to provide a robust analysis of the framing of boarding schools in the *Tribal Observer* and mainstream media.

Indigenous Critical Theory

Indigenous critical theory is a prominent intellectual framework that challenges the production of knowledge from within western paradigms and promotes the production of knowledge from Indigenous paradigms. This is a useful lens through which to study Tribal media as it allows for the inclusion of the specific context from which it is produced. Koenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2009) asserts that Indigenous critical theory is:

[A] mode of analysis [that] can offer accounts of the contemporary world of Indigenous peoples that centre our ways of knowing and theorising. Our writing is challenging and innovative, engaging theory to philosophise and apply to questions that concern us and our communities. These new conceptual models have grown productively out of the object of our study: the postcolonising world we inhabit. Our respective geographical locations are framed by nation states such as the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand where colonisation has not ceased to exist; it has only changed in form from that which our ancestors encountered. (p. 11)

Chickasaw scholar Jodi Byrd (2011) echoes Moreton-Robinson in writing that Indigenous critical theory draws upon “indigenous epistemologies and the specificities of the communities and cultures from which it emerges and then looks outward to engage European philosophical, legal, and cultural traditions in order to build upon all the allied tools available” (p. xxix–xxx). Tuck & Yang also remind us that “that the settler colonial project is incomplete” (p. 9) even though violence has been and continues to be the structure of how the United States treat its

Indigenous peoples (Byrd, 2011; Wolfe, 2006). For scholars that utilize Indigenous critical theory, Indigenous specificity (Aileen Moreton-Robinson, 2009), futurity (Tuck & Yang 2012; Rowe & Tuck, 2017), and ongoing colonialism are three vital components of how research questions are framed and studied.

Communication and media studies are fields that are overwhelmingly composed of non-Indigenous peoples, and as such the knowledge produced and replicated in these fields frequently produces scholarship that “often validates and justifies settler claims to Indigenous lands and resources” (Tuck & Yang, 2012). As Kānaka Maoli historian Noenoe K. Silva (2004) observes, scholarship and media produced by the west perpetuate the myth that Indigenous people are complacent in U.S. colonialism by *not* resisting the destruction of their culture and disappearance of their nations. As Silva and others have demonstrated, however, Indigenous peoples have been anything but complacent. As Anishinabe scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2015) writes:

The state attempts to regulate virtually every aspect of indigenous life—from our lands to our bodies and our minds, but my grandmothers have taught me that we collectively now have four hundred years’ experience of living sovereign despite the imposition of the state. (p. 23)

Scholars such as Cook-Lynn (1996) and O’Brien (2010) have demonstrated how American writers, in both fiction and non-fiction, have been successful in serving the nation’s fantasy about itself; that the nation (the United States) and its citizens (Americans) are the rightful inheritors of North America. Indigenous scholars have also asserted that Indigenous peoples have and continue to challenge and resist this mythology; ultimately requiring Americans to face the reality of an active Indigenous presence (Cook-Lynn, 1996; O’Brien, 2010; Silva, 2004; Vizenor, 2000).

Because Indigenous journalism is produced in an environment of ongoing occupation and each Native Nation has a distinct relationship with the production of media, Bhroin et al. (2021) advocate for a more robust study of Indigenous journalism:

We argue that research exploring Indigenous journalism needs to take a more critical approach... that analyses of the process of Indigenous journalism, beyond the potential for increased access to media and for amplification of Indigenous voice, are lacking. (p. 186)

By using Indigenous critical theory as a lens to analyze Indigenous journalism, and Tribal journalism specifically, this thesis aims to contribute to literature that situates Indigenous media production as expansive and complex.

Osage author and educator Robert Warrior (2016) teaches that there is power in combining Indigenous epistemologies and non-indigenous theory; it can create new knowledge and analytics that bring into focus the conditions of Indigenous life within the ongoing colonial occupation. (p. 93) This study combines both Anishinabe intellectual thought and that of framing theory; to fully understand the *Tribal Observer* it must be in relationship with the environment in which the paper is produced. This thesis evokes Indigenous specificity by telling the story of one Tribal newspaper, the *Tribal Observer*, in the context of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan's specific history. It also centers Anishinabe thought by understanding story as a tool capable of both creation and destruction. In conclusion, the use of critical Indigenous theory in this thesis acknowledges this work's "avocation for Native issues, for the defense of land and indigenous rights, including support for tribal nation-building, land claims, and an inherent right to exercise sovereignty and self-determination over all Native life" (Cook-Lynn, 1997).

RESEARCH METHODS

The objective of this study is to investigate how Native Nations represent themselves in print newspapers compared to how mainstream media represent Native peoples. The paper specifically examines newspaper coverage of Boarding Schools in 2021- a year marked by Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation and the announcement and launch of the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. This study will use both deductive and inductive forms of inquiry to detect the dominant frames used to report on boarding schools.

The following section discusses the methodological components of the study, including the design, data sample, research methods, and procedural steps involved.

Research Design

This study employed both deductive and inductive forms of framing analysis that incorporated both quantitative and qualitative research. A combination of deductive and inductive methods can strengthen the diversity of audiences across different fields of study. In this case, a quantitative, deductive form of inquiry that investigates predetermined news frames, derived from existing literature, helps to connect this research project to broader trends and the “larger implications of framing theory” (Borah, 2011, p. 249). A qualitative, inductive approach, on the other hand, allows for greater flexibility and thoroughness by investigating unique frames as they emerge from the data informed by Indigenous epistemology, or ways of thinking.

Data Sample

In this analysis, I analyzed articles from the *Tribal Observer* and five mainstream print and online news outlets: *Detroit Free Press*, *the Lansing State Journal*, *Midland Daily News*, the *Morning Sun*, and *MLive*. In my research, I used news sources that have both print and online editions, apart from MLive which is an exclusively web-based media outlet. These publications

were selected in terms of their relationship to the topic of boarding schools and their close geographic proximity to the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan. All aspects of the *Tribal Observer* are facilitated on the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan's Isabella Reservation. The *Morning Sun* and *Midland Daily News* are publications that are the closest in proximity to the SCIT, in Mt. Pleasant and Midland, Michigan respectively. *Detroit Free Press* and *the Lansing State Journal* encompass urban, cultural, and political hubs of Michigan. Finally, *Mlive* was added to this analysis because it is a highly prevalent, distributed, and consumed state-wide online news source.

