

A Difficult Conversation:  
The News Media and the Story of the First Peoples of Canada

by

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## Abstract

The news media have long contributed to the oppression of indigenous peoples in Canada; when journalists did report on indigenous peoples, they were stereotyped as helpless victims and threats to national identity. The result has been a distorted version of history championing settlers' pioneering legacy. In 2007-2008, the federal government introduced reconciliation policies. After conducting case studies of the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC, this thesis finds that the watershed moment when coverage began reflecting the nuances of the indigenous story came in 2014-2015.

Analyzing the case studies through a theoretical framework that considers the principles that guide journalists, the culture of the news media, and agenda-setting offers insight into what changed. This thesis concludes more information, institutional legitimacy, indigenous activism, indigenous journalists, and a digital vista have all influenced the continuity and the evolution in the way the indigenous story is told by the news media in Canada.

## Acknowledgements

My thesis supervisor, Susan Harada, has informed me that she is not a fan of lists that begin with the word firstly. Here, I hope she forgives me because firstly, I would like to thank her. I am so grateful to her for guidance and support in completing this research on how the indigenous story has been reported in Canada, an issue that I have come to care deeply about.

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Sarah Littisha Jansen spent hours helping me conceptualize and then reconceptualize my methodology. Once I had drafted my chapters, Sherry Lawson read through them all, looking for ways I could improve. Their counsel contributed immensely to the final product.

My parents, Linda and Harry Bell, have always told me they are proud that I am their daughter. I want them to know that their tenacity inspires me every single day and when I struggled with this thesis, I tried to emulate their strength. They raised me with the compassion to believe that the issues explored in this thesis are important. I am proud that they are my parents.

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## Introduction

The media play a seminal role in providing national publics with the facts and opinions to shape their understanding of their identities. According to communications scholar David Copeland in *The Media's Role in Defining the Nation*, the media can “effect change in government, in society, in economics, in practically everything.”<sup>1</sup> This thesis sets out to explore that supposition with respect to the story of indigenous peoples in Canada.<sup>2</sup> The media’s influence over the indigenous story is not lost on officials from Canadian society’s other central institutions. Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin, for one, emphasized the quintessential contribution of the media in establishing Canada’s once-proud pioneering legacy: “ ‘... the media was used to shape a certain perception of indigenous people and it was pretty effective and sometimes in very negative ways.’ ”<sup>3</sup> However, McLachlin questioned how the media should proceed given that the longstanding colonial narrative is eroding: “ ‘... there’s another way of looking at that — how do you use the media to get out the reality?’ ”<sup>4</sup>

In this thesis, I take a cultural studies approach that combines the non-critical liberal-pluralist and critical political economy of news approaches to examining how journalists make decisions about reporting on indigenous issues in Canada. This is particularly salient as the federal government has admitted that indigenous peoples have

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<sup>1</sup> David A. Copeland, *The Media's Role in Defining the Nation: The Active Voice*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2010), vii.

<sup>2</sup> Recognizing a range of terminology to refer to the descendants of those who lived within the bounds of what is now Canada prior to European settlement, this thesis’s preferred lexicon is indigenous peoples. As an umbrella term, it encompasses First Nations, Métis, and Inuit populations. Indigenous peoples is the official terminology used internationally, and has recently been adopted by the government of Canada and its bureaucracies.

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Press. “Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin says Media Could End Aboriginal Stereotypes.” *Huffington Post*, October 16, 2015, accessed October 17, 2015, [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/10/16/chief-justice-suggests-using-electronic-media-to-help-end-aboriginal-stereotypes\\_n\\_8314510.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/10/16/chief-justice-suggests-using-electronic-media-to-help-end-aboriginal-stereotypes_n_8314510.html).

<sup>4</sup> Canadian Press. “Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin says Media Could End Aboriginal Stereotypes.”

been subject to policy-driven subjugation and has committed to reconciling past wrongdoings. My research is inductive with both quantitative and qualitative components. Considering news as cultural product, my focus is on how Canada's leading major mainstream national media outlets have covered and are determining how to cover indigenous issues in a contemporary context. Given the tremendous power the mainstream media have when it comes to the way everyone living in Canada understands the history, a greater understanding of how journalists make decisions about what to report is important.

This thesis's central question asks: what factors influenced the continuity and evolution of the way journalists have covered the indigenous story in Canada? Related to the central question are contextual secondary questions around how the media have told the indigenous story in Canada. Following a review of literature to shed light on the contextual secondary questions, there are three case studies that include content analyses and as well as interviews with managers, editors, and reporters, from: the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). This thesis then assesses the case studies' findings, incorporating additional interviews with managers, editors, and reporters who transitioned from mainstream media to the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN), the sole indigenous national media outlet, providing further insight on how the indigenous story has been told.

### **Thesis Structure**

Chapter One is the first part of a two-part multidisciplinary literature review. It explores dominant themes in journalism and communication scholarship, looking at both the philosophical and practical nature of how journalists pursue and present stories as

well as how they shape public discourse. The objective is to develop a theoretical framework through which the indigenous story in Canada can be interpreted.

Chapter Two comprises the second part of the literature review. It relies on the theoretical framework introduced in the first part of the literature review to interpret the broad findings of secondary sources that have studied how journalistic coverage of the indigenous peoples has contributed to the social construction of reality in Canada. This chapter includes three sections consistent with major turning points of colonization, redress, and reconciliation. The objective is to examine the history of the indigenous story in Canada vis-à-vis the theoretical framework to understand trends in the continuity and evolution.

Chapter Three builds on the literature review by describing the methodology used to conduct case study research, which seeks to find answers to the central question. It explains the logic behind taking a case studies approach and the criteria by which the cases were chosen. It also provides a broad overview of the process for the content analyses, including a thorough method of determining quality coverage using communication scholar Maxwell McCombs's definition of effective mass communication as a guide. While the media outlets in the case studies have historically produced different types of coverage for print or broadcast, like most media outlets, they are now all now placing greater emphasis on digital content. This chapter outlines a plan to attempt to account for that transition. The objective is to outline a plan to triangulate the research in the case studies with the literature review to bolster the validity.

Chapter Four contains the case studies of the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC. Each case study starts with an overview of the media outlet and then presents the

findings of the content analysis, incorporating insights from interviewees where they are helpful. The objective of these case studies is to provide a snapshot of the content produced by the media outlets at a contemporary turning point in indigenous history to set the stage to explore the factors shaping the metanarrative of the history of Canada.

Chapter Five refers back to the theoretical framework to analyze the findings of the three case studies. It includes further comments from interviewees explaining how decisions regarding coverage of the indigenous story were made and are being made. The objective is to make connections between journalism and communication literature, history, and present practices to highlight overlapping themes leading to factors influencing the way the indigenous story has been told.

This thesis concludes by summarizing the research to extrapolate and synthesize the factors affecting continuity and evolution in the way journalists have told the indigenous story in Canada.

### **Motivation and Inspirations**

This thesis was initially motivated by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). The TRC launched in 2008 with a mandate to chronicle the devastating experiences of former Indian Residential School students to create a more inclusive version of the historical record in Canada.<sup>5</sup> In early 2014, as the TRC was wrapping up its public hearings, I was taking one of my first master's classes Carleton University: an international relations seminar on transitional justice mechanisms. Among the topics we discussed in that seminar was the importance of communication in fostering reconciliation in societies. It is difficult, if not impossible, to cultivate reconciliation in

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<sup>5</sup> "Our Mandate," Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, accessed August 16, 2014, <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=7>.

divided society if not all members of the society understand the divide. While reflecting on the coverage I was seeing of the TRC's final hearing (it was not much), I became uncomfortably aware of how little I knew not only about the work of the TRC, but also about the indigenous story in Canada. As I began to think about my thesis topic, I began to suspect I was not alone in my lack of knowledge. One of the first monographs published on the Commission in 2013 — *Truth and Indignation* by indigenous studies scholar Ronald Niezen — suggested the reason might have been that media coverage up until that point had been “sparse” (although he provided no empirical evidence).<sup>6</sup> While my interest was piqued, the tide began to change. As the TRC prepared to release its final report in 2015, I noticed the media were not only paying attention to that particular event, but more generally to indigenous peoples. Moreover, journalists — including from the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC (among other organizations) — were delving into issues indigenous peoples face in Canada via special projects. I had never seen such in-depth coverage by the mainstream media before, particularly around the disproportionate number of missing and murdered indigenous women. I began to wonder what had changed. It was that confluence of factors that served as the starting point for this thesis.

The basis of the theoretical framework that this thesis uses to assess how journalistic values translate into practice was inspired by journalism scholar Michael Schudson. His essay “Six or seven things news can do for democracy” resonated with me because of how it juxtaposed the romanticized moral idealism of journalism for the public good against the everyday realities of reporting.<sup>7</sup> As I researched, I found this

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<sup>6</sup> Ronald Niezen, *Truth and Indignation: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 38.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2008), 25-26.

relationship became less ironic and more symbiotic, ultimately setting the stage for examining what journalism scholar Herbert Gans calls enduring news values.<sup>8</sup>

Underscoring the framework is Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel's supposition that journalists ultimately understand that their first obligation is to the truth and their first loyalty, to the citizenry.<sup>9</sup> According to Kovach and Rosenstiel, who were leaders in a comprehensive contemporary study on journalistic responsibilities, these principles are not new.<sup>10</sup> That being said, the fact that the news media appear to be changing the way they report the indigenous story presents an interesting paradox, which this thesis investigates.

The work of CBC reporter Duncan McCue also loosely guides this thesis. McCue, from the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, was awarded Stanford University's Knight Fellowship in 2011 and created the *Reporting in Indigenous Communities* website. On the website, he explores how the bleak picture painted by the media about the lives of indigenous peoples reinforces the national divide between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. He offers journalists tips on how to avoid condensing backstories, depicting indigenous peoples as lacking agency to bring about change in their own lives, and perpetuating stereotypes. I took these practical considerations into account when devising criteria to measure the findings of the content analyses and interviews.

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<sup>8</sup> Herbert Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 42-52.

<sup>9</sup> Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> Kovach and Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*, 14.

## Significance

While scholars have widely noted how the media have contributed to the subjugation of minorities, including indigenous peoples in Canada, their conclusions are broad-reaching and not specific to the case studies in this thesis. My research is significant because it is one of the first detailed studies that specifically examines factors shaping the continuity and evolution of the indigenous story in Canada vis-à-vis journalism. As a result, it contributes to the still relatively new area of journalism theory dealing with changing discourse around minority representations. While journalism scholars have written at length about factors that shape reporting practices, there is a lack of empirical evidence when it comes to understanding factors that influence shifts in reporting practices. By triangulating the longstanding trends in previous scholarship with new quantitative and qualitative research, this thesis offers insight into what has changed and what has not with respect to reporting on indigenous peoples in Canada.

Although elements of the way the indigenous story has been told by the media are consistent with general conclusions of previous research, there are gaps. For example, Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson's study of the portrayal of indigenous peoples in Canadian newspapers found that as of 2009, colonialism was alive and well.<sup>11</sup> While their study is built around a timeline of coverage of important events, it does not get into the context-specific factors responsible for the endurance of the colonial narrative in each situation. Another study that finds some resonance here is Lea Hellmueller, Tim Vos, and Mark Poepsel's 2009 research on changing newsroom principles. They would argue that the fact that transparency about gathering information

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<sup>11</sup> Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson, *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers*, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011), 276.

has augmented objectivity could at least partially explain why journalists now may feel more comfortable taking a social-justice slant in their reportage. However, their survey of more than 200 journalists focused on achieving balanced reporting in the present and lacks empirical evidence to demonstrate that a shift actually occurred.<sup>12</sup> Also relevant is Schudson's assertion that journalists favour official sources, which are backed by quantitative data.<sup>13</sup> That ultimately suggests a degree of synchronization between policy changes and the way those changes are covered by media. This thesis considers whether that has happened with the indigenous story. Recognizing the factors influencing the way the indigenous story is told are context-specific, this thesis attempts to bridge the gaps in existing scholarship by studying what is driving the presumed shift in the metanarrative of the history of Canada.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of telling the story of indigenous peoples in Canada vis-à-vis journalism are that key moments in their histories and the richness of their cultures do not feature prominently. That being said, I took this approach not only to restrain the scope of this thesis, but also to ensure more accuracy through triangulating my methodologies. Focusing on the news media's version of the indigenous story means that secondary literature exploring the coverage produced in the past and the findings of my case studies overlap with journalists' comments from the interviews. This increased opportunity to corroborate my research on journalistic decision-making ultimately gives it more legitimacy.

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<sup>12</sup> Lea Hellmueller, Tim P. Vos, and Mark A. Poepsel, "Shifting Journalistic Capital? Transparency and Objectivity in the 21st Century," *Journalism Studies* 14:3 (2013), 293.

<sup>13</sup> Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, 52.

There are also limitations as to how far the conclusions that this thesis draws can extend. While the specific limitations of the case studies, content analyses, and interviews are explained in Chapter Two, it is important to keep in mind that only three media outlets are being considered. Although the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC are not immune to the budgetary and resources challenges inherent in contemporary newsrooms, they maintain the capacity to target national audiences and are comparably well positioned to provide quality journalism. Furthermore, they are all longstanding. The *Globe and Mail* began publishing in 1844; *Maclean's* was founded in 1905 as a business magazine, acquiring its current name and mandate in 1911; and CBC Radio was founded in 1936 followed by CBC Television in 1952. In that way, these media outlets have been involved in defining the history of Canada. All three appear to have made extra effort to communicate around the complexities of indigenous issues recently, showcasing in-depth special projects in 2015 about indigenous peoples. Other influential major mainstream media outlets have undeniably taken similar strides, but they are beyond scope of my research, which focuses on the dichotomy between way national media have traditionally approached covering indigenous issues and the way they are approaching them now. That being said, I felt it was important to include insights from journalists who work for APTN. APTN was launched as Television Northern Canada in 1992 and remains the only national indigenous media outlet to date. Although APTN's contributions to the media landscape are relatively recent, APTN is in a unique position to bring a nuanced perspective to investigating factors influencing the continuity and evolution in media coverage. My hope is that the findings of this thesis will heighten journalists' awareness

about the implications their reporting has on the futures of indigenous peoples living in Canada.

## Chapter One: A Theoretical Framework

A degree of understanding of how the media work is necessary at the outset of analyzing how they have told the indigenous story in Canada. As the first part of the two-part literature review, this chapter explores journalism and communication scholarship and suggests a theoretical framework. This lens can be applied in subsequent chapters to interpret how media have told the indigenous story in Canada

Before delving into the details of how the media work, it is important to establish a foundation from which to build an understanding. One of most well regarded conceptualizations of the media in scholarship is posited by Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky in the very first line of *Manufacturing Consent*: “The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace.”<sup>1</sup> Recognizing that the mass media are not synonymous with the media that produces journalism and the news, this definition merely serves as a helpful starting point for exploring those particular functions. Highlighting a lack of finite consensus around what journalism and the news actually are, scholars often describe them by listing various elements. For example, in “Notes Towards a Definition of Journalism,” G. Stuart Adam suggests that journalism is composed of some form of: news, reporting, linguistic technique, narrative technique, and interpretation.<sup>2</sup> Jack Fuller adds another dimension, suggesting in *News Values* that journalism’s goal is “to depict significant things learned about reality since the last report.”<sup>3</sup> When it comes to news, Fuller proposes it includes: timeliness,

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<sup>1</sup> Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), 1.

<sup>2</sup> G. Stuart Adam. “Notes Towards a Definition of Journalism,” in *Journalism: The Democratic Craft*, ed. G. Stuart Adam and Roy Peter Clark, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 365.

<sup>3</sup> Jack Fuller, *News Values: Ideas for an Information Age*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 22.

relevance to a given community, and significance.<sup>4</sup> These somewhat ambiguous definitions are products of the fact that scholars recognize that the terms are innately subjective. It is important for the theoretical framework that follows to grapple with them. However, the focus is on what influences the production of journalism and news, exploring the principles that guide journalists, how those principles translate via collective media culture, and the impacts on the media's agenda-setting role.

### **Principles that Guide Journalists**

Principles that guide journalists have been engrained over centuries. However, they have evolved vis-à-vis the societal constructs that journalists have created and operate within. This section explores how journalists' somewhat romanticized value system has developed. It focuses on how journalists have come to understand their obligation to truth and loyalty to the citizenry based on news values, the ideological toolbox that they use to pursue those ideals, and their inherent biases.

To try to understand how journalists saw their role in contemporary society, a group that became known as the Committee of Concerned Journalists formed in the late 1990s. After meetings with thousands of people and interviews with hundreds of journalists, Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel concluded in the resulting book, *The Elements of Journalism*, that journalists' first obligation is to the truth.<sup>5</sup> While not surprising, scholarly consensus suggests that over time, the way journalists have perceived truth has changed. However, it seems there has long been a juxtaposition between propaganda and investigative reporting driven by both morality and business when it comes to the pursuit of truth.

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<sup>4</sup> Fuller, *News Values*, 7.

<sup>5</sup> Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 4-5.

Initially, the press in North America was born to convey information to settlers about the colonization process, but it ultimately became a forum to present, and then to debate, issues related to the fledgling structures of imperial governance. What W. H. Kesterton calls “press warfare” in *A History of Journalism in Canada* began in the early 1800s after the “lines of political battle were drawn” and newspapers were labeled according to whether their content was seen as being for or against political reform.<sup>6</sup> However, post-Confederation in 1867, newspapers began to play a different role. As Peter Desbarats examines in the *Guide to Canadian Media*, newspapers began to foster a sense of national identity post-Confederation. Desbarats cites communication scholar Paul Rutherford’s four myths about Canadian life that began to circulate in the newspapers:

1. The Dogma of Modernity: purported democratic, economic, and moral progress that aligned with European race and culture was synonymous with Canada;
2. The Gospel of Order: popularized the “peace, order and good government” laid out in the British North America Act by emphasizing hard work and respect for the law;
3. The Gospel of Harmony: elevated compromise, but only insofar that “whenever anyone raised the race or religious cry, many more editors responded by warning that a revival of past feuds could only engender a devastating civil strife...”;
4. The Illusion of Sanity: embellished Canada as an island “in a world gone mad.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> W. H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1967), 14.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Desbarats, *Guide to Canadian News Media*, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990), 15.