I selected the *Tribal Observer* because it is a publication I know deeply and is meaningful to many citizens and descendants of SCIT. It is also produced by a Native Nation that has been directly impacted by federal Indian boarding school policy; the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School is located within the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan's territory. The presence of the boarding school and its legacy has greatly impacted the entire community for generations and thus coverage is prevalent in the Tribal Newspaper. There are other Tribal newspapers produced by other Native Nations in the state of Michigan, but by selecting to highlight one nation's coverage, this thesis attempts to push back against the grouping of all Native peoples and governments together. Having a nation-specific approach can be anti-colonial as it works to center a specific Native Nation with a distinct relationship to the coverage of boarding schools and provides a snapshot of how critical it is for Native Nations individually to participate in the framing of the narratives in media.

Midland Daily News and the *Morning Sun* were selected as they are the primary newspapers in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, the town that borders the SCIT's Isabella Reservation. Mount Pleasant and the surrounding areas are predominantly non-native, white specifically, and

rural. These two papers were included in this study because they write to audiences that coexist with Saginaw Chippewa tribal members and descendants and/or are Native themselves. Since media is the primary source of how non-native people learn about Native people and the non-native and Native audiences live very near to one another, it was important to include these two newspapers.

The *Detroit Free Press* and the *Lansing State Journal* were selected for two reasons. First, they are among the two most circulated, in print and online, newspapers in Michigan. Second, they are newspapers from important cultural centers of the state. Detroit is the urban center of the state, and its readership is large and diverse. Therefore, the *Detroit Free Press* can provide insight into Native and urban relations as expressed through media coverage. Lansing is the capital of Michigan, and this newspaper commonly has an emphasis on government and policy in coverage. Boarding schools are historically the result of federal policy and received state support and funding. Therefore, this paper would likely highlight trends in policy, funding, or support that may pertain to Native peoples generally, or boarding schools more specifically. This paper is particularly relevant because there is current federal legislation calling for an investigation into boarding schools. Thus, the inclusion of the *Lansing State Journal* allows for an analysis of the relationship between the state capitol, Native citizens, and the intersectionality of issues pertaining to both.

Finally, MLive is Michigan's most visited online news source. MLive is a sister company to the MLive Media Group which operates ten local newsrooms and eight publications throughout Michigan. This is a powerful news outlet with significant influence across the entire state.

Coverage during 2021 was selected as the news from Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation about the loss of life and unmarked graves at the Kamloops school in May prompted media coverage across the United States, Canada, and varying media outlets. The news reporting on boarding schools by non-native media outlets was unprecedented. It also coincided with the announcement from Deb Haaland on the launch of a federal investigation into boarding schools. By focusing on coverage during 2021, this research project can examine how boarding schools were framed during the height of media attention and political potential on the issue.

For this research project, individual news articles were selected as the unit of analysis and were collected through site-specific searches using the sites' search engine functions. This method yielded more results than searching through a database such as LexisNexis or ProQuest. My search terms were, "Anishinabe, Ojibwe, Saginaw Chippewa, Mount Pleasant Industrial School, Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School, Indian Industrial Boarding School, Indian Boarding School, Boarding School, Deb Haaland, Wet'suwet'en, Tk'emlups te Secwépemc, Tk'emlúpsmc, First Nations, Residential School, S.2907, 2907, Truth and Healing, Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act, National Day of Remembrance." Although coverage of boarding schools was much higher in 2021 than in previous years, the number of articles was still small. So, the search terms were expanded to reflect the differences in language related to boarding schools.

Another goal for expanding the search terms was to be comprehensive. This study is concerned with how Tribal, local, and state newspapers report on boarding schools. So, it was not necessary that the article report on the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial School specifically, but that they report, even briefly, on boarding schools. Searches were generated by accessing the

internal search and research tools of each newspaper and searching each term individually. All articles generated in the search were recorded.

Once all sites had been searched with all terms, 50 articles were reviewed for duplication and relevance. In the end, 38 articles were used for this study. 19 from the *Tribal Observer*, 3 from *Midland Daily News*, 5 from the *Morning Sun*, 3 from the *Detroit Free Press*, 1 from the *Lansing State Journal*, and 7 from MLive. Their content included news reports, editorials, announcements, and photo essays. A spreadsheet was compiled manually to track the news source, author, article genre, date, and associated search terms. The articles are broken down further in the findings section.

Phase One: Quantitative Content Analysis

For this phase, I chose to use Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) deductive approach. This method was selected because it allows for systematic analysis and review of the issue and is consistent in framing analysis studies. Additionally, it puts this research into conversation with other content analysis and framing-related research. Phase one used five frames from Semetko and Valkenburg's work: attribution of responsibility, conflict, economic, human interest, and morality.

Procedure

The coding scheme developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) was applied to measure the degree to which the five news frames are present in news articles discussing boarding schools. This method has 20 questions, each measuring one of the five frames (see Appendix A). "Does the story contain any moral message?" (morality frame), "Does the story suggest solution(s) to the issue?" (attribution of responsibility frame), "Does the story reflect disagreement between parties, individuals, groups, or countries?" (conflict frame), "Is there a

mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?” (economic frame), and “Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?” (human-interest frame) are examples of the types of questions used in each category. For each article, each of the 20 questions was coded: 0 to indicate the frame was not present or 1 to indicate the frame was present. Then, the numbers in each frame were added together to reveal the degree to which a news frame was used in that specific article. An article with a score of one out of five in the human-interest frame would indicate a weak presence, and a four out of five would indicate a strong presence.

Frame Definitions

The five frames used in phase one are described by Semetko and Valkenburg below.

Conflict frame. This frame centers on “conflict and disagreement between individuals, groups, or institutions to draw the audience’s attention.” This frame also “commonly oversimplifies conflict and can lead to public cynicism and lack of trust in political and social institutions.” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95).

Human interest frame. “This frame brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95). This frame is another method for media to captivate and keep by personalizing, dramatizing, or emotionalizing news to captivate and hold their audience’s attention.

Economic consequences frame. This frame “reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95).