These myths were basically an early set of distinctly Canadian news values, but shared commonalities with news other societies' news values. In *Deciding What's News*, Herbert Gans identifies the long-term enduring news values, elements of which are evident in the myths about Canadian life. Some of the enduring news values Gans highlights include: ethnocentrism elevating the nation being covered above all others; altruistic democracy fixating on stories about corruption, conflict, protest and bureaucratic malfunctions; and responsible capitalism assuming the economy will flourish as long as businesspeople are able to maintain a healthy oligopoly.<sup>8</sup> However, there have long been more immediate factors that shape how journalists decide what stories to tell — and they have not always lined up with long-term news values.

Following a monumental study of stories that make the news, Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge concluded: “Journalists should be better trained to capture and report on long-term development and concentrate less on ‘events.’ ”<sup>9</sup> Although Galtung and Ruge’s study was built around foreign reporting in the mid 1900s, the focus was on newspapers. After sampling more than 1,200 clippings, they deduced that a confluence of short-term news values ultimately impact whether long-term news values are being met. Among Galtung and Ruge’s broad findings about what makes news were: whether an event unfolded along the same timeline as the news medium (be it daily, weekly, monthly, etc.); whether the event concerned powerful people or nations; whether the event was either unexpected or rare; whether the event had become familiar because it

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<sup>8</sup> Herbert Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 45-47.

<sup>9</sup> Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, “The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba, and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers,” *Journal of International Peace Research* 1, (1965), 84.

had developed in the spotlight; and/or whether the event had meaning to the journalists covering it and/or to the presumed audiences' frame of reference.<sup>10</sup> In 2001, Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill revisited Galtung and Ruge's study to fine-tune the list. According to Harcup and O'Neill, stories that make the news typically satisfy at least one of the following: they concern the powerful elite, celebrity, and/or entertainment; they have an element of surprise; they contain particularly bad news or good news; they involve a significant magnitude of people; they are perceived to be of relevance to the presumed audience; they follow up previous stories; and/or they fit the news organization's agenda.<sup>11</sup> The cleavages between long-term and short-term news values are captured in the career of Joseph Pulitzer, who defined a journalism business model that incorporated civil rights groups vying for inclusions in the face of industrial and technological revolution.

Pulitzer, a Hungarian immigrant to the United States, began working at a small German newspaper in St. Louis, Missouri, before going on to become a New York media baron. He was known in the late 1800s for a style of journalism that aggressively challenged the decisions of central institutions and the people running them. Pulitzer said he believed that newspapers should “ ‘always remain devoted to the public welfare; never be satisfied with merely printing the news.’ ”<sup>12</sup> This sort of ideology is still heralded today as the force behind investigative journalism — as long as the content produced is not sensationalized to the point that it merits the criticism of “yellow journalism,” driven

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<sup>10</sup> Galtung and Ruge, “The Structure of Foreign News,” 66-84.

<sup>11</sup> Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill, “What Is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited,” *Journalism Studies* vol. 2, no. 2 (2001), 278-279.

<sup>12</sup> David A. Copeland, *The Media's Role in Defining the Nation: The Active Voice*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2010), 99.

by ethical compromise and financial interests.<sup>13</sup> Pulitzer cited journalism for the public good as what motivated him,<sup>14</sup> ultimately raising the question of what constitutes the public good.

The historical context in which the pursuit of truth developed as a guiding principle for journalists was tied to the idea that the press was providing a service — but for whom? Kovach and Rosenstiel assert that journalists' first loyalty is to the citizenry, grounding journalists' role in the fact that in the United States, the First Amendment protects their freedom to do the work they do.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms includes “freedom of the press and other media of communication.”<sup>16</sup> Internationally, it was after the World Wars when leaders became acutely aware of the value of information as a tool or weapon that the press began to contemplate its role in informing democracy in the western hemisphere.<sup>17</sup> Building on a report in the aftermath of the Second World War by the Commission on Freedom of the Press in the United States, Theodore Peterson made the argument in the mid-1950s that the privileged position the press holds in shaping public discourse should be concomitant with a moral duty. In his exploration of the then-emerging social responsibility theory, he cites the recognition of the growing size and importance of the press, an intellectual climate eroding ideals of enlightenment and a professionalizing spirit that included formal journalism education as influences.<sup>18</sup> That being said, how journalists have come to

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<sup>13</sup> Copeland, *The Media's Role in Defining the Nation*, 129-151.

<sup>14</sup> James McGrath Morris, *Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power*, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 3.

<sup>15</sup> Kovach and Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*, 52.

<sup>16</sup> Department of Justice Canada, *A Consolidation of the Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982*, January 1, 2013, accessed January 29, 2016, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html>.

<sup>17</sup> Copeland, *The Media's Role in Defining the Nation*, 189.

<sup>18</sup> Theodore Peterson, “The Social Responsibility Theory of the Press,” in *Four Theories of the Press: The Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility and Soviet Communist Concepts of What the*

understand and navigate the subjective concept of morality while executing their stories is still today a topic of much scholarly debate.

That journalists should strive for objectivity in their coverage was cultivated in the same climate in which the development of the professional ethics alluded to above occurred. Barbara M. Kelly claims that during that era journalists thought of objectivity as “a clear break with the policies that had blurred the distinction between the fourth estate and its official adversaries in government.”<sup>19</sup> Whether objectivity should be a goal and how it is defined is contested, but the logic driving it is generally accepted among theorists and practitioners. Kovach and Rosenstiel suggest objectivity should actually be thought of as a method guided by techniques in fairness and balance.<sup>20</sup> However, the challenge even then is that there is room for different interpretations because as Fuller points out: “any deep consideration of the idea of fairness leads eventually to questions of distributive justice.”<sup>21</sup> Fuller uses the term “neutrality” to describe the mindset and approach journalists should take in presenting the truth to the citizenry, suggesting that “journalists can discipline themselves to correct against bias and deal with each new situation with an open mind.”<sup>22</sup> In light of the individualistic and subjective reality associated with reporting, there is increasing scholarly consensus that what journalists need to highlight in their work is transparency. A 2009 study by Lea Hellmueller, Tim Vos, and Mark Poepsel supports the rise of transparency as a goal of journalists from a practitioners’ perspective. In the study, the researchers describe transparency as being

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*Press Should Be and Do*, ed. Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 77.

<sup>19</sup> Barbara M. Kelly, “Objectivity and the Trappings of Professionalism, 1900-1950,” in *Fair and Balanced: A History of Journalistic Objectivity*, ed. Steven R. Knowlton and Karen L. Freeman, (Northpoint, AL: Vision Press, 2005), 149.

<sup>20</sup> Kovach and Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*, 83.

<sup>21</sup> Fuller, *News Values*, 33.

<sup>22</sup> Fuller, *News Values*, 28.

shaped by a journalist's openness about gathering information and willingness to be held accountable for it by the public.<sup>23</sup> While Adam acknowledges that there are procedures and principles journalists follow, he notes that journalists "work in deeper intellectual cosmologies and thus confer meaning on their subjects in richer and more persuasive ways."<sup>24</sup> The direction that meaning takes is influenced by the fact that journalists are not naturally guided by impartiality.

Journalism and communication scholarship suggests that journalists, like most people, do not search for ideas that contrast the ones they already hold. Consequently, the press, with its development in Canada deeply rooted in colonialism, has contributed to a national narrative grounded in Eurocentrism. In *Unequal Relations*, Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott define Eurocentrism as a form of ethnocentrism that specifically purports the superiority of the European culture and values within the social construction of reality, assuming that it is broadly applicable.<sup>25</sup> Evidently, that has contributed to what scholarship has come to characterize as journalistic whitewashing of minority groups. In explaining whitewashing in the context of Canada, in *Media and Minorities* Fleras and Jean Lock Kunz point to "an implicit hierarchy of racial desirability" that not only elevates whiteness as desired, but non-whiteness as potentially menacing or dangerous.<sup>26</sup> There is a case to be made that journalistic whitewashing as a result of Eurocentrism has influenced prejudice and the proliferation of stereotypes. Fleras and Elliott define stereotypes as unwarranted and unfounded generalizations that reduce complex

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<sup>23</sup> Lea Hellmueller, Tim P. Vos, and Mark A. Poepsel, "Shifting Journalistic Capital? Transparency and Objectivity in the 21st Century," *Journalism Studies* 14:3 (2013), 289-290.

<sup>24</sup> Adam, "Notes Towards a Definition of Journalism," 364.

<sup>25</sup> Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, *Unequal Relations: An Introduction to Race, Ethnic, and Aboriginal Dynamics in Canada*, 3rd ed, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1999), 73.

<sup>26</sup> Augie Fleras and Jean Lock Kunz, *Media and Minorities: Representing Diversity in a Multicultural Canada*, (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc., 2001), 147.

phenomena to simple explanations; they say stereotypes are “yet another form of social control in preserving the prevailing distribution of power and resources.”<sup>27</sup> Fleras and Elliott surmise that the press has been a major source of stereotypes and “visibly negligent in responding positively to Canada’s evolving diversity.”<sup>28</sup>

While impartiality may not necessarily be considered a principle for journalists, there is an assumption that they will attempt to mitigate their biases. To explain how that can be done, Kovach and Rosenstiel quote television newscaster Carol Marin: “When you sit down this Thanksgiving with your family and you have one of those classic family arguments — whether it’s about politics or race or religion or sex — you remember that what you are seeing of that family dispute is seen from the position of your chair and your side of the table. And it will warp your view, because in those instances you are arguing your position... A journalist is someone who steps away from the table and tries to see it all.”<sup>29</sup> However, Fleras and Kunz argue that Eurocentrism is so deeply engrained in the collective Canadian subconscious that the journalists may not think to question it. Fleras and Kunz call that phenomenon systemic racism: a “largely inadvertent bias that is built into the institutional framework of society.”<sup>30</sup> Therefore, it is worthwhile to consider how the media fits into the institutional framework of society to understand the procedures that it adopts. While this section explores the ambiguity that exists around guiding principles, ultimately influenced by journalists’ own moral compasses, the next section examines some of the scholarly consensus that has developed around how they have come to operate as a collective within the confines of democracy.

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<sup>27</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 74-75.

<sup>28</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 335.

<sup>29</sup> Kovach and Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*, 110.

<sup>30</sup> Fleras and Kunz, *Media and Minorities*, 194.

## The Culture of the News Media

The culture of the news media is the product of both the idealism and the pragmatism imbued in the principles guiding journalists. This section examines how newsroom typifications found at that intersection impact decision-making at an institutional level. It discusses how the new media works with other institutions and the constraints they face.

As journalism has evolved, the news media have become an integral institution in society. Scholarship indicates that its role has been delineated vis-à-vis not only the principles that guide journalism, but the impact those principles have had over time on relationships with other institutions. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu describes these interactions in “The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field,” defining a field as: “a field of forces within which the agents occupy positions that statistically determine the positions they take with respect to the field, these position-takings being aimed either at conserving or transforming the structure of relations of forces that is constitutive of the field.”<sup>31</sup> Within this dynamic, Bourdieu argues the journalistic field has become increasingly heteronomous.<sup>32</sup> In *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, Michael Schudson breaks that down further, characterizing members of the media as “institutionalized insiders.”<sup>33</sup> Schudson explains the professionalization of the news media has increased consensus around their function as being “to report government affairs to serve the informational functions that make democracy work.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “The Politics Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field,” in *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, ed Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2005), 30.

<sup>32</sup> Bourdieu, “The Politics Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field,” 43.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2008), 60.

<sup>34</sup> Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, 52.

Building on that, in “The Social Production of News,” Stuart Hall et al. explain how the news media is a secondary definer of society, reliant on primary definers from other institutions for information.<sup>35</sup> Gans agrees, claiming that it takes two to tango and “more often than not, sources do the leading.”<sup>36</sup> Gans’s sentiment is echoed by Herman and Chomsky, who take it even further, arguing that the media broadly serve as a model for propagandizing elite interests in government and private sectors. Herman and Chomsky claim that if “the powerful are able to fix the premises of discourse, to decide what the general populace is allowed to see, hear and think about, and to manage public opinion by regular propaganda campaigns, the standard view of how the system works is at serious odds with reality.”<sup>37</sup> That assertion adds some context to the many studies that indicate journalists tend to rely on official sources. For example, Justin Lewis, Andrew Williams, and Bob Franklin deduced from their 2006 analysis on public relations content in journalism in the United Kingdom that it was the sole or main source for approximately 19 per cent of the stories in major newspapers and 17 per cent of stories from major broadcasters.<sup>38</sup> However, Schudson contests the allegation the free press is essentially not so free by examining the benefits it can afford to society.

Although Herman and Chomsky contend that media liberties are only afforded to members within the bounds of elite institutionalism,<sup>39</sup> Schudson paints a picture of “Six or seven things news can do for democracy.” They are: deliver information, perform investigation, offer analysis, generate social empathy, provide public forum, motivate

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<sup>35</sup> Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts, “The Social Production of News,” in *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1978), 57.

<sup>36</sup> Gans, *Deciding What’s News*, 116.

<sup>37</sup> Herman and Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*, xi.

<sup>38</sup> Justin Lewis, Andrew Williams, and Bob Franklin, “A Compromised Fourth Estate: UK news journalism, public relations, and news sources,” *Journalism Studies* 9, no. 1 (2008), 7.

<sup>39</sup> Herman and Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*, 304.

mobilization, and publicize representative democracy. Schudson is not challenging Herman and Chomsky's assessment that the media serve a purpose with respect to elite decision-making, but rather rejecting their claim that the "media would be failing to meet their elite audience's need if they did not present a tolerably realistic portrayal of the world."<sup>40</sup> From Schudson's perspective, journalists are not active in the propaganda process, but can sometimes be susceptible to the power of the institutional culture within which they operate. Schudson is opposed to romanticizing the connection inherent to journalism and democracy. To illustrate that point, Schudson quotes James Carey's summation that "journalism is usefully understood as another name for democracy"<sup>41</sup> only to repudiate it. He disagrees with Carey about the degree to which pluralism is reflected equally in journalism and democracy, noting: "Reality is more complicated and less happy." To consider more fully the applicability of that statement, it is important to understand the constraints faced by the media as an institution.

Schudson is not the only scholar to argue that the media is not complacent or manipulated into propagandizing on behalf of other powerful institutions. In fact, many scholars have offered analyses of decision-making in the news media founded fundamentally in how organizational structure affects the practical elements of content production. Adding another layer to the descriptions of mass media, journalism, and news provided at the outset of this theoretical framework is Gaye Tuchman's 1978 supposition in *Making News* that news should actually be considered "an institutional method of making information available to consumers."<sup>42</sup> Taking a liberal-pluralist perspective to

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<sup>40</sup> Herman and Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*, 303.

<sup>41</sup> Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, 11.

<sup>42</sup> Gaye Tuchman, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*, (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 4.

understanding how public discourse is shaped, Tuchman looks at the news as a social construction of reality vis-à-vis constraints on and resources available to journalists and their news organizations. Acknowledging the organizations that make up the news media are complex, Tuchman explains through a sociological lens how a unique relationship between time, space, and typifications shapes journalistic practice. To confront the goal of filling a newspaper, magazine, or broadcast program, news media organizations and the journalists who work for them have developed similar routines based on the restrictions associated with time and space that are inherent to the process.<sup>43</sup> Building on that, scholars identify resources as an important consideration when it comes to decision-making. In “The Media and Money,” Nick Russell states: “Even if the newsroom is at arms length from the commercial side of the business, it is not immune from the vicissitudes of the whole operation.”<sup>44</sup> David Taras cites the Lincoln Report on broadcasting in “The Ownership Juggernaut” when explaining how the inherent prevalence of business interests in journalism as a result of conglomeration undermines the news media.<sup>45</sup> Where Schudson states journalists understand their role to be reporting government affairs, Taras suggests it is secondary to sustaining the commercial interests of news media companies for which they work. According to Robert McChesney in “Corporate Media, Global Capitalism,” it is in democratic societies where unfavourable ideas are most stealthily repressed.<sup>46</sup> Even removing how commercial interests can directly impinge on news routines, budgetary considerations impact on staffing and lead

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<sup>43</sup> Tuchman, *Making News*, 41-45.

<sup>44</sup> Nick Russell, “The Media and Money,” in *Morals and the Media: Ethics in Canadian Journalism*, 2nd ed., (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 51.

<sup>45</sup> David Taras, “The Ownership Juggernaut,” in *Digital Mosaic: Media, Power, and Identity in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 102.

<sup>46</sup> Robert McChesney, “Corporate Media, Global Capitalism,” in *Media Organization and Production*, ed. Simon Cottle, (London: Sage, 2003), 36.

journalists to increasingly rely on editors for direction.<sup>47</sup> While news media organizations have long had centralized news routines, the digital age has disrupted them somewhat.

The same technological developments that have allowed the news media to respond to a more connected world have also shaped the solution to addressing the growing amount of information available. As a result of the desire to “catch” the ever-increasing available content in a “news net,” Tuchman argued in 1978 that news media organizations in general have become more reliant on wire services.<sup>48</sup> However, Angela Phillips found in her 2010 study “Old Sources: New Bottles” that few journalists referenced wire services: “They didn’t need to because they usually had the same selection of statements from all the major players in their own inbox. What seems to be a rather more salient trend is direct cannibalization of copy.”<sup>49</sup> The general idea of using subsidized information links back to the dependence of the news media on official sources and public relations. Gans suggests that journalists tend to revert back to a small pool of news sources that have previously proved suitable “and are passive toward other possible news sources.”<sup>50</sup> At the most basic level, journalists guided by the pursuit of truth are in a race against time to fill space. It is logical to assume that they would associate credibility with sources that have either proven it in the past or are respected broadly via public opinion. To that end, Schudson’s assertion that journalists are actually institutionalized insiders can be understood at macro and micro levels. At the macro level, journalists collectively forming the news media take their lead from other institutions, but at the micro level, they work within the constraints of their own

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<sup>47</sup> Angela Phillips, “Old Sources: New Bottles,” in *New Media, Old News: Journalism and Democracy in the Digital Age*, ed. Natalie Fenton, (London: Sage, 2010), 90-91.

<sup>48</sup> Tuchman, *Making News*, 20-21.

<sup>49</sup> Phillips, “Old Sources: New Bottles,” 95.