Morality frame. This frame uses religion and/or ethics to address the event, problem, or issue in the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions. Stories that use this frame can have

moral messages or instructions for how to behave. This is among the least common frames used in news reporting (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Responsibility frame. This frame presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to the government, an individual, or a group. This frame can shape public understanding of responsibility for causing or resolving important societal issues. This frame is used to commonly cover an issue in terms of an event, instance, or individual instead of in terms of broader historical context. As a result, this frame can cause an audience to understand societal issues as individual issues (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Phase Two: Qualitative Content Analysis

For the qualitative phase of this project, I elected to use a set of best practices described by Matthes and Kohring (2008). In contrast to the quantitative method that asks if a specific frame/topic is already present, this method looks at how specific elements, composed of issue-specific variables, are put together to frame an issue. Inductive frame analysis can often be difficult to recreate as the method is not standardized and the frames can also be highly issue-specific, making them difficult to apply future research on similar, but varying topics (Knudsen, 2017). To mitigate these methodological concerns and identify frames consistently, Matthes and Kohring (2008) developed a system of cluster analysis of frame elements and variables to identify frames. (Matthes and Kohring, 2008, pp.258-260). This system contains four functions, or elements, of news frames as defined by Entman (1993): problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. Matthes and Kohring further define each function by the following:

A problem definition can consist of an issue and relevant actors that discuss the problem.

A causal interpretation is an attribution of failure or success regarding a specific outcome.

An evaluation can be positive, negative, or neutral and can refer to different objects.

Finally, a treatment recommendation can include a call for or against a certain action. (p. 264)

Once the variables are identified, articles are read to code for which variables are present within each of the four elements to begin “clustering” groups together: or in other words, developing a pattern of association between the frame elements. The more common a specific group of framing elements (cluster) is, the stronger the frame.

Procedure

To conduct inductive frame analysis, a set of variables must be created to develop a coding scheme (Chong & Druckman, 2007b). Out of the 38 total articles that were chosen for frame analysis, four were randomly selected from the *Tribal Observer* and four from mainstream news sources to identify the variables related to each framing element as demonstrated by Matthes and Kohring (2008). First, the articles were coded for the main problem or issue and key individuals or groups involved. Then, I coded for the second element, causal interpretation, focusing on determining who or what was held accountable for the issue and who would gain from it. Thirdly, I reviewed each article to evaluate how the issues were approached, taking into consideration whether the tone was positive, negative, or neutral. Lastly, the articles were examined for any proposed solutions or recommendations to resolve the problem and who would implement those solutions.

After coding the variables, I applied a cluster analysis on all 38 articles to examine how the different elements of frames come together to form specific news frames. Cluster analysis, as a data mining technique, is valuable for comprehending the interplay between variables and is often employed to study large datasets using software and statistical algorithms (Allen, 2017a).

However, due to my relatively small sample size, I manually performed the cluster analysis by reading the articles, analyzing the co-occurrence of frame elements, and grouping them into consistent clusters. These clusters represent patterns of variables that tend to occur together and rarely with others (Knudsen, 2017). The frames highlighted by the cluster analysis were then reviewed to understand how Tribal and mainstream media are informing discourse on boarding schools.

By using these two well-known research methods in my deployment of frame analysis, I attempt to make this work accessible and informative to a breadth of students and scholars within media and Indigenous studies, but also community members who are interested and invested in Native Nations and their citizens and descendants. The findings for both deductive quantitative and inductive qualitative are described in the two respective sections below.

FINDINGS

The 38 articles used for this research were organized into a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was divided by news source and articles then recorded by the title, date of publication, genre, author, and search terms. Of the 19 articles published by the *Tribal Observer* ($n = 19$), 18 (95%) were written by journalists, editors, or SCIT community members. 1 (5%) was reprinted from the Associated Press. 7 of the 19 articles (37%) published by mainstream media sources (*Detroit Free Press* (DFP), the *Lansing State Journal* (LSJ), *Midland Daily News* (MDN), the *Morning Sun* (MS), and *MLive* (ML)) ($n = 19$), 7 were reprinted from other media sources: 2 printed from the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan press releases and 5 printed from the Associated Press.

Publishing Frequency

Before conducting any coding, a preliminary analysis of publishing frequency was conducted between the two media sources: the *Tribal Observer* (n =19) and mainstream newspapers (*Detroit Free Press* (DFP), the *Lansing State Journal* (LSJ), *Midland Daily News* (MDN), the *Morning Sun* (MS), and *MLive* (ML)) (n =19). Table 1 and Table 2 below illustrate important points about the frequency of publication.

Table 1 below provides the breakdown for the proportion of coverage per specific media source. Between January 2021 and December 2021, the *Tribal Observer* (TO) published 19 articles (n =19) related to boarding schools. Between all five media sources across Michigan (*Detroit Free Press* (DFP), the *Lansing State Journal* (LSJ), *Midland Daily News* (MDN), the *Morning Sun* (MS), and *MLive* (ML)) 19 articles (n =19) were published for the same time period. *MLive*, a web-exclusive statewide news source, provided the largest volume of articles.

Table 1

Breakdown of Articles Covering Boarding Schools by Publication, 2021

	Tribal Newspaper (n=19)	Mainstream Newspapers (n=19)				
Publication	TO	DFP	LSJ	MDN	MS	ML
Number of Articles	19 (100%)	3 (16%)	1 (5%)	3 (16%)	5 (26%)	7 (37%)

Table 2 below provides insight into the frequency of coverage throughout 2021. The *Tribal Observer's* coverage spans 7 months, while mainstream news coverage spans 6 months. Reporting in 2021 was concentrated in July for the *Tribal Observer* and split between May and June for mainstream news sources. The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan hosts an

Honoring and Remembering Ceremony every June. This could account for the high frequency of reporting in July. The Tribe has been invested in reporting on updates on the MIIBS and boarding schools more generally prior to 2021. The longer span of coverage could be the result of more sustained and long-term reporting. It is also reasonable to read the height of coverage in mainstream media in May and June as coinciding with media reporting on residential schools in Canada.

Table 2

Frequency of Articles Reporting on Boarding Schools, 2021

Publication	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<i>The Tribal Observer</i>	3	1	0	1	3	2	7	0	0	0	2	0
Mainstream News (combined)	0	0	0	0	5	5	3	1	1	4	0	0

Quantitative Content Analysis

Human interest, morality, and attribution of responsibility were the most visible frames in articles from the *Tribal Observer*. Each frame, respectively, had at least one variable present in the article: 100% (n =19), 84.2% (n =16), and 78.9% (n =15). The least visible frame was conflict which was only present in 10.5% (n =2) of the articles. The more variables, or items, present in a specific frame the stronger that frame is in the article. See Table 3 below to view the frequency and strengths of generic frames used in the *Tribal Observer*. Table 3 also indicates that a significant number of articles featured at least three variables present for both attribution of responsibility and human interest frames. This suggests that these frames are not only the most common but also the most strongly expressed within the *Tribal Observer*'s coverage of boarding

schools. Conflict, economic, and morality frames are not as present in comparison and weakly expressed.