<sup>50</sup> Gans, *Deciding What’s News*, 116.

institution. Both macro and micro level considerations impact both the information delivered to the public and how that information is delivered to the public. How the news media functions as an institution as explored in this section is important to understanding its contribution to discourse in society. However, it does not do so in isolation from the principles guiding journalists established in the first section. The next section examines how the two concepts come together to project enduring news values into the social construction of reality.

### **Agenda-setting and the Narrative of Nationhood**

Agenda-setting and the narrative of nationhood have been significantly shaped by journalists and more broadly, the news media. This section explores how discourse is determined vis-à-vis the principles guiding journalists and the culture of the news media to understand why those concepts matter. It looks at the relationship between press coverage and issues to which the public attaches salience as well as the factors that affect how issues are framed.

To appreciate why the decisions journalists and the news media make around telling stories matter, it is necessary to reflect on why journalists and the news media matter. To drive home exactly that point at the beginning of his book *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, Maxwell McCombs quotes humorist Will Rogers: “All I know is what I read in the newspapers.”<sup>51</sup> That quote, McCombs goes on to explain, is a “succinct summary of the knowledge and information that each of us possesses about public affairs.”<sup>52</sup> For all intents and purposes, that idea was introduced in *Public Opinion* in 1922 by Walter Lippmann, who starts out by criticizing the news

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<sup>51</sup> Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2014), 1.

<sup>52</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 1.

media for the “defective organization of public opinion.”<sup>53</sup> Lippmann says “public opinions must be organized for the press if they are to be sound, not by the press as is the case today.”<sup>54</sup> In the late 1960s, McCombs, with Donald Shaw, undertook empirical research to build on that to set a precedent for understanding how journalism shapes discourse through an agenda-setting theory.

According to McCombs, agenda-setting is understood as a “transfer of salience from one agenda to another, usually the media agenda to the public agenda.”<sup>55</sup> The research McCombs undertook with Shaw demonstrates this. During a presidential election campaign, the duo investigated the correlation between the most reported issues and the issues the public deemed most important. Focusing on Chapel Hill in North Carolina, they found the five most reported issues actually were the issues the public deemed most important.<sup>56</sup> Acknowledging that the finding could be interpreted symbiotically, it is worth noting that there have been multiple studies since then that reflect the news media’s influence on the public through both quantitative and qualitative elements. In the late 1980s, Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder performed a number of experiments to test agenda-setting theory on audiences of television news in the United States. In their book, *News That Matters*, they outline how by “attending to some problems and ignoring others, television news shapes the American public’s political priorities.”<sup>57</sup> Iyengar and Kinder’s findings essentially corroborate with McCombs and Shaw’s: the sheer volume of coverage that issues receive affects their public profile.

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<sup>53</sup> Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1922), 32.

<sup>54</sup> Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, 32.

<sup>55</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 35.

<sup>56</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 6.

<sup>57</sup> Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder, *News That Matters*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 33.

However, Iyengar and Kinder also examine how factors relating to the way the issues are presented shape perceptions. For example, stories at the top of the broadcast dominate agenda-setting,<sup>58</sup> but the effectiveness of storytelling techniques, such as illustrative personal cases to confer meaning on problems, can depend on the traits of audiences.<sup>59</sup> According to McCombs, covering an issue alone is often not enough in agenda-setting; making “compelling arguments” for news items also plays a role. He says the concept of “compelling arguments” recognizes the media’s ability “to transfer the relationships among the elements of the media agenda to the public agenda.”<sup>60</sup> For journalists, that means the way stories are framed can impact whether they resonate with people.

According to Fleras and Kunz, framing refers to “the process of imposing a preferred meaning... on an event.”<sup>61</sup> Understanding the influences contributing to that “preferred meaning” therefore becomes critical to understanding agenda-setting. However, as Aziz Khaki points out in *Deception and perception*, there are no laws requiring the press to be “objective, fair, or even representative of the society that it serves.”<sup>62</sup> As a result, the principles that guide journalists are imperative to understanding framing. Although journalists see themselves as dedicated to sharing truth with the citizenry within the confines of the democracy they serve, their moral mission is inherently influenced by their biases, which are tied to the colonial history of Canada. “Unswerving Eurocentrism” is ultimately at the core, serving a dictatorial function in framing stories.<sup>63</sup> The whitewashing that occurs has meant that stories involving

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<sup>58</sup> Iyengar and Kinder, *News That Matters*, 45.

<sup>59</sup> Iyengar and Kinder, *News That Matters*, 53.

<sup>60</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 55.

<sup>61</sup> Fleras and Kunz, *Media and Minorities*, 190.

<sup>62</sup> Aziz Khaki, *Depiction and perception: Native Indians and visible minorities in the media*, (Vancouver: Ad Hoc Committee for Better Race Relations, 1988), 23.

<sup>63</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 344.

“assertive minorities are framed as a narrative involving conflict of interest between the forces of destruction on one side and the forces of order, reason and stability on the other.”<sup>64</sup> The effects of long-term stereotyping can be unjustifiably damaging not only to the reputations of minority groups, but the individuals who are part of them. As Fleras and Elliot explain: “each negative image or unflattering representation reinforces their peripheral position within an unequal society.”<sup>65</sup> The question is then how journalists’ biases impact the news media collectively.

Mediacentrism as a derivative of Eurocentrism asserts that “reality is never interpreted objectively, but tends to be routinely and automatically from the point of view of those in positions of power (white males, those of European tradition, those in positions of authority).”<sup>66</sup> Fuller notes a main challenge facing the news media is the impact reportage has on relationships with the subjects covered most often, explaining that government and politicians have “become extraordinarily sophisticated about the imperatives that drive journalism.”<sup>67</sup> Considered within the parameters of mediacentrism, there is logic to Herman and Chomsky’s assertion that members of the news media who fail to conform are cast aside as “‘irresponsible,’ ‘ideological,’ or otherwise aberrant.”<sup>68</sup> Building on that is Schudson’s analysis of journalists as “Reluctant Stewards.” Schudson says that although journalists understand their role to be objective gatherers and presenters of information to inform democratic ideals, they actually have a limited understanding of democratic ideals that they are hesitant to look beyond.<sup>69</sup> However,

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<sup>64</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 340.

<sup>65</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 74.

<sup>66</sup> Fleras and Kunz, *Media and Minorities*, 191.

<sup>67</sup> Fuller, *News Values*, 19.

<sup>68</sup> Herman and Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*, 304

<sup>69</sup> Michael Schudson, “Reluctant Stewards: Journalism in a Democratic Society,” *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 142, no. 2 (Spring 2013), 172.

scholars in general point out that the institution with the power to normalize relations within societies is in fact the media. As explained by Fleras and Elliott, the media can privilege and discredit views within the social construction of reality.<sup>70</sup>

The significance of that is intrinsic to the general scholarly consensus that the social construction of reality is a product of the news media. According to Tuchman, the two are essentially the same: “The act of making news is the act of constructing reality itself.”<sup>71</sup> However, as illustrated, the reality constructed in Canada has historically been based on solidifying colonization, presenting a distorted narrative that does not accurately reflect the varied experiences of many minority groups. Fleras and Elliott argue that the coverage minority groups have received is reflected mainly via the “shallows and rapids treatment” that they have received. The shallows are consistent with the broader context in which they are regarded as irrelevant whereas the rapids are guided by crises and calamities that only feed existing prejudice.<sup>72</sup> McCombs suggests that an increased understanding around the agenda-setting role of journalists and the news media can provide a foundation from which to understand historical narratives.<sup>73</sup> While the impact in Canada has been a whitewashed version of history of indigenous peoples, attempts to address that surfaced in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The federal government and minority groups began to respond to the pervasiveness of mediacentrism as global norms of egalitarianism and human rights became prominent. With regards to approaching diversity in the news media, Fuller explores three options: genuinely allowing all perspectives, presenting it on the surface

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<sup>70</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 344.

<sup>71</sup> Tuchman, *Making News*, 12.

<sup>72</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 337.

<sup>73</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 37.

while preserving a united underlying bias, or channeling it through staffing.<sup>74</sup> It is the last option that has been seemingly reflected in the paths that both the federal government and minority groups pursued. In *Discourse of Domination*, Frances Henry and Charles Tator cite a 1985 brief to the parliamentary subcommittee on equality rights from the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, which states that people of colour are invisible in the Canadian media. At that time, hardly any racial minorities worked as anchors or reporters. Few were found behind the scenes in production and administration, either. According to Tator and Henry's summation: the limited participation of people of colour in the industry "was the result of both overt bias and systemic discrimination."<sup>75</sup> The federal government's 1986 Task Force on Broadcasting Policy identified the need to amend the *Broadcasting Act* so that it was more inclusive of minority groups. The reforms were grounded in improved access for and representations of minority groups in the news media as an institution.<sup>76</sup> The 1988 Multiculturalism Act echoed the general sentiment, encouraging inclusivity of minority groups across institutions to "advance multiculturalism throughout Canada."<sup>77</sup> However, that was not the only development; alternative media premised on communicating minority perspectives began to pop up as well. One of them was the January 1992 launch of Television Northern Canada, which led to the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN).

Given the circumstances, Fleras and Elliott assert that the power of portrayals in the news media put some "onus on minority men and women to reclaim control over

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<sup>74</sup> Fuller, *News Values*, 108.

<sup>75</sup> Henry and Tator, *Discourses of Domination: Racial Bias in the Canadian English-Language Press*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 39.

<sup>76</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 345.

<sup>77</sup> Government of Canada, *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, 1988, accessed January 9, 2015, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-18.7/>.

representations about who they are and who they want to be.”<sup>78</sup> Minority groups are typically left out of the mainstream, which Tator and Henry define as: “The dominant culture and the political, social, educational, cultural and economic institutions through which its power is maintained and reproduced.”<sup>79</sup> In *Culture*, sociologist Raymond Williams identifies two clear options to the mainstream: alternative and oppositional formations. While oppositional formations seek to overthrow existing systems, alternative formations want inclusion.<sup>80</sup> Building on that, when it comes to the news media in Canada, communication scholars Kirsten Kozolanka, Patricia Mazepa, and David Skinner point to three characteristics of alternative media. While not all three characteristics apply to every alternative media outlet, they typically exist outside the market as a non-profit (structure), they are non-hierarchical and often operating as collectives (participation), and they are committed to social change (activism).<sup>81</sup> Alternative media by minority groups for minority groups in Canada predates the aforementioned legislative changes. CHIN Radio and CFMT, now OMNI Television, have targeted various diaspora communities in southern Ontario since 1966 and 1979, respectively.<sup>82</sup> In “Are Ethnic Media Alternative?” Karim Karim argues that media outlets such as CHIN and OMNI do actually foster participation in society by minority groups insofar that they do not directly or indirectly promote isolationism. He suggests that some are even becoming “increasingly allied with mainstream media.”<sup>83</sup> That is an

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<sup>78</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 336.

<sup>79</sup> Henry and Tator, *Discourses of Domination*, 246.

<sup>80</sup> Raymond Williams, *Culture*, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Fontana, 1981), 256.

<sup>81</sup> Kirsten Kozolanka, Patricia Mazepa, and David Skinner, “Considering Alternative Media in Canada: Structure, Participation, Activism,” in *Alternative Media in Canada*, ed. Kirsten Kozolanka, Patricia Mazepa, and David Skinner, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 15-16.

<sup>82</sup> Karim H. Karim, “Are Ethnic Media Alternative?” in *Alternative Media in Canada*, ed. Kirsten Kozolanka, Patricia Mazepa, and David Skinner, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 173.

<sup>83</sup> Karim, “Are Ethnic Media Alternative?” 181-182.

important consideration as a broader influence on the news media's social construction of reality. As the federal government and minority groups have consciously taken measures to elevate societal integration, it is logical and plausible to assume that the mainstream news media and the journalists who constitute it have or will be affected by the changing landscape.

The principles guiding journalists and the culture of the news media have arguably developed around the social construction of reality to which they have contributed through agenda-setting. The next chapter of this thesis explores the history of the indigenous story in Canada through this lens.

## Chapter Two: The History of the Indigenous Story in Canada

The indigenous story in Canada has traditionally and consistently depicted indigenous peoples as inferior to non-indigenous peoples. As the second part of the two-part literature review, this chapter looks at secondary source studies of how journalists have reported on indigenous peoples through the lens established in the previous chapter. This chapter considers the historical coverage of indigenous issues during three time periods delineated by the dominant policy themes.

As Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson demonstrate through their study *Seeing Red*, portrayals of indigenous peoples have “served to reinforce prevalent mainstream notions... all of which degrade, denigrate and marginalize.”<sup>1</sup> This summation is consistent with established traditions of colonialism long dominating the relationship. However, Cronlund Anderson and Robertson’s study, the most comprehensive study of indigenous peoples in Canadian media to date, only takes into account the period between 1869 and 2009. In the elapsing years, justice mechanisms associated with the federal government’s official policies of reconciliation have paved the way to reinterpret the impact of colonialism on indigenous peoples via themes of modern-day human rights and equality. This analysis considers how principles guiding journalists, the culture of the news media, and agenda-setting and the national narrative have shaped the history of the indigenous story in Canada as told by the news media in three time periods: colonialism (1869-1968), redress (1969-2007), and reconciliation (2008-2015).

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson, *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers*, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011), 6.

### **Colonialism (1869-1968)**

Canada's formative years were shaped by nation building, setting the precedent for both policies relating to and reporting on indigenous peoples. During this period, the mainstream viewpoint was established and the enduring news values discussed by scholars Peter Desbarats and Herbert Gans took root. This section demonstrates how journalism in Canada developed in concert with colonialism. It explores how principles guiding journalists led to the stereotyping of indigenous peoples against Eurocentric values, the effect that stereotyping had on the culture of the news media as it engaged as an institution with other societal institutions, and the establishment of a national agenda that reflected both of those unfortunate realities.

When it came to telling the truth to the citizenry about indigenous peoples in Canada, at best journalists cast them to the periphery of society. To backtrack, there are scholars who have made the case that policy on indigenous peoples began with the British Royal Proclamation of 1763 to establish sovereignty over the unexplored interior of what is now known as North America.<sup>2</sup> However, this thesis specifically focuses on the story of indigenous peoples in Canada, which for all intents and purposes began in 1869 when the newly confederated government took two steps toward their subjugation. In 1869, Canada acquired a large mass of land around Hudson's Bay populated by indigenous peoples and legislated their oppression through the first of a series of bills that became the *Indian Act*.

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<sup>2</sup> Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, *Unequal Relations: An Introduction to Race, Ethnic, and Aboriginal Dynamics in Canada*, 3rd ed, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1999), 178.

As Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott argue in *Unequal Relations*, the dispossession of land and rights from indigenous peoples “has been well documented,”<sup>3</sup> including by journalists. According to W.H. Kesterton, journalists had diverged from simply reporting information about settlement by 1869 and started commenting on governance.<sup>4</sup> Coverage of the developments in that year offer insight into how journalists had begun to understand their obligation of telling the truth vis-à-vis the underlying bias they had come to hold. According to Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, when Canada purchased Rupert’s Land from the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1869, the necessity of doing so was argued “across... the political spectrum” not just strategically or economically, but morally as well.<sup>5</sup> The sentiment, guided by Eurocentrism, was reflected in the newspapers of the day, which endorsed the stance by painting indigenous peoples as savages too unfit to exercise control over it. When analyzing newspaper coverage of settling Rupert’s Land, Cronlund Anderson and Robertson quote the *Toronto Globe* (now the *Globe and Mail*): “No Canadian farmer should hesitate for an instant on their account.”<sup>6</sup> Also in 1869, Canada introduced the Gradual Enfranchisement Act, officially denoting indigenous peoples as inferior in status and limiting their rights.<sup>7</sup> Legislation to criminalize indigenous customs came down from the highest level. In March 1884, founding Prime Minister John A. Macdonald introduced a bill to prohibit indigenous dancing. Macdonald, as quoted by Constance Backhouse in *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada*, claimed that the festive dancing was “ ‘debauchery

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<sup>3</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 177.

<sup>4</sup> W.H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1967), 14.

<sup>5</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 37.

<sup>7</sup> Government of Canada, *An Act for the gradual enfranchisement of Indians, the better management of Indian affairs, and to extend the provisions of the Act 31st Victoria, Chapter 42*, 1869, accessed September 20, 2015, <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100010204/1100100010206>.

of the worst kind.’<sup>8</sup> Other oppressive policies followed in short order and before the turn of the century indigenous peoples were even stripped of the authority to make decisions about the futures of their children. It became mandatory that indigenous children attend Indian Residential Schools run by churches, where they were prohibited from speaking their mother tongues or engaging in their cultural practices. Although *Saturday Night* magazine made public a 1907 federal government report of 15 residential schools that indicated the residential school system was extremely flawed — 24 per cent of the 1,537 enrolled children had died — the system continued to operate. Fleras and Elliott suggest that pervasive Eurocentrism very well could led Christian European settlers and their descendants to truly believe that their initiatives were enlightened and could improve the lives of indigenous peoples.<sup>9</sup> While a weak defense, it seemed to apply broadly at that time not only to the government, but also to journalists who stereotyped indigenous peoples.

There is extensive scholarship on stereotypes of indigenous peoples, including those perpetuated by journalists, but the most common theme paints indigenous peoples as social outcasts. An excerpt from a 1911 *Lethbridge Herald* report on an indigenous festival illustrates the degree of cultural separation shaping prejudice: “‘There in full war paint, with totem poles waving in mid air, bedecked in gaudy feathers, and amid the merry music of jingling bells, beating drums and singing braves, the parade presented a sight that was at the same time awe-inspiring and amusing.’”<sup>10</sup> Throughout history, stereotypes were sustained by journalism that viewed indigenous peoples through

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<sup>8</sup> Constance Backhouse, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900-1950*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 65.

<sup>9</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 182-183.

<sup>10</sup> Backhouse, *Colour-Coded*, 60.

Eurocentric lenses. Those lenses, according to Fleras and Elliott, can be categorized as: eulogization (depictions as savage and/or primitive); debasement (depictions as comical, and/or as victims and/or villains); and stigmatization (depictions as problematic and/or menacing).<sup>11</sup> Representations such as those are consistent with the idea that indigenous peoples and their existence on the periphery pose an inconvenience at best and a threat at worst to Canada's national interest. In that way, the general view taken by the news media of the day paralleled the views of other of other societal institutions.