Table 3
Generic News Frames: The Tribal Observer

Use/No Use	Five News Frames				
	Responsibility	Conflict	Economic	Human Interest	Morality
Use Breakdown					
One Item	3 (15.8%)	1 (5.3%)	3 (15.8%)	2 (10.5%)	8 (42.1%)
Two Items	5 (26.3%)	1 (5.3%)	3 (15.8%)	10 (52.6%)	6 (31.6%)
Three Items	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.3%)	3 (15.8%)	2 (10.5%)
Four Items	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	—	3 (15.8%)	—
Five Items	3 (15.8%)	—	—	1 (5.3%)	—
Total Use	15 (78.9%)	2 (10.5%)	7 (36.8%)	19 (100%)	16 (84.2%)
Total No Use	4 (21.1%)	17 (89.5%)	12 (63.2%)	0 (0%)	2 (10.5%)
Total	19 (100%)	19 (100%)	19 (100%)	19 (100%)	19 (100%)

Table adapted from An and Gower (2009) and Francoeur (2018). Use breakdown indicates the number of content analysis variables (see Appendix A) positively identified.

Human interest, attribution of responsibility, and conflict were the most visible frames in articles from mainstream news sources. Each frame, respectively, had at least one variable present in the article: 89.5% (n =17), 84.2% (n =16), and 52.6% (n =10). Economic and morality frames were equally least visible. Each frame was only found in 26.3% of articles (n =5). See Table 4 below to view the frequency and strengths of generic frames used in articles published by mainstream news sources (*Detroit Free Press*, the *Lansing State Journal*, *Midland Daily News*, the *Morning Sun*, and *MLive*).

Table 4
Generic News Frames: Mainstream News Sources

Use/No Use	Five News Frames				
	Responsibility	Conflict	Economic	Human Interest	Morality
Use					
Breakdown					
One Item	1 (5.3%)	7 (36.8%)	1 (5.3%)	2 (10.5%)	4 (21.1%)
Two Items	4 (21%)	2 (10.5%)	3 (15.8%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)
Three Items	5 (26.3%)	1 (5.3%)	1 (5.3%)	8 (42.1%)	1 (5.3%)
Four Items	5 (26.3%)	0 (0%)	—	3 (15.8%)	—
Five Items	1 (5.3%)	—	—	2 (10.5%)	—
Total Use	16 (84.2%)	10 (52.6%)	5 (26.3%)	17 (89.5%)	5 (26.3%)
Total No Use	3 (15.8%)	9 (47.4%)	14 (73.7%)	2 (10.5%)	14 (73.7%)
Total	19 (100%)	19 (100%)	19 (100%)	19 (100%)	19 (100%)

Table adapted from An and Gower (2009) and Francoeur (2018). Use breakdown indicates the number of content analysis variables (see Appendix A) positively identified.

The attribution of responsibility frame was one of the most visible frames in both news categories. For mainstream news sources (see Appendix A); “Does the story suggest that some level of government is responsible for the issue?” is present in 84.2% (n =16) of the articles and “Does the story suggest solution(s) to the issue?” is apparent in 73.7% (n =14) of articles. For the *Tribal Observer*, however, government responsibility for the issue is only attributed to 31.6% (n =6) of articles. 78.9% (n=15) of articles in the *Tribal Observer* have the solutions variable present. The conflict frame is more present in mainstream media sources (52.6%, n =10) than in the *Tribal Observer* (10.5%, n =2). The most prominent difference element was, “Does the story

refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?"; which was present in 36.8% (n =7) of mainstream articles and 5.3% (n =1) of *Tribal Observer* articles. A notable difference is also found within the human interest frame and "Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?" element. The *Tribal Observer* had visual images present in 89.5% (N =17) of articles and mainstream sources only had images present in 42.1% (n =8). Finally, the morality frame was far more visible in the tribal publication than it was in the mainstream sources. Specifically, the element "Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?" is in 78.9% (n =15) of *Tribal Observer* articles and 21.1% (n =4) of mainstream articles. For a breakdown of frame use by media source, refer to Appendix B.

Qualitative Content Analysis

To conduct the inductive phase of this thesis, I established variables within Entman's (1993) different functions of framing: problem definition, causal attribution, moral judgment, and treatment. These variables were listed under each function and then consolidated to find concrete news frames within the elements as Matthes and Kohring (2008) have suggested. Coding variables are found in Table 5 below.

Once the coding variables were selected, I conducted a manual analysis of 30 articles to determine which elements tended to group across texts. For each news article, variables were coded as either being present or not, with configurations that seldom occurred being excluded from the findings. As a result, two cohesive frames were identified; one from mainstream media and one from the *Tribal Observer*. A deeper look at each frame, detailed below, reveals some of the issue-specific patterns that emerged from mainstream and Tribal news sources.

Table 5

Final Coding Variables for the Inductive Content Analysis

Frame Element	Problem definition: <i>Define the problem, determine what a causal agent is doing</i>	Causal attribution: <i>Diagnose the cause of the problem, identify the forces creating the problem</i>	Moral judgements: <i>Evaluate causal agents and their effects</i>	Treatment recommendations: <i>Determine which activities can solve the problem, offer and justify treatments for the problems</i>
Coding	Topic: Legacy of Boarding Schools Topic: Solutions Topic: Protest Topic: Cultural Loss Topic: Collaboration Topic: Preservation Actor: Native Individuals Actor: Native Nations Actor: Federal/Religious Organizations Actor: The Public Actor: Religious Organizations	Responsible: Federal/Religious Organizations Responsible: Native Nations/SCIT Responsible: Community Responsible: Individuals Benefit: Native Nations Benefit: Community Benefit: Land Benefit: Individuals	Benefits: Political Benefits: Land Benefits: Social Risk: Political	Federal Investigation Education Preservation Collaboration Honoring/Remembering

Mainstream News Media: The “Federal Fix” Frame

This set of variables primarily focuses on the U.S. federal government as a primary actor capable of resolving the legacy of boarding schools, a federal investigation as a primary solution, cultural loss and the explicit detailing of Indigenous people’s individual struggles with trauma, and the healing of Indigenous people.