There is a case to be made that the culture of the news media was consistent with the culture of other institutions in the emerging nation during the early years of the colonial era. However, near the end of the colonial era when global norms began to shift toward egalitarianism and human rights in the aftermath of two World Wars, the extent to which Eurocentrism had become entrenched in the practices of the news media became painfully obvious. The reportage by the news media of the indigenous story in Canada around the turn of the century reflected not just colonial sentiment, but the perceived goals of societal institutions with respect to establishing the nation. It is important here to consider how the construction of the national narrative by the news media conflated with the aims of other societal institutions that sought direct control. According to Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, indigenous peoples were important characters in the story arc insofar that they "became possessions of the state."<sup>12</sup> However, indigenous peoples were not so much passive toward oppressive policies as they were respectful in their attempts to secure their stability within them. In the early 1900s, delegations of indigenous leaders from British Columbia travelled to England to seek assurance directly from the king that

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<sup>11</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 338.

<sup>12</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 100.

the territorial and political rights promised in the Royal Proclamation would be honoured. The delegations were presented with signed portraits of the king and referred back to federal officials in Canada, but they continued to have faith in traditions of oral agreements, which Canada has continually undermined.<sup>13</sup> Relating that back to the news media, as Stuart Hall et al. note, the news media are the secondary definers of society; they rely on primary definers from other institutions for information.<sup>14</sup> In Canada, this relationship was solidified through both legislation and trends in practice.

The development of colonial press in Canada was closely connected to the press in England, an important consideration when it comes to understanding how mainstream views were honed. Kesterton notes how libel legislation from England went on to become a model for the devolved government in Canada.<sup>15</sup> While this was an important step toward establishing institutional hierarchies, even prior to confederation, leaders of the colonial press had their own ideas. By the late 1800s, they were already meeting annually to discuss strategies to deal with both the business and ethics of producing the news. Among the issues deliberated by what would become the Canadian Press Association was the “elevation of the tone of the press.”<sup>16</sup> What that shows is that the leading journalists of the day were very aware of their power to shape societal understanding — that what they said as a collective about whom and in what context mattered. Cronlund Anderson and Roberston’s analysis of how the news covered the death of Grey Owl in 1938 builds on that to explain how indigenous peoples were marginalized in the dominant colonial

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<sup>13</sup> P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Andrew F. Cooper, “The Achilles Heel of Canadian International Citizenship: Indigenous diplomacies and state responses,” *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 13, no. 3 (2007), 101.

<sup>14</sup> Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts, “The Social Production of News,” in *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1978), 57.

<sup>15</sup> Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*, 14.

<sup>16</sup> Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*, 56.

narrative. Grey Owl was actually a British immigrant named Archie Belaney who moved to rural Saskatchewan, but he identified as an indigenous conservationist and went on to become the “poster boy for Canadian colonialism.”<sup>17</sup> However, according to Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, at that point stereotypes had been naturalized in newspapers. Grey Owl was popular in the news media because he was depicted as a noble savage, who, on the surface, appeared to offer an indigenous perspective that did not upset the foundation of the non-indigenous society of the day.<sup>18</sup> After Grey Owl died, the *North Bay Nugget* newspaper in Ontario published a story explaining the truth about Grey Owl’s ancestry. While the *North Bay Nugget* actually learned that Grey Owl was not indigenous three years earlier, Cronlund Anderson and Robertson note the newspaper did not publish a story at that time to protect his legacy.<sup>19</sup> Following the revelation in the *North Bay Nugget*, the reaction of the rest of the news media was bewildered denial, as Cronlund Anderson explained: “Disrobing Belaney, which challenged and thus disturbed the press’s role in the promotion of colonialism, ultimately was solvated by palatable amnesia. As a cultural construct, Grey Owl not so much eased the guilty conscience as he provided direct evidence that colonialism worked.”<sup>20</sup> The way the news media approached information that did not serve the interests of colonialism is indicative of both the underlying bias of journalists as well as how they as a collective filled their role with respect to broader goals as defined by other societal institutions.

The narrative that developed during the colonial era was a product of the agenda set by journalists with a bias toward indigenous peoples and the news media’s tendency

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<sup>17</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 116-117.

<sup>18</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 117

<sup>19</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 129.

<sup>20</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 135.

to operate within narrow parameters of nation building. To refer back to failed indigenous diplomacy efforts, the argument that journalists undermined the indigenous delegations pursuing them by propagating stereotypes that bolstered the legitimacy of government's colonial aspirations could be easily made. As Fleras and Elliott assert: "The dispossession of aboriginal peoples from their lands was facilitated by circulation of negative images of aboriginal peoples as savages, cannibals, and brutes."<sup>21</sup> To that end, the news media, with both broad social and institutional authority to confer meaning, played a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions of nationhood consistent with the political agenda. As scholarship theorizes, official sources dominate the stories produced by the news media. However, considering how it developed as an institution in the colonial era helps to explain Michael Schudson's claim that journalists have come to fulfill a role "to report government affairs to serve the informational functions that make democracy work."<sup>22</sup> With respect to the coverage of Grey Owl's death, journalists were forced to navigate the meaning in the principle of telling the truth to the citizens by reporting he was not actually of indigenous descent. This is demonstrated by the *North Bay Nugget's* conscious decision not to publish the truth about Grey Owl while he was still alive; the story challenged the colonial goals society had come to share. Therefore, it is important to consider how the indigenous story in Canada was reported when it was conducive to the national narrative.

The service of the thousands of indigenous men and women in the Canadian military during the Second World War was warmly received by the news media. As Cronlund Anderson and Robertson describe, by the early 1940s, the dominant stereotype

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<sup>21</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 74.

<sup>22</sup> Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, 52.

of indigenous peoples as violent criminals threatening national security was being usurped by portrayals of patriotism.<sup>23</sup> During that time, the news media developed a frame for indigenous peoples that went beyond the noble savage role to suggest that they were contributing to the greater good of Canada. However, that correlates with the era's overall emphasis on national unity. Representations of indigenous peoples during wartime actually confirmed that the news media used them as characters whose fates did not matter beyond the grandiose construction of nationhood. This is evident because when the war was over, the news media reverted to previous stereotypical depictions of indigenous peoples.<sup>24</sup>

What differed was the fact that following the Second World War, there was heightened global awareness about the catastrophic impact of the discriminatory policies. Although the concept of the right to self-determination is associated with the conclusion of the First World War, it was after the Second World War that decolonization truly began as norms shifted toward egalitarianism and human rights. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Andrew F. Cooper demonstrate in "The Achilles Heel of Canadian International Citizenship" how indigenous peoples in Canada saw an opportunity to challenge their subjugation through the international organizations being established, such as the United Nations.<sup>25</sup> That began to draw attention to the stereotypes of indigenous peoples that journalists perpetuated and a transition toward "normalizing Indianess" occurred.<sup>26</sup> To understand what that meant, it is necessary to consider more closely the culture of redress. While this section explores the intersection between journalists' Eurocentric bias

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<sup>23</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 137.

<sup>24</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 137.

<sup>25</sup> Lackenbauer and Cooper, "The Achilles Heel of Canadian International Citizenship," 101-102.

<sup>26</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 184

and the news media's allegiance to nation building, the next section demonstrates how these established norms translated into covering the increasingly complex sociopolitical nature of indigenous issues in Canada.

### **Redress (1969-2007)**

The internationalization of domestic human rights issues highlighted the cleavages in Canada's colonial model, prompting the federal government to explore options to mitigate the unequal society that had been created. During this period the mainstream narrative in Canada met what Raymond Williams calls alternative formations, even though they barely registered. This section illustrates how the principles guiding journalists and the culture of the news media that had developed with respect to reporting on indigenous peoples were so deeply engrained that coverage of redress was through the longstanding colonial lens. It focuses on the pervasiveness of the Eurocentric bias in journalistic coverage of events, how developments toward egalitarianism in other societal institutions influenced the news media, and the impact on the public discourse around the national narrative.

When reporting the truth about indigenous issues to the citizenry during this time period, journalists came up short. They continued to perpetuate stereotypes and did not include important background information that was available. This is illustrated by journalists' coverage of the federal government's 1969 White Paper and 1970 Red Paper, which affirms Fleras and Elliott's assertion that "context and consequences are crucial variables in shaping different outcomes."<sup>27</sup> The White Paper, which sought to abolish the draconian *Indian Act*, was praised by journalists with headlines such as: "Ottawa plan to treat Indians as full citizens" and "Indian's New Deal: He'll be treated like everyone

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<sup>27</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 74.

else.”<sup>28</sup> However, the White Paper did not receive the same warm reception from indigenous peoples. Scholar Harold Cardinal, the prominent voice behind the Red Paper, eloquently described why in *The Unjust Society*: “We do not want the *Indian Act* because it is a good piece of legislation. It isn’t. It is discriminatory from start to finish. But it is a lever in our hands and an embarrassment to the government, as it should be. No just society and no society with even pretensions to being just can long tolerate such a piece of legislation, but we would rather continue to live in the bondage under the inequitable *Indian Act* than surrender our sacred rights.”<sup>29</sup> Cardinal identified Eurocentrism as a general hindrance to redress: “The big problem for the concerned non-Indian is simply that he does not know what he is doing. He lacks any clear understanding of the Indian and because of this he can’t develop any clear perspective of the issues facing our people.”<sup>30</sup> Among journalists, who espoused support for assimilation even as the federal government retreated from the White Paper,<sup>31</sup> Eurocentrism was clearly pervasive. To Cardinal’s point, it became evident that there were very serious issues facing indigenous peoples as a result of past policy, not the least of which was whitewashing by the news media.

The coverage of the 1971 murder of an indigenous woman in The Pas in northern Manitoba exemplified not only the whitewashing by the news media, but larger problems it caused. Helen Betty Osborne was brutally beaten and stabbed to death with a screwdriver by a group of white men who had been drinking. Despite the fact that area residents allegedly not only knew what had happened, that it was not uncommon for

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<sup>28</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 159.

<sup>29</sup> Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society*, 2nd ed., (Vancouver: Douglas & MacIntyre Ltd., 2001), 119.

<sup>30</sup> Cardinal, *The Unjust Society*, 76.

<sup>31</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 170.

white men to go “squaw-hopping,” and that the police were likely covering it up, the only reportage of the incident was 50 words in the *Winnipeg Free Press* under the headline “Girl Slain At The Pas.”<sup>32</sup> It took 16 years for the details to be made public, when the case finally went to trial. As Cronlund Anderson and Robertson assert, the absence of any investigative reporting was not only unsurprising, but also unfortunately consistent with “a larger narrative that framed (indigenous) women as a threatening presence to the moral order of colonialism.”<sup>33</sup> In 1988, following the trial (which concluded with the imprisonment of one man), the government of Manitoba launched an inquiry into whether racial prejudice against Osborne’s indigenous heritage influenced how the case was handled. The findings released in 1991 determined that racial prejudice did play a role (although the prosecution was not delayed).<sup>34</sup> That report was not the first, nor would it be the last, to indicate that indigenous peoples continued to be wrongly repressed in the social construction of reality in which they lived. However, other institutions began to attempt to change the situation.

While the idea of egalitarianism between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples was not translated via journalists and the news media, it became prevalent in other institutions because of international pressure and domestic movements. In 1977, Sandra Lovelace from the Tobique reserve in New Brunswick challenged the provision of the *Indian Act* that stripped her of her status as a result of her marriage to a non-indigenous man (whom she later divorced). She argued that her right to live on the reserve with her children and preserve her language and culture was dependent on her status, which she

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<sup>32</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 202-204.

<sup>33</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 203.

<sup>34</sup> Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission, *The Death of Helen Betty Osborne*, 1991, accessed January 17, 2015, <http://www.ajic.mb.ca/volumell/toc.html>.

would have kept if she were an indigenous man marrying a non-indigenous woman. After unsuccessfully appealing to the Supreme Court that clause of the *Indian Act* on the grounds of gender discrimination, she took the case to the United Nations Human Rights Committee. As the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* protects minority cultures, the Human Rights Committee ruled in Lovelace's favour. The federal government amended the *Indian Act* accordingly in 1985.<sup>35</sup> Around that same time, there was another important domestic legislative development regarding indigenous rights.

When the Constitution was patriated in 1982, it contained a provision protecting indigenous rights established via treaties during colonialism. The clause was noteworthy for two reasons: it was the result of successful indigenous lobby efforts, and it set the precedent for challenges to Canadian law subjugating indigenous peoples. The establishment of the National Indian Brotherhood (the predecessor of the Assembly of First Nations) in 1969 was significant not only because it unified previously isolated indigenous groups, but because it strengthened their position to negotiate with the federal government, according to Cardinal<sup>36</sup> As Peter H. Russell et al. suggest in *The Court and the Constitution*, a major indication that the National Indian Brotherhood and similar groups that formed over the following decade were gaining momentum was the fact that despite some resistance from provincial premiers, Section 35 was included in the legislation amending the 1867 Constitution.<sup>37</sup> Under section 35, "The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and

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<sup>35</sup> Lackenbauer and Cooper, "The Achilles Heel of Canadian International Citizenship," 104.

<sup>36</sup> Cardinal, *The Unjust Society*, 90.

<sup>37</sup> Peter Russell, Rainer Knopff, Tom Bateman, and Janet Hiebert, *The Court and the Constitution: Leading Cases*, (Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications, 2008), 411.

affirmed.”<sup>38</sup> However, the legal system struggled to define those rights as court cases challenging Canadian law purportedly violating them began to emerge.

The news media were not the only institution tainted by a deeply engrained bias against indigenous peoples. As Fleras and Elliott explain: “The legacy of Eurocentric-based colonialism continues to shape how the legal system identifies and interprets aboriginal rights and relations, in effect, reinforcing the view that Canadian law is not neutral or impartial, but a means by which dominant values are imposed and enforced under the guise of neutrality and objectivity.”<sup>39</sup> While having indigenous rights in the Constitution provided indigenous peoples with a platform from which they could oppose the legitimacy of longstanding policies oppressing them, the subsequent court rulings highlighted the nuanced ambiguity of the amendments. Take the high profile and controversial 1999 decisions around Donald Marshall’s indigenous right to fish, for example. Although the Supreme Court ultimately ruled Marshall’s right was subject to Canadian law, the process revealed there was limited documentation to support the existence of indigenous rights — related to treaties, in particular. One of the recommendations that came out of the case was a need for greater emphasis on oral records.<sup>40</sup> Indigenous cultures, which did not have formal writing, have always considered spoken promises to be a binding part of the treaties. That decision could be understood as an acknowledgement that correcting against the systemic subjugation of indigenous peoples would not be possible within the existing social construction of reality. Its significance is tied to the fact that, as previously established, the news media

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<sup>38</sup> Department of Justice Canada, *A Consolidation of the Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982*, January 1, 2013, accessed January 29, 2016, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-16.html#h-52>.

<sup>39</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 203.

<sup>40</sup> Russell et al., *The Court and the Constitution*, 453.

rely on other institutions to define society. By that point, the news media had already begun to incorporate another dimension to the way they recounted the indigenous story in Canada.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) has historically had a commitment to include all Canadians in its coverage. How effectively it did so over the years has been a result of not only principles guiding journalists and the culture of the news media, but also technology and geography. In 1958, CBC launched a northern television service to in addition to the radio presence it established in the territories in the 1930s. The problem was that the “objectives of this northern service were derived from a southern perspective.”<sup>41</sup> However, indigenous peoples living in northern regions became more interconnected by developments in satellite communications during the 1960s and 1970s. In the early 1980s, the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation was created, balancing CBC programming with local content and providing the policy to redub CBC programming in the local language. The evolution of indigenous media in Canada has been an “exercise in self-determination,” assert Fleras and Elliott. They argue that indigenous ownership fostered “a sense of community commitment and involvement.”<sup>42</sup> An important step toward recognizing this was the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission’s 1991 licensing of Television Northern Canada, which is now known as the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN).

APTN is more than just space for the sociopolitical and cultural expression of indigenous peoples. As Kerstin Knopf asserts in “Aboriginal Media on the Move,” APTN also offers them a platform “from which to contest the ideological and imaginary

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<sup>41</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 346.

<sup>42</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 347-8.

aboriginal constructed in western media discourse.”<sup>43</sup> However, APTN has faced obstacles that put it, like the community it covers, at a competitive disadvantage. While technological progress has meant increased national and international connectivity, it has not translated equally, according to Lorna Roth in “First Peoples Television in Canada.” She claims APTN is chronically underfunded and struggles to keep up with its mainstream counterparts, given its limited transmission capacity.<sup>44</sup> Despite APTN’s ambitious mandate, operational challenges associated with budget constraints have meant it fails to reach many of the members of the communities it strives to cover, much less the broader public. Monika Ille, APTN’s executive director of programming and schedule, explains in a letter to the Canada Media Fund that the way funding formulas weight ratings is stratified toward large broadcasters: “Numeris does not measure Aboriginal audiences or rural or northern audiences (APTN’s target audience). As a result, our ratings are disproportionately lower and we suffer the consequences in our envelopes’ calculations.”<sup>45</sup> As that statement demonstrates, while APTN and indigenous outlets do wield influence in the news media, it is marginal relative to that of mainstream organizations. In that way, although there were important developments in the indigenous story during redress, it was the mainstream interpretation that continued to shape discourse.

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<sup>43</sup> Kerstin Knopf, “Aboriginal Media on the Move: An Outside Perspective on APTN,” in *Indigenous Screen Cultures in Canada*, ed. Sigurjon Baldur Hafsteinsson and Marian Bredin, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2010), 87.

<sup>44</sup> Lorna Roth, “First Peoples Television in Canada: Origins of the Aboriginal Peoples’ Television Network,” in *Indigenous Screen Cultures in Canada*, ed. Sigurjon Baldur Hafsteinsson and Marian Bredin, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2010), 29.

<sup>45</sup> Monika Ille, “Letter from Monika Ille to Stephane Cardin, December 18, 2015,” Canadian Media Fund, accessed January 29, 2015, <http://www.cmf-fmc.ca/documents/files/about/ind-outreach/2015-16/aptn.pdf>.