This frame calls on the United States government to conduct an investigative report on federal Indian boarding schools and their impacts on Native peoples. The central actor in this frame was the U.S. government, suggesting that the federal government is the party most capable

of resolving the impacts and issues related to boarding schools. While it is mentioned in some articles that the report will seek to collaborate with Native Nations, it is not emphasized or explained in any type of detail. Indigenous people, boarding schools, and Native Nations are overwhelmingly homogenized in this frame as “Native Americans” without distinction in boarding school experience, history of schools, the policies that created them, or the Native governments in care of the wellbeing of the people and sites impacted by the schools.

These stories emphasized the loss of Indigenous life, physically and culturally, and focused on the intergenerational trauma passed down as a result. For example, an article would detail physical violence (e.g., beatings, forced labor), sexual violence, and cultural violence present in boarding schools. This frame then frequently details the individual trauma now experienced by survivors of boarding schools. For example, grandparents who were heavy-handed and cold, lack of culture in the home/community, drug and alcohol abuse, and general social and economic dysfunction. This frame invites the reader to see Indigenous people as having moral and social failures with the government to blame.

The Tribal Observer: The “Interconnected” Frame

This frame is essentially the antonym of the federal fix frame. It reflects the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe as competent and capable of caring for survivors, descendants of survivors, and the land that MIIBS was built. Rather than the federal government being the sole entity responsible for addressing the impacts of boarding schools, this frame emphasizes the need for inter-agency collaboration. For example, the collaboration of SCIT with the National Park Service to obtain funding to build a fence, First Lady Jill Biden visiting the Ziibiwing Center to discuss the positive impacts programming is having on both Native and non-Native community

members, and the MIIBS committee working with professionals in the field of architecture and professors in archeology at CMU.

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Architect reaches out to a SCIT committee to offer pro bono assistance on former boarding school site grounds

NATALIE SHATTUCK
Editor

An architect currently residing in Berlin recently reached out to committee members of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School to offer architectural assistance pro bono.

The architect, Christian Nakarado, submitted an email to Shannon Martin, director of the Ziibwing Center, William Johnson, curator for the Ziibwing Center, Marcella Hadden, tribal historic preservation officer, and Dr. Sarah Surface-Evans, associate professor of anthropology at Central Michigan University, who has studied the MIIBS grounds.

Hadden invited Nakarado to join a MIIBS Committee meeting held virtually via Lifesize.

The Dec. 16 morning meeting was an opportunity for the MIIBS Committee members to introduce themselves and Nakarado to share his work experience and discuss his offer.

A graduate from Yale University, Nakarado has a great list of work experience in locations throughout the U.S. including in Los Angeles and New York and also internationally.

Nakarado is a citizen of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and his great-grandfather was a survivor of the Holy Childhood School in Harbor Springs, Mich.

"There isn't yet a similar project for that school that I know of, but I would very much like to help with your efforts if needed," Nakarado said in his email to the four MIIBS Committee members. "I'm a licensed architect and member of the AIA and AICAE (American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers), and I run a small architectural practice called Slow Built Studio, while also working as a lecturer and deputy course director in architecture at Birmingham City University."

Nakarado's email continued, "I'm not sure what your needs might be, but I have significant experience in creating 2D and 3D representation of lands, buildings, and spaces from historic documents as well as site visits, photographs and surveys. I would be very happy to do this or something similar for your project."

Shannon Martin, director of the Ziibwing Center, replied to Nakarado's Dec. 9 correspondence, "What a hopeful email to wake up to this morning."

"This project is a labor of love for many of us and we hope one day to transform the site physically," Martin said in an email response to Nakarado. "Your email could not be more timely. We are in the phase of the project that will soon need conceptual and elevation drawings for one to two of the buildings that are the most viable for rehabilitation."

The MIIBS Committee introduced possible rehabilitation options on the site and discussed the MIIBS survey results, taken by SCIT members and local community.

Frank Cloutier, public relations director, suggested Nakarado learn more about the history of the MIIBS grounds and views photographs of the buildings.

Before Nakarado would begin any pro bono work, the potential project needs to be documented and accepted through the SCIT Legal Department and approved by Tribal Council.

Nakarado said he will be in touch with Hadden and the MIIBS Committee.

Figure 3.1
"Interconnected" Frame example from January 2021. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

Respecting the site of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School

SCIT PUBLIC RELATIONS

MOUNT PLEASANT, Mich. – The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan's Tribal Historic Preservation Office was awarded a tribal heritage grant from the National Park Service (2019-2020) to install a protective fence around two buildings at the site of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School, a historic district property listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The MIIBS was part of the Federal Indian boarding school system, which removed

American Indian children from their families and culture as part of a forced education and assimilation initiative that persisted for nearly a century.

The SCIT is in the planning stages of rehabilitating and repossessing the site for the healing of our people.

"It is with heavy hearts that we share with you that our efforts to protect the buildings continue to be compromised. Vandals continue to cut sections of the fence to access the buildings. Once again we face the cost of repairs and deal with the very painful reality that people are desecrating the site," said Tribal Historic

Preservation Officer Marcella Hadden. "Based on postings on social media, some think it is 'interesting' or 'fun.' Some think they are 'ghost hunting' on the site of an 'Ancient Indian Burial Ground.' These hurtful actions have prompted the Tribe to call on university, civic, and public communities to support and assist tribal efforts to stop the unlawful access to this important historic site."

Any unauthorized access (including walking the grounds) may be subject to civil and criminal penalty. When Tribal Police issue citations, trespassers have to answer to federal court in Bay City because the buildings are on federal property.

By preserving and protecting this important cultural and historical resource, we take a step toward restoring trust with the non-Native community and the Federal Government.

The Ziibwing Center of Anishinaabe Culture & Lifeways, the Tribe's museum and cultural center, has a permanent exhibition about the MIIBS and co-hosts "Honoring, Healing & Remembering," a yearly celebration held each year on June 6 which celebrates the closing of the school. The event also honors children and families who suffered from the effects of the boarding school era and creates opportunities for healing the Tribal community.

HHR this year will be virtual planned for Friday, June 4, 2021.

If you have information or knowledge of anyone trespassing please contact the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Police at (989) 775-4700 or the anonymous tip hot line at (989) 775-4775.

PATHWAY PROGRAM
For Juniors & Seniors

Explore career options, gain experience, and enhance your educational journey through the pathway program.

Apply for SCTC Pathway!

High school seniors that finish the program and register for at least 3 credits for the next semester at Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College will receive a \$300.00 incentive.

SCTC Pathway Program For Juniors & Seniors
Program to be offered virtually and in person

- From Aug. 24, 2021 - July 26, 2022
- Every 4th Tuesday, from 3:30 - 5 p.m.
- Two 40-minute sessions, each session is different, with a 10-minute break between sessions
- Limited to 15 students
- Student/parent information night: Aug. 10, 2021 from 6-7 p.m.

Registration open from: May 10 - July 2, 2021

Requirements:

- Underrepresented,
- Junior or Senior
- first-generation or low-income
- Must attend and participate in all sessions
- Currently enrolled in school

For more information, please contact:
Kathleen J. Hart | 989.317.4827 | khart@sagchip.edu

Figure 3.2
"Interconnected" Frame example from June 2021. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

SCA 5th graders receive Anishinaabe names and clans

The Saginaw Chippewa Academy would like to congratulate our 5th graders (not all pictured) on receiving their Anishinaabe names and clans on Tuesday, May 25.

"Chimigwetch to the family members that came to support their students in strengthening their identity and connection. It was a beautiful day," said Tribal Education Director Melissa Isaac.

"Migwetch to the Anishinaabe Bimadziwin teachers and Traditional Healer Joe Syrette for their traditional knowledge and empowering our young people to be proud and determined Anishinaabek," Isaac said.



TRIBAL OBSERVER

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CMU and SCTC field school conduct research at Stonehouse for connection to boarding school

NATALIE SHATTUCK
Editor

As part of the program for this year's virtual Honoring, Healing and Remembering event to honor the anniversary of the closing of the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School on June 4, Dr. Sarah Surface-Evans of Central Michigan University's Archeological Field School shared findings on the Asinii Waa'kaa'igan (Pego-Pelcher Stonehouse) and its connection to the boarding school.

The Stonehouse was built in the 1890s and given to Lenora Pelcher to live in when her husband James Pego died at a young age,



Archeological efforts begin at the Asinii Waa'kaa'igan (Stonehouse), to research its connection to the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School.

according to Surface-Evans' research after speaking with Faith Carmona-Pego and the Pego-Pelcher family.

"The Pego-Pelcher farmstead began when Mariah Pelcher was allotted 40 acres in November 1885," Surface-Evans said. "She later sold two acres to the Ann Arbor Railroad which runs along the eastern side of property. Mariah and her husband, Moses, and their children made a home there, and their descendants lived there the last 136 years."

The Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School,

or MIIBS, opened just as the Pelchers started their family.

"Their children were forced to attend the boarding school," Surface-Evans said. "Their son (Ulysses Pelcher) tragically died at the school at age 7 (in 1906). (Daughter) Lenora and James' son Henry died at the school at age 5 (in 1927)."

The Pego-Pelcher family reported that they assisted children running away from the boarding school. These children used their barn as a safe haven, briefly stopping there before catching the train to return home.



A joint field school of Central Michigan University archeology and Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College students working on the site pose for a photo.

"The Pego-Pelcher family actively recruited MIIBS boys from the outing program in the summer months, having them work their farm in order to protect them from abuse elsewhere with white families," Surface-Evans said.

Because of this significant history, a grant from the National Park Service was obtained to conduct research on the site and to learn more about its connections to MIIBS. Collaborating for this research includes: the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, the

Ziibiwing Center, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College and Central Michigan University.

The grant covers three different aspects of research: professional survey of the land, architectural evaluation of the homestead, and the archeological evaluation of the farm.

"To gather the material remains that tell a story of the Pego-Pelcher family and the connection to MIIBS, we are developing an approach that helps to identify and document

Stone House | 15

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Figure 3.3 "Interconnected" Frame example from July 2021. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

This frame also positions citizens, descendants, and community members as active agents in their own healing and that of the well-being of the community. This frame is action-oriented; people are invited to participate in events and contribute to conversations. Unlike the federal fix frame, this frame avoids traumatic details of boarding schools; violence is alluded to more generally than descriptively. This frame also considers how to respect the MIIBS site and land, something that the federal fix frame negates completely.

MIIBS
Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School
Virtual Strategic Planning Session
Save the Date!
Tuesday, June 15 & Wednesday, June 16
• **Facilitator: Jason George**
Training & Development Manager,
Human Resources Department
For more information, please contact:
Marcella Hadden, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
• **Email:** MIHadden@sagchip.org • **Phone:** 989.775.4751

VIRTUAL Honoring, Healing & Remembering
Join us virtually on the 87th anniversary of the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School closing. We recognize the suffering, strength and resilience of the children through a day of memoriam and fellowship.
Save the date!
Friday, June 4, 2021
► Student Roll Call
► Guest Speakers
For more information:
• **Marcella Hadden**
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- **Email:** MIHadden@sagchip.org
- **Phone:** 989.775.4751
• **Or email:** miibs@sagchip.org

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan
THPO
ZIBIWING CENTER
of Anishinabe Culture & Language
CMU
CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Figure 4.1 Example of agency in May 2021. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

Sign created for sacred fire wood at campground

MARCELLA HADDEN
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Eric Phipps (photographed left in the photo to the right), of the Soaring Eagle Carpenter Shop, designed a Sacred Fire Wood sign as requested by the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Committee (MIIBS). Phipps is pictured by the sign on May 25, 2021 with Steven Shaydik (right), who assisted in hanging it, at the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Campground (also known as The Hill or powwow grounds).

The wood was cut from the MIIBS property earlier this year. Tribal Council approved to have the trees cut as they were dead and dangerous. The trees are considered “witness trees” because they have witnessed a lot of what happened on the MIIBS property throughout the years.

The SCIT Fire Department Wild Land Crew will be cutting the wood into smaller pieces. The wood can now be used for sacred fires (especially when a loved one passes) and the community can help themselves to it. Traditionally, fires are used to help a loved one on their journey to the spirit world and burns for four days. This wood can now be used in a good and respectful manner and help carry prayers to the Creator.

If you would like to donate wood for fires, please do so. We are hoping to keep this as a community function.

Sacred Fire Wood

Eric Phipps (left) and Steven Shaydik (right) pose with the newly-created Sacred Fire Wood sign.

For more information or questions, please contact Marcella Hadden, tribal historic preservation officer for the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. MLHadden@sagchip.org or 989-775-4751. Miingwetch.