To try to understand the impact on the national narrative, it is important to consider how events during the period of redress oscillated between the media agenda and the public agenda. The acknowledgments that indigenous peoples had been and were being mistreated challenged the version of history that many Canadians had come to accept. To that point, Maxwell McCombs explains: “In the realm of public affairs, the greater an individual’s need for orientation, the more likely he or she is to attend to the agenda of the news media, with their wealth of information on politics and the government.”<sup>46</sup> There is a case to be made that how the news media interpreted sociopolitical developments in the indigenous story affected broader public engagement toward egalitarianism. As established, the bias of journalists promulgated through the news media continued to paint distorted pictures of indigenous peoples as a problem peoples, insinuating that they threatened territorial integrity, jeopardized social order, drained economic resources, and flooded the criminal justice system.<sup>47</sup> The coverage of the land dispute in 1990 between the town of Oka, Quebec and the local indigenous community demonstrated the pervasiveness of those distortions. According to Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, the scholarly studies in the aftermath of Oka pointed to “an ideological cleavage somewhat resembling the contours of colonial narrative and counter-narrative.”<sup>48</sup> The report in 1996 by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which was formed to address issues such as those brought to light by Oka, concluded: “Aboriginal people are not well represented by or in the media. Many Canadians know Aboriginal people only as noble environmentalists, angry warriors or pitiful victims. A

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<sup>46</sup> Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2014), 77.

<sup>47</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 339-340.

<sup>48</sup> Cronlund Anderson and Robertson, *Seeing Red*, 222.

full picture of their humanity is simply not available ...”<sup>49</sup> As Ronald Niezen notes in *Truth and Indignation*, the Royal Commission actually condemned “nearly every aspect of Canada’s aboriginal policy,”<sup>50</sup> including mismanagement of the Indian Residential School system, to which increasing attention was being paid.

As the federal government began shutting down the schools in the 1970s and 1980s, the abuse indigenous children endured in them became public, “but did not capture the public imagination” until Phil Fontaine, president of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and later the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, revealed he had been a victim.<sup>51</sup> On October 31, 1990, an article on the front page of the *Globe and Mail* alleged that Fontaine and his peers had been “called upon” to perform perverted acts on a priest. In the article, Fontaine was quoted saying: “ ‘I think what happened to me is what happened to a lot of people. It wasn’t just sexual abuse. It was physical and psychological abuse. It was a violation.’ ”<sup>52</sup> Fontaine’s disclosure, as communicated by the news media, sent a ripple through Canada. Not only did it prompt both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples to echo the plea he made for the government to look into what went on behind the schools’ closed doors, it was also a catalyst for thousands of legal claims against the government by former students. As the lawsuits piled up, the government sat down in 2005 with the churches and the Assembly of First Nations to negotiate a solution, and in 2006, signed the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement*

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<sup>49</sup> Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *People to People, Nation to Nation*, 1996, accessed September 20, 2015, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014597/1100100014637>.

<sup>50</sup> Ronald Niezen, *Truth and Indignation: Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 34.

<sup>51</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 183.

<sup>52</sup> David Roberts, “Was abused by priest, native leader alleges,” *Globe and Mail*, October 31, 1990, A1.

*Agreement (IRSSA)*, which went into effect the following year.<sup>53</sup> While journalists and the news media played a role in elevating discourse around indigenous issues during the period of redress to the public agenda, as Oka showed, colonial overtones continued to shape their coverage. However, the *IRSSA* was a turning point because it spelled out the need for reconciliation with indigenous peoples. As demonstrated, the way that journalists and the news media interpreted lofty political rhetoric during redress impacted how the discourse around it developed. This section illustrates that although international and national policy had begun to shift away from colonialism, the news media continued to perpetuate stereotypes of indigenous peoples, undermining developments toward egalitarianism in the indigenous story. However, the next section examines how journalists and the news media are grappling with the concept of reconciliation.

### **Reconciliation (2008-2015)**

When Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized in 2008 for Canada's historic treatment of indigenous peoples, he called longstanding assimilative federal policies toward them "wrong" and asked for forgiveness "for failing them so profoundly."<sup>54</sup> That same year, Canada launched the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on Indian Residential Schools, as stipulated in the *IRSSA*. The TRC was essentially mandated to establish an official record based on testimonies from former students and their families and raise awareness about the abuse they experienced.<sup>55</sup> However, the ideals associated with reconciliation stand in stark contrast to the history of the indigenous story in

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<sup>53</sup> Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 42-43.

<sup>54</sup> Stephen Harper, "PM offers full apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential School system," June 11, 2008, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2008/06/11/pm-offers-full-apology-behalf-canadians-indian-residential-schools-system#sthash.qRVMRtgn.dpuf>.

<sup>55</sup> "Our Mandate," Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, accessed August 16, 2014, <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=7>.

Canada. Referring back to Raymond Williams's synopsis of cultural formations, the alternative formations pushing for inclusion in the mainstream during redress appear to have made headway during reconciliation. While the long-term, enduring news value of ethnocentrism traditionally dominated when it came to covering — or not covering — the indigenous story, a number of key events took place during reconciliation that found resonance in short term news values. As a result, a more comprehensive metanarrative began to emerge in the mainstream. This section explores the principles guiding journalists and the culture of the news media, specifically regarding policy oriented to reconciliation, in order to understand how the national narrative is changing. It considers the juxtaposition between reconciliation and journalists' bias, efforts by the news media as an institution to promote a more inclusive culture, and the agenda being set by mainstream national outlets' coverage.

The concept of reconciliation both aligns with and challenges the principles guiding journalists to tell the truth to the citizenry when it comes to the indigenous story, which has been distorted by colonialism. As Aziz Khaki notes, while freedom of the press might allow for ignorance, "it certainly does not bestow the right to demean, hurt and malign a whole community."<sup>56</sup> That is what has happened historically to indigenous peoples as a result of journalists' Eurocentric bias. Since Joseph Pulitzer's newspaper reign in the late 1800s, there have been openings for journalists to investigate potentially misinformed policies,<sup>57</sup> such as the ones affecting indigenous peoples. Here, it is useful to remember Fleras and Elliott's point that during the colonial era there was a general

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<sup>56</sup> Aziz Khaki, *Depiction and perception: Native Indians and visible minorities in the media*, (Vancouver: Ad Hoc Committee for Better Race Relations, 1988), 27-28.

<sup>57</sup> David A. Copeland, *The Media's Role in Defining the Nation: The Active Voice*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2010), 99.

sentiment that policies subjugating indigenous peoples were morally founded. Fleras and Elliot explain: “It is easy to judge and condemn actions in hindsight, especially when implemented by people who may have genuinely believed that one’s own culture and assumptions were of universal applicability and value.”<sup>58</sup> Understanding that is no longer the case, it can be argued that journalists, by way of their contribution to colonialism over time, now have a very important role to play in reconciliation. In “Reconciliation for Realists,” Susan Dwyer describes reconciliation as: “a process whose aim is to lessen the sting of a tension: to make sense of injuries, new beliefs, and attitudes in the overall narrative context of personal or national life.”<sup>59</sup> That ultimately suggests a need for journalists to not only tell the truth when it comes to the indigenous story, but to also contextualize how it became misconstrued. Halfway through the public hearing process in 2013, Niezen noted media coverage was “sparse.”<sup>60</sup> Two years later as the TRC came to a close journalists appeared to be paying more attention to indigenous peoples and the issues they face.

Nancy Macdonald’s January 2015 special investigation for *Macleans*’s resulted in a long-form feature that focused on racism against indigenous peoples in Winnipeg. Speaking in an interview about what prompted the investigation, Macdonald said, “... it finally feels like in Winnipeg that too much has happened.”<sup>61</sup> She referenced the murder of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine, the indigenous teenager whose body was found wrapped in plastic floating down the Red River in August 2014, as well as blatant discrimination

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<sup>58</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 182-183.

<sup>59</sup> Susan Dwyer, “Reconciliation for Realists,” in *Dilemmas of Reconciliation: Cases and Concepts*, ed. Carol A. L. Prager and Trudy Govier, (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 106.

<sup>60</sup> Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 38.

<sup>61</sup> Nancy Macdonald, interview by John Geddes, “Nancy Macdonald on a story that has everyone talking,” *Macleans*’s, January 23, 2015, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://www.macleans.ca/news/macleans-reporter-nancy-macdonald-on-racism-in-winnipeg/>.

against now-Mayor Brian Bowman, who is Métis, and other indigenous candidates in the October 2014 municipal election campaign. Macdonald explained that she, like many Winnipeggers, was also moved by the attempted murder of 16-year-old Rinelle Harper in November 2014. However, as Macdonald highlights in the feature, the day after Harper spoke publicly about her recovery in December 2014, high school teacher Brad Badiuk posted on Facebook: ““Oh Goddd (sic) how long are aboriginal people going to use what happened as a crutch to suck more money out of Canadians? They have contributed nothing to the development of Canada. Just standing with their hand out. Get to work, tear up the treaties and shut the FK up already. Why am I on the hook for their cultural support?””<sup>62</sup> Macdonald, in the interview, called Badiuk’s comment, which leads the feature, “hideous” and “racist.”<sup>63</sup> Her attempt to contextualize the events that occurred in Winnipeg demonstrates a conscious effort to communicate the scope of the problems facing indigenous peoples not only there, but also across Canada. Such efforts by the news media to do so should be situated within the changing dynamics of other societal institutions.

How the news media as an institution broach coverage of indigenous issues during reconciliation is contingent on a bigger picture of societal relations. While reportage and the stereotypes it perpetuated have generally reflected a Eurocentric bias prevalent in other institutions as well, information revealing the harm such bias has brought to indigenous peoples and their communities over time has become increasingly available. As Lackenbauer and Cooper explore, the globalization of human rights culture

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<sup>62</sup> Nancy Macdonald, “Welcome to Winnipeg, where Canada’s racism problem is at its worst,” *Maclean’s*, January 22, 2015, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/welcome-to-winnipeg-where-canadas-racism-problem-is-at-its-worst/>.

<sup>63</sup> Macdonald, interview by John Geddes.

compounded by technological advances have put pressure on Canada to reconsider its indigenous policies,<sup>64</sup> and lent legitimacy to indigenous rights movements. As a result, the news media have had opportunities to consider the nuances inherent to the stories produced on indigenous issues. One outlet that appears to have done that is CBC, which launched a digital platform in December 2013 specifically to tell indigenous stories. Fiona Conway, CBC's executive director of programming at the time, cited the Idle No More campaign, through which hundreds of indigenous communities across the country rallied in solidarity to promote their rights and draw attention to treaty violations, as a primary driver. Conway wrote in a statement posted on *J-Source* that associated events "drove home the need for the public broadcaster to cover First Nation issues more thoroughly and to create conversation in which all Canadians can participate."<sup>65</sup> Similarly, the *Globe and Mail's* public editor, Sylvia Stead, wrote in June 2015 about the attention and care required when covering indigenous issues. She quoted her colleague, Angela Murphy, who was heading up a series on the disproportionate number of missing and/or murdered indigenous women, about the "'need to better understand the ongoing impact of colonization, the residential school system, of the *Indian Act*.'"<sup>66</sup> It is the associated complexities that the *Globe and Mail* has seemingly tried to capture in the missing and/or murdered series, which highlights the historical ambivalence of societal institutions to the situation. In February 2015, Kathryn Blaze Carlson and Renata D'Aliesio considered how the "Planned Canadian DNA data bank will fall short of gold

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<sup>64</sup> Lackenbauer and Cooper, "The Achilles Heel of Canadian International Citizenship," 113.

<sup>65</sup> Fiona Conway, "CBC launches digital aboriginal unit," *J-Source*, December 9, 2013, accessed September 27, 2015, <http://j-source.ca/article/cbc-launches-aboriginal-digital-unit>.

<sup>66</sup> Sylvia Stead, "Inclusivity important when writing about indigenous issues," *Globe and Mail*, June 17, 2015, accessed September 13, 2015, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/community/inside-the-globe/public-editor-inclusivity-important-when-writing-about-indigenous-issues/article25003829/>.

standard as a tool in search for missing indigenous women,” examining how unidentifiable human remains can pose challenges to such a data bank. Ultimately, the story highlighted shortcomings in the government’s plan.<sup>67</sup> In a May 2015 feature on “The Death and Life of Cindy Gladue,” Blaze Baum took a different approach. Blaze Baum painted a portrait of Gladue as a loving mother of three daughters struggling to navigate a high-risk lifestyle. The depiction put a human face to Gladue, who was a sex worker at the time she was found dead in an Alberta hotel room after spending a night with an Ontario trucker.<sup>68</sup> These efforts by mainstream national media outlets to undertake projects that examine the indigenous story from a new angle leads to the question of why. To begin to consider that, it is necessary to examine the intersection of the public agenda and media agenda.

During reconciliation, more so than during the colonialism or redress periods, the public agenda has influenced the media agenda around the indigenous story in Canada. In *The Elements of Journalism*, Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel explore how technology has enabled citizens to contribute to the news.<sup>69</sup> However, Angela Phillips demonstrates in “Old Sources: New Bottles” that the glut of information it makes available has in many instances narrowed perspectives.<sup>70</sup> It is interesting to note the salience of the indigenous story, traditionally sidelined, amid what McCombs refers to as the increasing diversity of

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<sup>67</sup> Kathryn Blaze Carlson and Renata D’Aliesio, “Planned Canadian DNA data bank will fall short of gold standard as a tool in search for missing indigenous women,” *Globe and Mail*, February, 26, 2015, accessed September 27, 2015, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/planned-canadian-dna-data-bank-will-fall-short-of-gold-standard-as-tool-in-search-for-missing-indigenous-women/article23221815/>.

<sup>68</sup> Kathryn Blaze Carlson, “The death and life of Cindy Gladue,” *Globe and Mail*, May 15, 2015, accessed September 27, 2015, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/the-death-and-life-of-cindy-gladue/article24455472/>.

<sup>69</sup> Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 246.

<sup>70</sup> Angela Phillips, “Old Sources: New Bottles,” in *New Media, Old New: Journalism and Democracy in the Digital Age*, ed. Natalie Fenton, (London: Sage, 2010), 99.

the public agenda.<sup>71</sup> Around the same time as the *Globe and Mail* series, CBC's Aboriginal Unit launched a similar special project: an interactive database profiling the country's hundreds of missing and/or murdered indigenous women and girls whose cases remain open. While many names have headshots and biographies with contributions from their families and friends, some remain silhouettes with few words other than what police said about the crimes when they happened. At the bottom of the website, CBC calls on the public to help fill in the blanks: "Do you have information on an unsolved case involving missing or murdered indigenous women or girls? CBC needs you."<sup>72</sup> This is a significant departure from the previous ambivalence of the news media in general to indigenous stories. Not only is CBC telling indigenous stories, it is actively seeking sources for assistance on an ongoing basis.

The special project undertaken by CBC, like the *Globe and Mail* series and Macdonald's *Maclean's* investigation, coincided with the release of the executive summary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, the issues in the special projects, like other issues indigenous peoples face, are not new. What is new is the apparent interest of national mainstream media outlets in elevating discourse. Although there is extensive literature and even scholarly studies on reporting on indigenous issues in Canada during colonialism and redress, there is a much smaller body to draw from during reconciliation. While the way that Canada's indigenous story has historically been covered fits with trends in journalism practice, the way it is being covered now is markedly different. To that end, it becomes important to consider the factors influencing

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<sup>71</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 83.

<sup>72</sup> CBC, "Missing and Murdered: Unsolved cases of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls," accessed September 13, 2015, <http://www.cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/>.

continuity and evolution of the way journalists have covered the indigenous story in Canada.

At the outset, it appears the news media are challenging the Eurocentric bias of journalists and the resulting stereotypes of indigenous peoples. Indigenous activism was typically framed as a departure from established norms, according to Fleras and Elliott, who note protestors were framed as “dangerous” and/or “irrational.”<sup>73</sup> As demonstrated in this literature review, leaders in the news media are now more or less crediting indigenous activism for bringing to light the nuances of longstanding issues the institution had previously failed to identify. The contradiction between that and Michael Schudson’s assertion that journalists are typically reluctant to steward causes is interesting.<sup>74</sup> In *Un/covering the North*, Valerie Alia postulates that the louder indigenous voices become, “the stronger will be the challenge to conventional colonial thinking.”<sup>75</sup> Given that journalists and the news media have figured so prominently in perpetuating colonial thinking, it is worth acknowledging their role in mitigating it. The general summation Fleras and Elliott make about the future for indigenous peoples in Canada is only too pertinent to the news media: “It is one thing to promote aboriginal proposals for renewal and reform. It is quite another to put into practice the goals of indigenous-plus self-determination and aboriginal treaty rights.”<sup>76</sup> For this reason, the decisions that journalists make about how to report the indigenous story in Canada matter because the news media have influence over public discourse.

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<sup>73</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 340.

<sup>74</sup> Michael Schudson, “Reluctant Stewards: Journalism in a Democratic Society,” *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 142, no. 2 (Spring 2013), 172.

<sup>75</sup> Valerie Alia, *Un/Covering the North: News, Media and Aboriginal People*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 161.

<sup>76</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 200.

The theoretical framework and final section of this literature review broadly suggest that journalists and the news media have a role to play in the reconciliation process. However, the point of this thesis is not to argue that; it is to explore how journalists make decisions about what to report during the reconciliation period. Extending the theoretical framework in this literature review to investigate three contemporary case studies sheds light on the factors influencing continuity and evolution in principles guiding journalists, the culture of the news media, and the national narrative.

### Chapter Three: Methodology for the Case Studies

Journalists have strong guiding principles that are inherently compromised by the constructed reality in which they operate, as the review of the literature indicates. Their search for credibility within constrained parameters has historically led them to report an incomplete version of the indigenous story in Canada. Interestingly, the recent and marked departure from that practice is both consistent and inconsistent with existing scholarship. This thesis sets out to explore why by triangulating the literature review with case studies on three national mainstream media outlets using two empirical forms of evidence, content analyses and interviews.

I used case studies for this social science research because they permit a snapshot of a phenomenon in a specific time period to be tested against historical understandings of and explanations relevant to other events.<sup>1</sup> As the literature review illustrates, media coverage of indigenous issues has complex social, political, and economic overtones. I acknowledge that by concentrating on certain media outlets' coverage in a specific time period, some of those overtones are not captured. However, this approach is still of benefit because it demonstrates to an extent how conscious the media is of those nuances and encapsulates how they are portrayed to the public.