3 Days of Michigan Indian Family Olympics

Figure 4.2 Example of agency in July 2021. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

'Orange Shirt Day' promotes awareness of the Native American boarding schools



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck

Community members gather for a photo on Sept. 30 during "Orange Shirt Day," a day of remembrance to educate and promote awareness of the Native American boarding schools. The day also recognizes the impact these schools had on the Native American community, an impact that continues today. The day honors and remembers Indigenous people and their children affected by boarding schools in the U.S. and Canada.

The group photo was taken outside of the Black Elk building after 10 a.m.

Figure 4.3 Example of agency in November 2021. Used with permission of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council and Public Relations Department.

DISCUSSION

The data collected for this thesis suggests that Tribal journalism and mainstream journalism in the state of Michigan are *creating* vastly different worlds with the *stories* they tell about American Indian boarding schools. These differences were seen in the frequency of articles, the generic frame and elements most visible and invisible, and the organic frames that emerged through cluster analysis. To facilitate the discussion section, I invoke Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor's (2000, 2008, 2009) use of *Native* and *indian* to denote the framing differences used in the *Tribal Observer* and mainstream media in the state of Michigan. Vizenor uses the dichotomy of *indian* (historical absence and the dominance of cultural simulations) and *Native* (presence over absence, nihility, and victimry) to illustrate the dual worlds that Indigenous peoples are required to exist in and between. This section is devoted to illuminating

the ways in which framing, as reflected in data, in mainstream journalism creates an *indian* world and Tribal journalism creates a *Native* world.

The data revealed that there was a glaring lack of coverage in the mainstream media compared to the *Tribal Observer*; both news sources had a total of 19 articles that could be used for frame analysis. In other words, *one* Tribal newspaper wrote 19 articles and *five* news sources in the state of Michigan wrote 19 combined *about*, sometimes not even *on* as the primary focus, American Indian boarding schools. The geography of coverage is also telling. Truly surprisingly, the *Lansing State Journal* only wrote *one* article. While this one article represents 5% of the sample, it represents a much, much smaller percentage of the total articles written in 2021. Lansing is the state capital and legislative center of Michigan; LSJ is produced and consumed in the political heart of the state. The absence is striking considering the federal inquiry into boarding schools and ongoing legislative advocacy of the different variations of the *Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policy in the United States* bill in the House of Representatives (H.R.8420 in 2020) and Senate (S.2907 in 2021-2022, S.1723 in 2023). LSJ also encompasses Michigan State University and its Law School, both of which happen to have a large and robust Native Studies program, prominent Indigenous scholars who frequently write and advocate for Native issues and voices, and Native students. With such a large Indigenous presence and availability of resources and knowledge, it is alarming that LSJ reported so little on an issue critical to Native communities, especially SCIT which is less than 70 miles away. It is also important to highlight the lack of coverage from the Morning Sun and the Midland Daily News given the proximity to SCIT. The coverage area for MS includes that of the physical site of the MIIBS and for MDN is the nearest urban center, only 25 miles away. This extremely low rate

of frequency, especially in the context of the media sources researched, demonstrates the ways in which media, and news specifically, continues to “narrate extinction” (O’Brien, 2010, p. xv).

The federal fix frame creates an *indian* world in two significant ways. First, this frame emphasizes the federal government’s sole ability to investigate and resolve issues associated with the history and development of American Indian boarding schools. By focusing on the federal government as the sole institution responsible, it absolves other institutions and other individuals of responsibility. This frame also firmly places the problem (boarding schools) and the cause (the federal government) in the past; the government is not investigating how the logic of the policy continues today, but rather “a comprehensive review of the troubled legacy of federal boarding school policies” (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2021). This allows the cause to be tied to a moment in the past, rather than a part of an ongoing historical structure. By situating the cause of boarding schools firmly in the past, current governments, citizens, and institutions are absolved from accountability since that was “then” and this is “now”. Tuck and Yang (2012) refer to these positions as “settler moves to innocence” which they define as “strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all” (p. 10).

Secondly, the federal fix frame exposes how mainstream news media works to reinforce the notion that Indians are still a problem to be solved. Victimry was used as one of the central problems associated with the legacy of boarding schools. Articles focused on personal, or communal, traumatic events which have then led to intergenerational trauma. This reinforces the stereotype that Native people are morally and socially inept and incapable of modernizing like the rest of society and have no agency to impact their circumstances. Trauma, as framed in the mainstream news sources of this study, is also closely associated with the loss of culture and

thereby the further elimination of the Native. Scholars like Jean O'Brien, Patrick Wolfe, and Robert Berkhofer have theorized that non-native claims to Native land require the physical and ideological erasure of Native people; one method includes the myth of the "authentic" and "inauthentic" *indian*. In this sense, this frame continues the nation-building project by communicating the elimination of the native as expressed through cultural loss.

The interconnected frame creates a *Native* world by making a place and space for Indigenous presence. Natives, including the SCIT government, citizens, descendants, and community members are all capable of resolving the legacy of boarding schools. The frame illustrates that the Tribe is not dependent upon the federal government to resolve critical issues related to boarding schools. By including stories about collaboration with the National Park Service, the executive branch of the federal government, Ziibiwing Center, Central Michigan University, and individuals, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe is made to be capable of determining what the issue is and how to resolve it. Presence is also conjured in the frame by what the issues with boarding schools are defined as. Unlike the federal fix frame, this frame does not detail individual trauma and loss of culture as primary points of concern with the boarding schools. Additionally, this frame is largely concerned with caring for the site of the MIIBS, creating educational material, and providing opportunities for present day citizens and descendants to be in relationship with relatives who have been impacted by this practice. Ultimately, this frame does not assume a predetermined future for Native people, but a future open to possibilities and disrupting the *indian* world. If not in the *Tribal Observer*, then where else would young Anishinabek understand themselves in the present and as a citizen of a nation capable of caring for them - past, present, and future?

FUTURE RESEARCH

One of the most rewarding and interesting aspects of this research project was considering the numerous directions I hope to see this work grow in the future. Only one Tribal newspaper, for one year, in one state was studied and compared to only 5 mainstream news outlets. I believe one of the first ways this research can grow is to have Tribal newspapers studied more specifically in their historical, cultural, and geographical contexts. This research was also limited to newspapers (print and online). This thesis did not consider other sources of Tribally produced media and content. This study also solely focused on the production of media, not media effects or reception.