Generally speaking, there are fundamental threats to the validity of case studies. Those threats are essentially grounded in the fact that case studies, as qualitative research, are not robust and cannot determine causality. However, incorporating a quantitative component where relevant, as this thesis does, adds further legitimacy and strengthens the comparative advantage that this approach ultimately provides. As respected

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, "Case Studies and Social Science," in *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 5.

communication scholars, such as Maxwell McCombs as well as Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder, have pointed out in their own projects, both qualitative and quantitative elements are important to understanding how the media operates to produce journalism.

The three case studies of this thesis focus on the contemporary work of: the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

### **Case Study Selection**

The *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC were selected primarily because they represent the mainstream. Revisiting the definition of scholars Frances Henry and Carol Tator, the mainstream is “the dominant culture and the political, social, educational, cultural and economic institutions through which its power is maintained and reproduced.”<sup>2</sup> This is an important consideration when examining how indigenous peoples and the issues they face are conveyed to a society that may not be acquainted with their circumstances. Mainstream media depictions could very plausibly be a major, if not sole, source of information for many people to understand the various nations that make up indigenous peoples in Canada.

Considering snapshots from only the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC weakens the data being assessed; it is not part of a full set, but rather a sample. However, this is an acceptable risk to take within the bounds of this thesis because this sample is representative of broader news coverage. This is backed up by philosopher Karl Popper's 1934 logic of having a falsifiable theory. Popper argued the mathematic probability of all scientific theories is essentially zero using the analogy that proving all swans are white is

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<sup>2</sup> Frances Henry and Carol Tator, *Discourses of Domination: Racial Bias in the Canadian English-Language Press*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 246.

only done by searching for black swans without finding any.<sup>3</sup> In the case studies, I am analyzing media outlets that are essentially equipped to produce what could be considered the best coverage. Other media outlets without the same capacity should be able to cover indigenous issues at least as poorly. Further to that point, McCombs has argued the “elite news media,” which the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean’s*, and CBC justifiably are, “frequently exert a substantial influence on the agenda of other news media.”<sup>4</sup> Arguably, the three media outlets chosen for analysis are demonstrative of broader trends. If another mainstream media outlet were to be substituted, the findings would still stand, given the criteria used in the selection process.

There were five criteria considered in ascending order to parse out the three mainstream media outlets for the case studies in this thesis:

1. Mainstream, with a national general news and current affairs focus: Taking into account only mainstream media outlets that target national audiences ensures that they have the resources to generate general news and current affairs content to reach what could be considered the largest and broadest demographic possible. From the researcher’s perspective, the *Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *Le Devoir*, *Maclean’s*, *The Walrus*, *L’Actualité*, CBC, CTV Television Network, Global Television Network, Radio-Canada, and TVA all fit this criterion.
2. Representative of newspapers, magazines, and broadcasting, with an online presence: The purpose of this criterion was to capture the unique nuances of the

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<sup>3</sup> Imre Lakatos, “Falsification and the methodology of scientific research programmes,” in *The methodology of scientific research programmes: Philosophical Papers, Volume I*, ed. John Worrall and Gregory Currie, (New York: Cambridge UP, 1978), 11.

<sup>4</sup> Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2014), 128.

major platforms for distributing news. My aim was to have media outlets representing different platforms. The *Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, and *Le Devoir* were categorized as newspapers while *Maclean's*, *The Walrus*, and *L'Actualité* were categorized as magazines. CBC, CTV Television Network, Global Television Network, Radio-Canada, and TVA were all categorized as broadcast networks.

3. English-language: While there are two official languages in Canada, the Anglophone population is significantly bigger and dispersed over a wider geographic area. To that end, Francophone media is not widely circulated outside of the province of Quebec. This criterion eliminated *Le Devoir* from the newspapers and Radio-Canada and TVA from the broadcast networks.
4. Longstanding: The number of years that the media outlets have been providing coverage was a criterion because the longer its reportage has been in the public sphere, the more likely it has made conclusive contributions to the narrative of the indigenous story in Canada. This criterion means more accuracy can be assumed in triangulation with the literature review. The *Globe and Mail* was the longest standing newspaper, *Maclean's*, the longest standing magazine, and CBC, the longest standing broadcast network.
5. Produced content for a major project on indigenous peoples in 2015: The *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC all produced content for major projects on indigenous peoples (relating in some way to missing and murdered indigenous women) in 2015. This criterion is important because it signals the change in the way the indigenous story was being reported that inspired this thesis. These major

projects appear to be on the cusp of a more inclusive historical metanarrative in Canada.

It should be acknowledged that wire services were not considered specifically for the case studies. To that end, the mainstream national media outlets selected for analysis more or less pick up wire coverage from major services, such as the Canadian Press, Bloomberg and Reuters.

### **Parameters for the Content Analyses**

The content analyses in the first part of each of the case studies offer a snapshot across platforms of how journalists approached covering the country's indigenous story in recent years — not a comprehensive historical breakdown. To ensure feasibility, the content analyses are limited to the work produced by the three selected outlets between July 2007 and June 2008. The purpose is to provide a glimpse into their reportage, specifically, when federal policy positions around reconciliation were being established. The period begins in July 2007, and shortly after, in September 2007, the *Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement* went into effect. The period ends with launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and federal apology in June 2008. If a departure from the colonial narrative were to occur, it would have been during this period based on how journalists understand and fulfill their role in society to report government affairs, according to the theoretical framework. Furthermore, conducting the content analyses during this period suggests the findings should correlate to an extent with the overall conclusions of Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson's study. They determined that at least up until 2009, colonial attitudes continued to influence mainstream media portrayals of indigenous peoples in Canada. Their study is ultimately

in keeping with the long-term enduring news values, particularly of ethnocentrism and altruistic democracy, which Herbert Gans explains simply has winners and losers.<sup>5</sup> Building on that, Cronlund Anderson and Robertson's finding also validates Peter Desbarats's arguments for the Dogma of Modernity, which aligns European culture with progress, as well the Gospel of Harmony, which repressed concerns about racial inequality.<sup>6</sup> However, short-term news values also play a role in how the indigenous story is told. Considering how they guide the stories journalists choose to pursue, looking at a full year of coverage during which a number of key developments in the indigenous story occurred allows journalists a window of introspect to evaluate their coverage.

To gather the content, I used ProQuest database, which has every episode of CBC's national newscast dating back to September 4, 1995, every volume of *Maclean's* dating back to January 6, 1992, and every issue of the *Globe and Mail* dating back to November 14, 1977. I used a predetermined list of general key terms commonly used in the literature to identify indigenous peoples and the nations that comprise them as minorities to search each publication separately. The terms were: indigenous, aboriginal, "First Nation," "First Nations," Métis, and Inuit. Two other popular lexicons, Indian and native (American), were left out intentionally as they are frequently used in other contexts and would generate too many non-applicable results. The term Indian, for example, also identifies nations from the Asian continent, while the term native, as an adjective, is used in various circumstances to explain the geographic indigeneity of many nouns. Adding the term American would have modified it to describe more accurately the

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<sup>5</sup> Herbert Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 43.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Desbarats, *Guide to Canadian News Media*, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990), 15.

First Peoples in the United States, not Canada. In that way, while the search was comprehensive, journalistic works that used different terminology could potentially have been left out. While discussing exclusions, it is worth pointing out that ongoing conversations on social media were also omitted. Although it is indisputable that social media have been and continue to be an extremely useful tool for journalists, the content analyses focus on the more traditional approaches to journalistic storytelling that created the colonial narrative for comparative purposes.

The second part of each of the case studies considers at least one in-depth multimedia project from 2014-2015. The *Globe and Mail* produced “The Taken,” *Maclean’s* produced “Welcome to Winnipeg” and “It could have been me,” and CBC produced “Missing and Murdered.” There are a few reasons I took this approach, but first and foremost is that the media landscape has changed drastically since 2007-2008. As David Taras explains in “The New Architecture of Media Power,” the Internet has caused disruptive innovation among the news media: “...many of the old boundaries, many of the old distinctions, are disintegrating as traditional media are being reassemble and reshaped.”<sup>7</sup> The way that these mainstream national media outlets are presenting stories is much different in 2014-2015 than was the case in 2007-2008; their focus is increasingly digital. It would therefore be remiss to focus on the traditional platforms as opposed to digital. However, it is much more difficult to track their day-to-day digital content. Given the expanse of digital realm, media outlets are now all dabbling in audio, video and text-based stories. The scope of production now makes it harder to keep

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<sup>7</sup> David Taras, “The New Architecture of Media Power,” in *Digital Mosaic: Media, Power, and Identity in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 14.

consistent archives. For example, even searching the *Globe and Mail* or *Maclean's* archives for their special projects does not turn up the full stories available online.

Recognizing there are significant differences between the special projects and day-to-day news coverage, looking at both versus making a direct comparison in my case studies is not only an acceptable risk, but is beneficial. Here, I refer again to Popper's falsification logic; irrespective of the platform, the special projects in 2014-2015 are undoubtedly some of the most comprehensive stories in mainstream media capturing the nuances of what it means to be indigenous living in Canada. The purpose of analyzing the 2007-2008 coverage is to ascertain a benchmark against which to consider the continuity and evolution in the way journalists reported the indigenous story in 2014-2015. I am ultimately digging into how journalists make decisions and want to learn about what was done and is being done differently. Focusing on the special projects, which appear at the outset to be precedent-setting, provides important insights about the factors that motivated journalists to pursue such in-depth reporting. However, to ensure at least some level of comparative evaluation, specific benchmarks to gauge qualitative components are required.

### **Evaluating the Content Analyses**

McCombs, whose pioneering work on agenda-setting and the news media has guided other leading scholars (from Gaye Tuchman to Herbert Gans to David Copeland) for decades, determined there are three social roles for mass communication in a society. Those roles are surveying the larger environment, consensus-building, and transmitting culture.<sup>8</sup> Further outlining these broad functions more explicitly vis-à-vis covering indigenous issues in Canada provides this thesis's basis for evaluating what constitutes

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<sup>8</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 134.

quality journalism. However, with regards to the first part of the case studies, it is necessary to start with what constitutes journalism. As determined by the literature review, there are varied definitions. For the purposes of this methodology, journalism has to be a form of reporting on news or current affairs gathered and presented by the media outlet, which means that resources had to be divested. While this allows for special contributions by freelancers and wire service coverage to be incorporated, it means that editorial and opinion pieces, including letters to the editors in print media and viewer responses in broadcast media, are excluded. Also excluded are articles or reports in which indigenous peoples are only mentioned. By that, I mean that the crux of the story is not specifically about indigenous peoples or an issue affecting them. There are two specific scenarios here. In the first scenario, indigenous peoples were clearly not contacted as crucial commentators in the curated story arc. For example, a story that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on February 4, 2008 focused on how a 2006 storm that ravaged Stanley Park inspired an art exhibit at the Vancouver Art Gallery. The story mentions that Stanley Park has a lot of history as indigenous villages once existed there.<sup>9</sup> In the second scenario, one or more of the six terms (usually the term “indigenous”) appeared in another context, often referring to indigenous peoples in another country. For example a CBC story from September 4, 2007 looked at a hurricane wreaking havoc in Central America. The story mentions that the indigenous peoples living on the Atlantic coast of Central America could be in danger.<sup>10</sup> While the fact that indigenous peoples only mentioned in these stories could be an indicator that they remain on the periphery of society, there are limited opportunities for further qualitative analysis. Because my aim is

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<sup>9</sup> Marsha Lederman, “Finding beauty in nature’s wrath,” *Globe and Mail*, February 2, 2008, S4.

<sup>10</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC, September 4, 2007, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed December 2015).

to find out more about how journalists make decisions about telling the indigenous story, it is helpful to consider reports and articles with more emphasis on indigenous peoples.

I conduct further discourse analysis on small portion of the stories from each of the three outlets focused on federal policies directly affecting indigenous peoples. I zero in on articles and reports on federal policies because they align with the juxtaposition between long-term news values and short-term news values outlined earlier. Taking this approach provides the opportunity to examine how journalists respond to a fairly clear-cut departure by the government from the longstanding narrative that has marginalized indigenous peoples. I realize that the bigger picture of indigenous peoples in Canada has been shaped by stories in the news media about other topics, ranging from the environment to crime, the economy to health. However, to refer to Popper's falsification logic again, I want to consider the stories that journalists would be most likely to change the way they report on indigenous peoples. Based on news values, those stories would be about federal policies dealing with issues related to reconciliation.

With that in mind, to be considered quality journalism in further discourse analysis, articles and reports have to uphold the three social roles of effective mass communication identified by McCombs. McCombs's components of effective mass communication as they relate to agenda-setting are quite broad. I flesh them out in more detail with practical insights from the online Reporting in Indigenous Communities (RIIC) guide on framing to use them as measures of the way the indigenous story is told:

1. Surveying the larger environment: McCombs notes that it is through mass media exposure that "people become aware of major elements in the environment beyond their immediate personal ken and ascribe particular importance to a

particular few.”<sup>11</sup> When it comes to covering indigenous issues, it is important to consider how little exposure to indigenous peoples and their cultures that the vast majority of the Canadian public has had. RIIC reiterates that journalists’ first obligation is to the truth and notes that when it comes to indigenous stories, there are many Canadians who rely on journalists to bring them into the mainstream; otherwise, these Canadians might not know where to turn to find them.<sup>12</sup> In evaluating whether the coverage is surveying the larger environment, I take a quantitative approach, looking at the proportion of stories on indigenous peoples and the issues they face as well as the proportion of indigenous sources consulted in those stories.

2. Consensus-building: McCombs links the mass media to societal consensus on topics. Using a quote from scholars Jian-Hua Zhu and William Boroson, McCombs argues: “ ‘The media agenda-setting effects are not manifested in creating different levels of salience among individuals, but are evident at driving the salience of all individuals up and down over time.’ ”<sup>13</sup> With respect to reporting the indigenous story in Canada, journalists should not disparage indigenous peoples’ capacity to find solutions to challenges in their own communities. RIIC asserts that when the news media depict indigenous peoples as lacking agency, the public is unlikely to show support for the transfer of federal power and resources that many require to work toward goals, including self-

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<sup>11</sup> McCombs. *Setting the Agenda*, 134.

<sup>12</sup> Reporting in Indigenous Communities, “News Stereotypes of Aboriginal Peoples,” accessed January 2, 2016: <http://www.riic.ca/the-guide/on-the-air/context-and-colonial-amnesia/>.

<sup>13</sup> McCombs. *Setting the Agenda*, 134.

governance,<sup>14</sup> to which they are constitutionally entitled. To assess consensus-building, I take a qualitative and quantitative approach, examining where indigenous sources are introduced in the story as a measure of the agency they have in shaping the frame. According to Stuart Hall et al.: “Arguments against a primary interpretation are forced to insert themselves into its definition of ‘what is at issue’ — they must begin from this framework of interpretation as their starting point.”<sup>15</sup> Recognizing that background context also plays a role, consensus-building is explored hand-in-hand with transmitting culture.

3. Transmitting culture: McCombs explains how agenda-setting is more than conveying messages about culture and beliefs: “Taking the larger view, the agenda-setting influence of the media on these broad civic attitudes is far more important than any agenda-setting effects on specific issues and opinions.”<sup>16</sup> For the public to conceptualize the richness of indigenous cultures, journalists must avoid building stories around perpetuating the five key stereotypes identified by RIIC: warrior, drumming, dancing, drunk, or dead.<sup>17</sup> Regarding this criterion, I do not specifically look at those stereotypes. Instead, I take a qualitative approach, analyzing whether enough context is provided to mitigate broader notions of indigenous peoples as victims of the existing system or aggressors attempting to upset it.

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<sup>14</sup> Reporting in Indigenous Communities, “News Stereotypes of Aboriginal Peoples,” accessed January 2, 2016: <http://www.riic.ca/the-guide/in-the-field/white-characters-and-the-question-of-agency/>.

<sup>15</sup> Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts, “The Social Production of News,” in *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1978), 58.

<sup>16</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 137.

<sup>17</sup> Reporting in Indigenous Communities, “News Stereotypes of Aboriginal Peoples,” accessed January 2, 2016: <http://www.riic.ca/the-guide/in-the-field/white-characters-and-the-question-of-agency/>.

Interpreting the content produced by each media outlet through this lens establishes the basis from which to understand contemporary approaches to telling the indigenous story in Canada as explained by reporters, editors, and managers in the interviews.

### **Criteria for Selecting Journalists to Interview**

The goal of the interviews is to induce insight based on the unique experiences of journalists who have covered indigenous issues to understand what has contributed to their understanding and telling of the indigenous story in Canada. The targeted number of interviewees was between 10 and 15. My aim was to have three to four journalists from the *Globe and Mail*, three to four from *Maclean's*, and three to four from CBC. I also wanted to interview three to four journalists from the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN). I felt it was important to include APTN in light of discussion in the literature review about mainstream, alternative, and oppositional formations. To return to Raymond Williams point, those associated with alternative formations are aiming for inclusion in the mainstream.<sup>18</sup>

Considering indigenous media have played an important role in elevating a narrative alternative to the mainstream, it would be remiss not to include the perspectives of journalists who work for indigenous media. As Marian Bredin explains in “Indigenous Media as Alternative Media,” the engagement of indigenous media “with indigenous cultural knowledge, strong links to local communities, and commitment to fostering cultural participation for Aboriginal people make them unique in the rapidly transforming

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<sup>18</sup> Raymond Williams, *Culture*, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Fontana, 1981), 256.

national and global mediascapes.”<sup>19</sup> Therefore, when analyzing trends in the content analyses, including the perspective of indigenous media is critical to painting fuller picture of continuity and evolution. Reverting to the criteria for selecting media outlets, APTN is the only indigenous media outlet that fulfills the first criterion’s requirements of national scope with a general news and current affairs focus. Recognizing that having a wholly indigenous focus fundamentally distinguishes APTN’s content from that produced by the mainstream, a case study to evaluate its content was not conducted for comparison. The purpose of including APTN is neither to look at how short-term and long-term news values come together in its coverage nor to show whether it differs from mainstream media coverage. The purpose is to consider the perspectives of journalists exclusively covering the indigenous story in the years before the indigenous story gained traction in the mainstream.