Future research could focus on media effects on readership, what impressions do people have when they read about a topic (like boarding schools) in a Tribal newspaper and a mainstream news source? Also, what do readers learn about the issue? What is visible/invisible to them? Additionally, how does mainstream media's coverage of boarding schools impact policy, if at all? This study could also be replicated for a longer period, or specifically study coverage of the Truth and Healing Commission as this has yet to come to full fruition.⁸

I believe another comparative study, perhaps even with the same articles, deploying critical discourse analysis to investigate choices about the representation of actors and events, naming and wording, and choices about the representation of knowledge status (Johnstone 2017) would yield key elements for how media is used in relationship to the structure of power. There is also room for different quantitative research for Tribal journalism. For example, measuring Native Nations who have Tribal newspapers and evaluating if there is an impact on health,

⁸ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and residential schools in media within the Canadian context has been heavily studied with influential findings.

education, employment, or political participation. Such studies can facilitate a better understanding of the evolving role that Tribal journalism plays in Native communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Research indicates when given different types of information about Native Americans, non-native individuals who tend to be resistant to Native causes may become much more receptive to supporting a variety of issues (Fryberg, 2018). Media plays a critical role in facilitating relationships between Native and non-Native people. It also plays a critical role in the lived reality of Native people as media impacts people's perceptions that influence their beliefs, actions, and voting patterns. All of which have tangible impacts (i.e., supreme court rulings, claims to land, and the political recognition of treaties). With this in mind, and on the off chance that someone from mainstream media is reading this thesis, I would like to promote a few recommendations and best practices:

- Increase the number of Indigenous journalists working in mainstream news sources.
- Read *Decolonizing Journalism: A Guide to Reporting in Indigenous Communities* by Duncan McCue (Anishinaabe). This is an accessible guide for new and seasoned journalists to build their capacity to effectively report on/with/from issues impacting Indigenous communities.
- Listen to Connie Walker's (Cree) *Stolen: Surviving St. Michael's (Season 2)* as a model for how to report on sensitive and emotional topics in a way that is receptive to and of Native people.
- Report on topics impacting Native Communities to a large non-Native audience more specifically, do not just reprint from the Associated Press.
- Increase the number of Tribal and Indigenous publications.
- Get training to unpack internal implicit bias to be better equipped to engage with Native people and topics.

CONCLUSION

“Working Together for Our Future” has been at the top of the *Tribal Observer* since at least 1984. This quote weaves together important components of this project: Tribal journalism

and Indigenous futurity. For better or worse, Native Nations, their citizens, and descendants remain in relationship with settlers and the discourses and narratives they have created about Native people. This is precisely why this work necessitates a comparative analysis. This thesis, through a comparative frame analysis conducted through an Indigenous critical lens and Anishinabe intellectual thought, has demonstrated that mainstream media and news sources continue to situate Native people as *indian*, “other”, deficit, and eliminated. This thesis has also articulated how Tribal journalism is one strategy that Native Nations can elect to use to refute these narratives of the settler-colonial nation-state of the United States by creating room for *Native* narratives and futures.

Using mixed methods, this study conducted a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the framing of Boarding schools in articles from the *Tribal Observer* and five mainstream Michigan news sources (*Detroit Free Press*, the *Lansing State Journal*, *Midland Daily News*, the *Morning Sun*) in 2021. The results indicate there are differences in the frequency of publication, visible/invisible generic frames and elements, and two distinct organic frames (the “federal fix” frame and the “interconnected” frame) that emerged from the data.

In conclusion, this thesis has attempted to broaden the intellectual consideration of Tribal journalism by asking, “Is that all there is?” My relationship with the *Tribal Observer* and Anishinabe storytelling inspired me to design this study to take seriously the power of stories and fuse it with already existing scholarship on Tribal journalism. As political anthropologist Audra Simpon (2014) has written, “Concepts have teeth, and teeth that bite through time” (p. 100). This work has demonstrated that these teeth can exist in both mainstream and Tribal journalism. This work asserts that the nation-building project of the United States remains incomplete, because

we, Indigenous peoples, are still here, know who we are, and continue to be in relation with the land and the present.

I hope this work inspires others to work with Native Nations and Native people on the media they produce in culturally and geographically specific contexts. I also hope it serves as one method of integrating Native intellectual thought in academia in ways that are meaningful for our communities.

APPENDIX A

Questions for Identifying Generic News Frames (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000)

Attribution of responsibility

Does the story suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate the problem?

Does the story suggest that some level of the government is responsible for the issue/problem?

Does the story suggest solution(s) to the problem/issue?

Does the story suggest that an ind. (or group of people in society) is resp. for the issue-problem?

Does the story suggest the problem requires urgent action?

Human interest frame

Does the story provide a human example or “human face” on the issue?

Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?

Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?

Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?

Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion?

Conflict frame

Does the story reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-countries?

Does one party-individual-group-country reproach another?

Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?

Does the story refer to winners and losers?

Morality frame

Does the story contain any moral message?

Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?

Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?

Economic frame

Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?

Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?

Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?

APPENDIX B

Breakdown of Frame use by Media Source

Framing Questions	Number and percentage of articles coded yes	
	Mainstream (n = 19)	The <i>Tribal Observer</i> (n = 19)
Attribution of responsibility frame		
Does the story suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate the problem?	11 (57.9%)	9 (47.4%)
Does the story suggest that some level of the government is responsible for the issue/problem?	16 (84.2%)	6 (31.6%)
Does the story suggest solution(s) to the problem/issue?	14 (73.7%)	15 (78.9%)
Does the story suggest that an ind. (or group of people in society) is resp. for the issue-problem?	5 (26.3%)	7 (36.8%)
Does the story suggest the problem requires urgent action?	2 (10.5%)	5 (26.3%)
Human interest frame		
Does the story provide a human example or “human face” on the issue?	17 (89.5%)	15 (78.9%)
Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?	15 (78.9%)	9 (47.4%)
Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?	7 (36.8%)	4 (21.1%)
Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?	6 (31.6%)	3 (15.8%)
Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion?	8 (42.1%)	17 (89.5%)
Conflict frame		
Does the story reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-countries?	6 (31.6%)	2 (10.5%)
Does one party-individual-group-country reproach another?	1 (5.3%)	0 (0%)
Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?	7 (36.8%)	1 (5.3%)
Does the story refer to winners and losers?	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Morality frame		
Does the story contain any moral message?	1 (5.3%)	9 (47.4%)
Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?	1 (5.3%)	2 (10.5%)
Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?	4 (21.1%)	15 (78.9%)
Economic frame		
Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?	4 (21.1%)	5 (26.3%)
Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?	5 (26.3%)	6 (31.6%)
Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?	1 (5.3%)	1 (5.3%)

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