In the end, I spoke with 11 journalists for this thesis, which took into consideration both feasibility within the scope of a master’s-level thesis and the reality of reaching content saturation. New perspectives are typically gained from the first few interviews, but at a certain point the answers become redundant. The following criteria were used to determine interviewees:

1. Gender: Acknowledging that men and women can have different views on social constructs, the idea was to have a 50:50 ratio of either men to women, or women to men to balance perspectives. This was important because some of the topics journalists report on, such as the disproportionate number of missing and murdered indigenous women, do have a gender angle and could resonate

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<sup>19</sup> Marian Bredin, “Indigenous Media as Alternative Media,” in *Alternative Media in Canada*, ed. Kirsten Kozolanka, Patricia Mazepa, and David Skinner, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 203.

differently with women and men. In the end, 64 per cent of interviewees were women and 36 per cent of interviewees were men.

2. Indigenous heritage: As the literature review reveals the omission of indigenous perspectives has historically contributed to an inaccurate version of the indigenous story, the value of the viewpoints of indigenous journalists should not be overlooked. Two of the three interviewees from APTN have indigenous heritage, while half of the targeted interviewees from CBC, which has an indigenous division, have indigenous heritage. I only interviewed one non-indigenous journalist from Maclean's. One of the three journalists from the *Globe and Mail* has indigenous heritage.
3. Years of experience: Years of experience proxies age and the insights that journalists from different age groups may have on accepted norms, including with respect to minority groups, and could bear some influence on their reportage. As the content analyses focus on the period between mid-2007 and mid-2008, in selecting interviewees, the goal was a range of between eight and 30 years of experience.
4. Position: Journalists who hold different positions within the media outlets can have different priorities. That being said, approximately one third of the targeted interviewees were newsroom managers, one third were editors with sway over individual stories, and one third were reporters.

Language was a criterion for selecting outlets, but not the journalists within them.

Therefore, it was important to find at least one Francophone journalist within the pool of interviewees to mitigate the overall weakness of not considering the technically national

dualistic language system. Francophone and Anglophone journalism in Canada ultimately speak to different audiences. At the most basic level, the journalists working for the public broadcaster to provide CBC coverage in English Canada are different from the journalists providing Radio-Canada coverage in French Canada. Furthermore, indigenous peoples who live in Quebec, which is also where the majority of Francophones are based, share a unique history as a result of the province's own cultural values. To ensure a Francophone, Quebecois, indigenous perspective was included in this thesis, I reached out to an indigenous French-speaking journalist from APTN based in Montreal. However, I recognize that a single source-source sample does not provide inductive accuracy.

### **The Interview Process**

To understand more fully the factors that have influenced the continuity or evolution of the way journalists have covered the indigenous story in Canada, it is important to consider how both historical and contemporary variables have shaped their understanding of it. The interviews are based on the following questions:

- As a journalist, what do you see as your role in telling the indigenous story?
- What do you think the indigenous story is?
- Do you feel the way you have covered indigenous issues has changed at all in recent years? If so, how?
- What inspired the special attention you have paid to indigenous issues as of late?
- What inspired the special attention your company has paid to indigenous issues as of late?

- Information has been available on these issues facing indigenous in Canada for decades. Why are you now pursuing them?
- What journalistic techniques and methods did you use in your recent coverage of indigenous issues?
- Can you describe the sort of background research that was done in preparation?
- What challenges did you encounter along the way?
- What type of feedback have you received? Is it by and large attitudinally similar or different to the type of feedback you have traditionally received?
- Has your understanding of the indigenous story in Canada and indigenous/non-indigenous relations changed as a result of the time and effort you have spent covering indigenous issues as of late? If so, how?

Participant bias is an obvious threat to the validity of the interview process as the answers are innately subjective because they are from people who presently work in the field and will be shaped by current circumstances. However, the answers need to come from those journalists in order to comment on how periods of change and/or stagnation in the socio-political climate have impacted their journalistic decision-making and more broadly, the journalist decision-making of the media outlet for which they work. The findings of the interviews are strengthened by the fact that they are evaluated in concert with the findings of the content analyses and literature review. Researcher bias is also a methodological hurdle because I, as a journalist as well (of non-indigenous heritage), developed the interview questions. However, that is counterbalanced by the fact that most

of the questions were open-ended and did not lead interviewees toward an answer. The process for posing them was semi-structured, allowing interviewees to talk more freely.

#### **Chapter Four: Case Studies of coverage by the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC**

Analyzing the continuity and evolution in the coverage of issues affecting indigenous peoples by mainstream national media outlets requires a baseline for comparison. The following cases studies of the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) consider what coverage looked like at the beginning of the denoted reconciliation period in 2007-2008 as well as closer to the end in 2014-2015. Each case study has two sections. As noted, the first section is a content analysis based on a search of the media outlet's archives through ProQuest between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008. The second section contrasts the findings against the special project(s) the media outlet produced over 2014-2015. The special project I look at from the *Globe and Mail* is called "The Taken." From *Maclean's*, I consider "Welcome to Winnipeg" and "It could have been me." From CBC, I assess "Missing and Murdered." In all three case studies, I include comments from interviews with journalists who worked on them to help understand the breakdowns.

As detailed the previous chapter, the standards used to evaluate the coverage from both 2007-2008 and 2014-2015 are based on a conception of quality journalism inspired by Maxwell McCombs's understanding that effective mass communication relies on its ability to: survey the larger environment, build consensus, and transmit culture.<sup>1</sup> In surveying the larger environment, I consider the proportionality of the coverage of issues affecting indigenous peoples against other topics as well as to the sources consulted in that coverage. With respect to building consensus, I explore the introduction of sources via the conflict in the story arc of the report or article to evaluate whether the agency

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<sup>1</sup> Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2014), 134.

indigenous peoples have to achieve their own goals is evident. Similarly, the transmission of indigenous culture is contingent on framing that avoids common stereotypes of indigenous peoples by including background context.

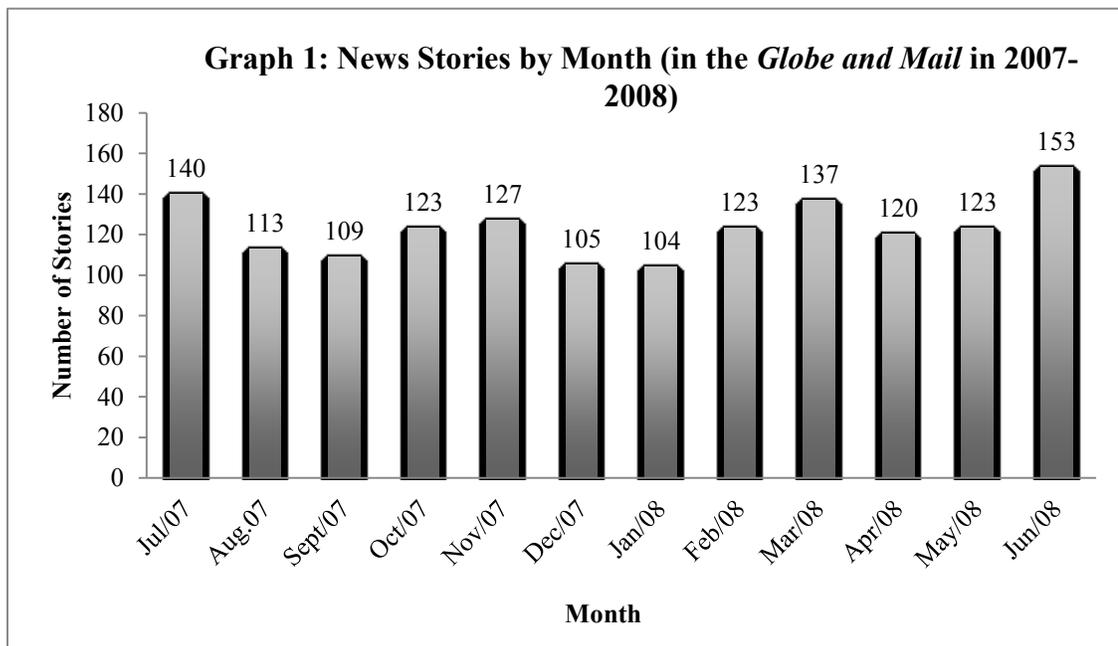
### ***Globe and Mail***

The *Globe and Mail* is one of only two national newspapers in Canada. Founded in 1844, it has been reporting to Canadians more than 150 years longer than the *National Post*, which only launched in 1998. The *Globe and Mail's* longevity, coupled with its reach (its average daily print and digital circulation in 2014 was 358,182, nearly double that of the *National Post*),<sup>2</sup> solidifies it as a go-to news source and not only an appropriate, but necessary case study for this thesis.

To take a closer look at the proportion of coverage the *Globe and Mail* gave indigenous issues when it came to surveying of the larger environment in 2007-2008, I started by searching archived content during the delineated time period. I used the search terms indigenous, aboriginal, "First Nation," "First Nations," Métis, and Inuit, which turned up a total of 1,513 articles. I excluded the 38 identified as commentary and/or editorial and I was left with 1,475 potential news stories as the starting point for a content analysis (see Graph 1). One month's worth of coverage was then selected to provide a detailed snapshot of the topics and formats of those stories. To determine which month to focus on, I took the mean, median, and mode of the stories produced during each one, which was 123. There were three months with that number of stories — October, February, and April. I zeroed in on February because it fell in the middle.

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<sup>2</sup> Newspapers Canada, *Circulation Report: Daily Newspapers 2014*, May 2015, accessed March 16, 2016, [http://www.newspaperscanada.ca/sites/default/files/2014\\_Circulation\\_Report-Daily\\_Newspapers\\_in\\_Canada\\_FINAL\\_20150603\\_0.pdf](http://www.newspaperscanada.ca/sites/default/files/2014_Circulation_Report-Daily_Newspapers_in_Canada_FINAL_20150603_0.pdf).



Data compiled from ProQuest's *Globe and Mail* archives

After reading through all of the articles from February, I excluded the 58 in which indigenous peoples were simply mentioned in passing, or in a different context, such as being indigenous to another country, for example, Australia. That means with respect to proportionality in surveying the larger environment, only 65 of the 123 articles that contained the search terms were even about indigenous peoples and the issues they face in Canada. Furthermore, I tracked the sections the articles were in, which ranged from sports to arts, business to national news. Here, it is useful to remember how short-term news lead journalists to focus on covering events.<sup>3</sup> Because this content analysis focuses on a time period when federal policies were changing, I zeroed in on the 28 articles filed as national news. Of them, seven were briefs of less than 200 words (see Appendix A). I excluded these because as Taras points out, “great journalism provides context,” and the

<sup>3</sup> Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, “The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba, and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers,” *Journal of International Peace Research* 1, (1965), 84.

purpose of this analysis was to look at the quality of journalism.<sup>4</sup> The remaining 21 articles were all between about 200 words and 1,000 words, which are fairly standard lengths for news reports in the *Globe and Mail*. I separated those articles by subject. While eight pertained to crime and/or court cases, three looked at health, one delved into the environment and natural resources, one explored culture, and one had a business angle. I focused on the seven that explicitly concerned federal politics. Based on the way journalists have historically reported the indigenous story, if they were going to expand the national narrative, it would likely be when the government was implementing policy changes aimed at reconciliation. As Stuart Hall et al. argue, the news media are secondary definers of society, taking their lead from other institutions.<sup>5</sup>

The seven articles the rest of this analysis considers are: “Emergency cash for native institute sparks furor over funding” and “Help for natives falls far short, chiefs say,” both of which dealt with federal funding;<sup>6</sup> “B.C. band’s plan calls for industrial, residential development of farmland” and “ ‘Edmonton Stragglers’ have come home to collect,” which were based on land claims;<sup>7</sup> and “Details demanded on children missing from residential schools,” “Natives say they’re shut out of apology process,” and

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<sup>4</sup> David Taras, “The New Architecture of Media Power,” in *Digital Mosaic: Media, Power, and Identity in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 15.

<sup>5</sup> Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts, “The Social Production of News,” in *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1978), 57.

<sup>6</sup> Kate Harries, “Emergency cash for native institute sparks furor over funding,” *Globe and Mail*, February 1, 2008, A7; Gloria Galloway, “Help for natives falls far short, chiefs say,” *Globe and Mail*, February 27, 2008, A18.

<sup>7</sup> Justine Hunter, “B.C. band’s plan calls for industrial, residential development of farmland,” *Globe and Mail*, February 27, 2008, A5; Bill Curry, “ ‘Edmonton Stragglers’ have come home to collect,” *Globe and Mail*, February 22, 2008, A3.

“Graphic list of abuse to settle claims,” which were all related to the *IRSSA*.<sup>8</sup> With regards to those articles, I took a closer look at the sources consulted.

The number of indigenous sources compared to non-indigenous sources is also an integral part of how the *Globe and Mail* surveyed the larger environment. In the seven articles, there were 14 people quoted as if they had been personally interviewed by a journalist for the story. That means sources whose comments that were paraphrased, made in public addresses or speeches, or in a document, such as a reference to a letter or email were excluded. Of the 14 sources that seemed to have been interviewed, six were indigenous (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Indigenous Sources (seven stories from February 2008 in the *Globe and Mail*)**

	Emergency cash	Farmland development	Children missing	Apology process	‘Edmonton Stragglers’	Graphic list of abuse	Help falls short
Indigenous leader	1	1					1
Indigenous person			2			1	
Non-indigenous official or politician	2	1			1	2	
Non-indigenous ally to indigenous peoples			1		1		

Data compiled from ProQuest’s *Globe and Mail* archives

In only one story — “Details demanded on children missing from residential schools,” about a protest to reveal the locations of unmarked graves of children who died in residential schools — were more indigenous sources consulted than non-indigenous sources. They included residential school survivor Gary Wassaykeesic, and John Garlow,

<sup>8</sup> Michael Oliveira, “Details demanded on children missing from residential schools,” *Globe and Mail*, February 9, 2008, A10; Bill Curry, “Natives say they’re shut out of apology process,” *Globe and Mail*, February 11, 2008, A4; Katherine O’Neill, “Graphic list of abuse to settle claims,” *Globe and Mail*, February 25, 2008, A12.

whose father attended a residential school as well as Kevin Annett, a writer and filmmaker who is not indigenous, but has focused work on indigenous communities. Interestingly, although there were federal government statistics and an excerpt from a federal government statement made in 1998 expressing remorse, comments from neither officials nor politicians were included.<sup>9</sup> To better understand the impact of how sources are presented, it is useful to consider not only the numerical breakdown, but also the hierarchy of their voices in the stories.

Taking into account that all seven stories delve into contentious policy issues, the order in which the sources are introduced plays a role in shaping the frames around which consensus is built. To refer back to Stuart Hall et al., views that counter the primary view ultimately use the primary view as a starting point.<sup>10</sup> In that way, the first person quoted arguably has more influence in setting up the narrative structure against which other views are weighed. However, the content analysis indicates that source placement alone did not determine whether indigenous peoples had agency. For example, the two stories where indigenous sources were introduced first — the “farmland development story” and the “help falls short” story — had little else in common regarding agency. In “B.C. band’s plan calls for industrial, residential development of farmland,” Tsawwassen First Nation Chief Kim Baird was introduced before opposition provincial parliamentarian Guy Gentner, who was concerned about the project. A closer read indicates that Tsawwassen First Nation did have agency and was proceeding with its plans.<sup>11</sup> However, in “Help for natives falls far short, chiefs say,” Angus Toulos, the Ontario regional chief, was the only source (although then-Finance Minister Jim Flaherty was quoted from

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<sup>9</sup> Oliveira, “Details demanded on children missing from residential schools.”

<sup>10</sup> Hall et al., “The Social Production of News,” 58.

<sup>11</sup> Hunter, “B.C. band’s plan calls for industrial, residential development of farmland.”

a speech). Toulous said: “Our citizens are going to be wondering what it’s going to take for Canada to respond to the crisis in first nations communities.”<sup>12</sup> The overarching implication was that First Nations were dependent on the government for funding and were helpless in the situation.

In the stories about the children missing from residential schools, emergency funding for a First Nations institute, and graphic details on sex abuse claims, indigenous sources followed the non-indigenous sources.<sup>13</sup> In these stories, where comments from indigenous sources were ultimately weighted against comments from non-indigenous sources, indigenous peoples did not appear to have agency. For example, in the graphic details on sex abuse claims story, lawyer Peter Harris, who worked on the settlement, is the first source. While he noted indigenous peoples were upset about the disclosure required for compensation and that it was not ideal, he said: “... Because of the huge number of claims, it’s a manageable way to approach the issue and try to get some level of standardization.”<sup>14</sup> The insinuation is that indigenous peoples were not able to change the situation. In order for many to receive the compensation that they were entitled to, they would have to follow the denigrating protocol. However, in one of two other stories without indigenous sources, indigenous peoples did have agency. To that end, it should be noted that a lawyer speaking on behalf of the “Edmonton Stragglers” was quoted in that article.<sup>15</sup> The other story without indigenous sources — “Natives say they’re shut out of apology process” — actually did not have any sources at all. It was based on a letter

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<sup>12</sup> Galloway, “Help for natives falls far short, chiefs say.”

<sup>13</sup> Oliveira, “Details demanded on children missing from residential schools”; Harries, “Emergency cash for native institute sparks furor over funding”; O’Neill, “Graphic list of abuse to settle claims.”

<sup>14</sup> Neill, “Graphic list of abuse to settle claims.”

<sup>15</sup> Curry, “ ‘Edmonton Stragglers’ have come home to collect.”

that then-Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Phil Fontaine, sent then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper. An excerpt of the letter cited in the article noted that if the AFN was not being consulted on the wording of the apology, “not only does the federal government risk having the apology refuted by survivors and First Nations peoples, we also believe the Federal Government would be in breach of the Political Agreement between the AFN and the Government of Canada executed on May 30, 2005.”<sup>16</sup> An email from an Indian Affairs office bureaucrat stating no comment followed. Although Fontaine took action on behalf of indigenous peoples, it was unclear whether it fell on deaf ears. Therefore, I was unable to ascertain with any clarity whether indigenous peoples had agency to affect the outcome of the situation, with which they were clearly displeased. To truly grasp the impact the positioning of these sources has on whether indigenous peoples are presented with agency requires a closer look at the background context provided in the story.

When it comes to transmitting culture, the perspectives and comments of indigenous peoples need to be contextualized in a way that avoids pigeon-holing them into general stereotypes. While including indigenous sources early in the story can heighten their influence, this analysis shows it does not always capture the undercurrents of the situations in question (see Table 2).

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<sup>16</sup> Curry, “Natives say they’re shut out of apology process.”

**Table 2: Indigenous stereotypes (seven stories from February 2008 in the *Globe and Mail*)**

	Emergency cash	Farmland development	Children missing	Apology process	'Edmonton Stragglers'	Graphic list of abuse	Help falls short
Indigenous source placement	Third source	First source	Second and third sources	No source	No source	Second source	First source
Agency	No: source explains the challenges indigenous post-secondary institutes face with funding	Yes: band is pursuing economic development but fighting for rights and respecting government protocol	No: introduce d after non-indigenous source, implying they are followers	Ambiguous: letter and government t have opposing viewpoints although letter comes first	Yes: lawyer spoke on behalf of group; reasonable to assume in court process	No: residential school survivors being "shafted" by the government	No: implication that indigenous peoples are dependent on the government
Stereotype	Helpless victim		Helpless victim			Helpless victim	Helpless victim

Data compiled from ProQuest's the *Globe and Mail* archives

As examined, there is no consistency regarding indigenous source placement in the four out of seven stories promulgating the helpless victim stereotype. Somewhat paradoxically, in his opening quote, the one and only source consulted in the "help falls short" story actually reinforces the existing societal power structures that marginalize indigenous peoples to the: " 'Our citizens are going to be wondering what it's going to take for Canada to respond to the crisis in first nation's communities.' " <sup>17</sup> In contrast, although not one indigenous source is quoted in the story about the group of indigenous peoples from Edmonton who took their land claim to the Supreme Court of Canada, I determined that the helpless-victim stereotype was not being perpetuated. It is reasonable to assume that a lawyer would speak on the group's behalf when the case was ongoing, which is what the story suggested happened. The lawyer, Ron Maurice, explained that the surrender of land in what is now urban Edmonton was " 'an illegal, invalid surrender

<sup>17</sup> Galloway, "Help for natives falls far short, chiefs say."

according to the *Indian Act* of the day.’<sup>18</sup> While oppression associated with colonialism was no doubt the cause of the situation, indigenous peoples clearly took it into their own hands by going through the legal system, acting not only with agency, but also respect for established institutional procedure to right the wrongdoing of the past.

Acknowledging this content analysis is only a snapshot from one month in 2007-2008, it provides an overview of how the *Globe and Mail* broached covering indigenous issues at that time. With regards to surveying the larger environment, just over half of the articles in which indigenous peoples were mentioned were actually about them. This is significant considering the content analysis only brought up articles that mentioned indigenous peoples. The content analysis did not take into consideration how that small portion of articles fits into all of the coverage produced by the *Globe and Mail* in 2007-2008. However, it is reasonable to assume that if only 53 per cent of the articles containing one of the key terms were even about indigenous peoples, that percentage would be only a fraction of total daily coverage. Similarly, just under half of the sources consulted were actually indigenous. When looking at whether sourcing contributes to the stories’ frames to build consensus around indigenous agency, that was the case in only one of the two stories that put an indigenous source first.

Furthermore, in one story with no indigenous source at all, indigenous peoples were portrayed with agency. Therefore, the background context provided is the most important consideration when gauging whether indigenous culture is being transmitted to challenge existing stereotypes, particularly of indigenous peoples as helpless victims in broader society. This is solidified in the second part of this case study as journalists covering

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<sup>18</sup> Curry, “ ‘Edmonton Stragglers’ have come home to collect.”

issues affecting indigenous peoples for the *Globe and Mail* in 2014-2015 said they are cognizant of that misconception and have attempted to provide counter facts.<sup>19</sup>

In November 2014, Angela Murphy became the *Globe and Mail's* special projects editor. Following discussions with her supervisors, she said the decision was made to include issues affecting indigenous peoples as a priority for her team.<sup>20</sup> Shortly after, the *Globe and Mail* launched an ongoing series of stories related to missing and murdered indigenous women. In November 2015, it released a capstone piece, “The Taken,” which delved into how five indigenous women were targeted by serial killers. “The Taken” appeared on the front page of the paper – which none of the stories from the 2007-2008 did — as well as online with multimedia elements.

The stories in the missing and murdered series cover a variety of sub-topics, showing an effort to survey the larger environment by highlighting the scope of the situation. When the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) released data in 2014 and 2015, “they were very narrow in the scope of how they described the problem,” Murphy said. “Our thinking was that it’s a very complex issue. There’s a lot more going on here.”<sup>21</sup> With the release of the RCMP’s 2015 data, which largely attributed the violence against indigenous women to indigenous men, the *Globe and Mail* published a primer highlighting the various angles it had already reported on. They included: the RCMP statistic of 1,181 missing and/or murdered indigenous women, the federal plan to use a DNA data bank to help solve outstanding cases; how calls for a national inquiry gained steam following the horrific murder of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine and the brutal attack on

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<sup>19</sup> Gloria Galloway, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February 17, 2016; Julien Gignac, phone interview by author from Winnipeg, February 8, 2016; Angela Murphy, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February 18, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

<sup>21</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

17-year-old Rinelle Harper in Winnipeg; and the federal government's resistance to a national inquiry, despite recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations.<sup>22</sup> The primer provided hyperlinks to stories on each of those sub-topics.

Gloria Galloway covers indigenous affairs on a regular basis for the *Globe and Mail* from Parliament Hill and has contributed content to the missing and murdered special project. Galloway said there have been times in recent years that her stories were held because there were already so many stories about indigenous issues on the front page. "We would have had an all-indigenous front page, and, you know, readers do need variety, right?" she said,<sup>23</sup> (echoing American newspaper editor David Burgin, who suggested that each page needs "a sufficient variety of stories that every member of the audience would want to read one of them).<sup>24</sup> However, as the 2007-2008 content analysis suggests, covering indigenous stories is important, but so is consulting with indigenous sources.

When considering sourcing in surveying the larger environment, slightly more indigenous sources appear to be included in the 2014-2015 missing and murdered special coverage compared to more general policy coverage in 2007-2008. Although the special projects differ from daily news coverage, I focus on "The Taken" here because it is related to policy. As noted, the disproportionately high number of missing and murdered indigenous women was on the federal government's radar. "The Taken" was published in

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<sup>22</sup> *Globe and Mail*, "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: A Primer," June 19, 2015, accessed March 19, 2016, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-what-you-should-read-today/article25037507/>.

<sup>23</sup> Galloway, phone interview by author.

<sup>24</sup> Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 24.

November 2015, just a few weeks after a new Liberal government that campaigned for an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women was sworn in (that the inquiry would be happening was announced in December 2015).<sup>25</sup> Although “The Taken” profiles five women who were murdered by serial killers, each profile also explains the story of the police investigation that followed their deaths. While 43 per cent of sources consulted in the six policy stories from 2007-2008 were indigenous, between 64 and 77 per cent<sup>26</sup> of sources consulted (in addition to police and court records) in the five stories in “The Taken” were indigenous (see Table 3).<sup>27</sup>

**Table 3: Sources in “The Taken” (the online multimedia project produced by the *Globe and Mail* in 2014-2015)**

	Myrna Letandre	Cynthia Maas	Sereena Abotsway	Shelly Napope	Carolyn Sinclair
Family member	4	1	1	1	1
Family friend					1
Social services worker	1 (indigenous- specific service)	1 (indigenous- related service)	3		
Academic/expert	1	1			1

Data from Blaze Baum, McClearn, Hoffman, “The Taken”

While there is clearly a marked increase in the number of indigenous sources, it is not the main difference from the 2007-2008 coverage. Of the sources who commented in the “The Taken,” not one is a government, court, or police official. In addition to family members (who are introduced first in all five stories), in four of the five stories, there are

<sup>25</sup> Liberal Party of Canada, “An Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,” *Liberal.ca*, December 14, 2015, accessed April 10, 2016, <https://www.liberal.ca/an-inquiry-into-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-girls/>.

<sup>26</sup> There is some ambiguity with regards to the indigeneity of sources in two stories, so I took minimum and maximum calculations.

<sup>27</sup> Kathryn Blaze Baum, Matthew McClearn, and Kristy Hoffman, “The Taken: How five indigenous women became the targets of serial killers, A Globe investigation,” *Globe and Mail*, accessed March 19, 2016, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/the-taken-five-women-five-serial-killers-and-how-their-paths-came-to-meet/article27444970/?story=5#undefined>.

also comments from those who worked with the slain women through social service agencies, and also academics studying demographic phenomena in the cities from which they went missing.<sup>28</sup> That suggests that the facts provided by family members, friends and social service workers and contextualized by academics stand up to comments from officials in the historical records. To that point, Murphy said covering the file first required learning about its complexities, including with respect to consensus-building.

At the *Globe and Mail*, consensus-building with respect to the missing and murdered special project began internally, according to Murphy. Before jumping in, she put together an advisory panel to help her and her team build a deeper understanding of the issues they were exploring. It included representatives from the Native Women's Association of Canada as well as a variety of indigenous women of various ages and life experiences from different communities across the country. "Part of it is that journalists, mainstream journalists, need to educate themselves and then once we feel fairly confident in that, sharing what we've learned with others," she said.<sup>29</sup> As part of the process, Murphy and her team did outreach, sponsoring and attending a conference in Edmonton where family members of missing and murdered indigenous women shared their stories. Murphy said it was there that she began to understand the pain they had experienced as a result of treatment by media in general in the past. She said the *Globe and Mail* has since been conscious when interviewing family members "to make them feel that they have some power over how they're portrayed, some ownership of the story, how their story's being told."<sup>30</sup> Although this approach could apply to other sources, it is especially salient for indigenous peoples, who have historically had very little control over how they are

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<sup>28</sup> Blaze Baum, McClearn, and Hoffman, "The Taken."

<sup>29</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

<sup>30</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

represented by the news media. Murphy said that since taking on the special project, she's realized just how much agency indigenous peoples do have. "I find that the indigenous peoples that I have met along my journey are very strong peoples and there is a strong female culture," she said.<sup>31</sup>

That sentiment was unapparent in the analysis of federal policy coverage from 2007-2008. Of the seven stories in the discourse analysis, indigenous peoples were stereotyped as helpless victims in four. Contrarily, "The Taken" expanded discussions by digging deeper into official statistics and reports and focusing on highlighting the richness of the women's lives to transmit culture. "The Taken" was motivated by the discovery while compiling a database of cases that show that indigenous women are significantly more likely to be murdered by serial killers than non-indigenous women.<sup>32</sup>

While the *Globe and Mail's* analysis revealed that since 1980, 18 indigenous women were killed by convicted serial killers,<sup>33</sup> it was the telling of the five women's stories Murphy said she's most proud of, noting Sereena Abotsway's story, in particular. Abotsway, who was murdered by Robert Picton, grew up in a loving foster home, but struggled with the impacts of fetal alcohol syndrome and ended up in a group home, where she was introduced to sex work and began using drugs. But reporters who went to Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to speak to people who knew Abotsway learned about another side of her that Murphy said was important to convey. "You don't think, 'I'm just going to have this kind of girl crush on this woman who on the surface of it is a drug addict and sexually abused — like, just a dark story — but you have this amazing bubbly, funny personality and so you come away from it with a very different view of a person,

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<sup>31</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

<sup>32</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

<sup>33</sup> Blaze Baum, McClearn, and Hoffman, "The Taken."

of an individual, than you went in with,” Murphy said. “I’m pretty proud of that. I think she would have been pleased to see the piece about her in the end.”<sup>34</sup> In other words, the fact that Abotsway lived a high-risk lifestyle could make it easy to jump to conclusions about why she died. The fact that she was an indigenous woman could make it easy to just turn her into another statistic, given the low socioeconomic status of so many indigenous peoples in Canada.<sup>35</sup> However, taking the time to learn more about Abotsway’s past helped Murphy to see Abotsway as a strong and resilient person despite the personal hardships Abotsway endured because she was indigenous. Breaking down barriers and moving beyond stereotypes is helping to paint a fuller picture of indigenous peoples’ humanity.

Contrasting the *Globe and Mail’s* coverage in 2007-2008 to 2014-2015 shows increased attention to surveying the larger environment. Given that the focus of 2014-2015 coverage is on a special project, directly comparing the sheer volume of stories about indigenous peoples and issues they face to 2007-2008 is difficult. However, the sourcing of the stories points to the concerted effort Murphy spoke of to build consensus by depicting indigenous peoples with the agency they clearly have to affect their own destinies. Recognizing the special project is not reflective of all day-to-day news articles, it is still an important interim step that sets a precedent for coverage that transmits culture and combats stereotypes going forward. The next case study considers how *Maclean’s*,

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<sup>34</sup> Kathryn Blaze Baum, Matthew McClearn, and Kristy Hoffman, “The Taken: How five indigenous women became the targets of serial killers, A Globe investigation (Sereena Abotsway),” *Globe and Mail*, accessed March 19, 2016, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/the-taken-five-women-five-serial-killers-and-how-their-paths-came-to-meet/article27444970/?story=3>.

<sup>35</sup> Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, *Unequal Relations: An Introduction to Race, Ethnic, and Aboriginal Dynamics in Canada*, 3rd ed., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1999), 172-176.

which is also historically print-based, but publishes much longer pieces but less frequently, approached indigenous issues during the same time periods.

### *Maclean's*

As a national, weekly current affairs magazine, *Maclean's* has become known over the past century for its introspective and in-depth features spanning politics to pop culture. The breadth of its regular reportage is fundamentally different than that of media organizations operating under a daily mandate. Because of that heightened opportunity to provide nuanced information, *Maclean's* is included as a case study in this thesis.

To see how *Maclean's* surveyed the larger environment in 2007-2008, I began by searching the archives for the six key terms, which turned up 75 different articles. Given that I focused on a slightly larger number of stories from the *Globe and Mail*, I considered all 75 in my analysis of *Maclean's* 2007-2008 coverage as a starting point. Taking a similar approach to my analysis of the *Globe and Mail*, I read through each article to determine if it was a piece of journalism. After excluding seven letters to the editor, I then looked at the pieces of journalism to determine whether indigenous peoples and/or an issue affecting them and their communities were the main focus. Sixteen of the 75 articles fit that description. There were five other articles in which indigenous peoples were not the main focus, but their perspectives played an integral role in shaping the story arc.<sup>36</sup> Considering those figures from a proportionality standpoint, only 21-28 per cent of the articles published by *Maclean's* that included a term describing indigenous peoples were actually even about them. In 72-79 per cent of the articles, indigenous peoples were

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<sup>36</sup> An example of how indigenous perspectives contribute to the story arc in a story about a different topic is the Inuit explaining how ending the hunt could damage both their livelihoods and traditions in "The war over the polar bear"; Colin Campbell and Kate Lunau, "The war over the polar bear," *Maclean's*, February 4, 2008, 46-52.

either mentioned in passing (for example, seven stories, noted indigenous peoples as inspiration for the art, culture, and literature that were the main focus) or in the context of another country. These articles were excluded from further analysis.

Zeroing in on the 16 articles in which indigenous peoples or issues involving them were the main focus, only 10 were *Maclean's*'s trademark explanatory- or analysis-style features of more than 700 words. The other six were briefs of less than 400 words simply presenting information (see Appendix B).<sup>37</sup> Recognizing that briefs in *Globe and Mail* were less than 200 words, it should be noted that the *Globe and Mail* is a newspaper. *Maclean's* is a magazine and stories in general, including briefs, are longer. However, briefs still offer less opportunity for deeper analysis, so I focused on the 10 features in *Maclean's*, which covered a diverse range of topics. While “An Aboriginal ‘glasnost’ ” looked at one reserve’s entrepreneurial development strategy,<sup>38</sup> “Landscape with sexy transvestite” quite literally painted a very different picture — about an art exhibition by an indigenous painter who is also a drag queen.<sup>39</sup> As in the *Globe and Mail* analysis, I examined the articles pertaining to federal policy. There were six, which related to either land use and/or disputes, as in “An Aboriginal ‘glasnost,’ ” or *IRSSA* settlements, as in “Cheque Imbalances,” which is about shortfalls in expected compensation under the agreement.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> An example “Playing with fire,” which claimed Phil Fontaine “may have overplayed his hand” when he compared the plight of indigenous peoples in Canada to the plight of the Tibetans in China. The brief noted that Fontaine said indigenous peoples would protest the 2010 Vancouver Olympics in the same way Tibetans did the 2008 Beijing Olympics; Anonymous. “Playing with fire,” *Maclean's*, May 5, 2008, 10.

<sup>38</sup> Nancy Macdonald, “An Aboriginal ‘glasnost,’ ” *Maclean's*, September 3, 2007, 27-28.

<sup>39</sup> Jordan Timm, “Landscape with sexy transvestite,” *Maclean's*, December 31, 2007-January 7, 2008, 94-95.

<sup>40</sup> Jonathon Gatehouse, “Cheque Imbalances,” *Maclean's*, February 25, 2008, 24-25.

The six articles had 34 sources that appeared to be directly quoted from original interviews for those stories (that figure double counts people whose names appear in more than one article). Of those 34 sources, 17 were identified as members or leaders of indigenous communities or organizations (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Sources Consulted (six political features in *Maclean's* in 2007-2008)**

	“That’s it? No protest?”	“An Aboriginal ‘glasnost’ ”	“Hail Chief Paleface”	“The body’s evidence”	“Cheque imbalances”	“To forgive or forget”
Indigenous community member			3		2	1
Indigenous community leader	1	1	2			
Indigenous organization leader	1		2	2	2	
Political or government official	1	1			1	1
Expert/academic	2	1	1	2		5
Businessperson		1				1

Data compiled from ProQuest’s *Maclean's* archives

Taking that a step further to examine consensus building suggests a closer look at where those sources are positioned in the articles, as I did in the *Globe and Mail* analysis of 2007-2008 content. In five of the six *Maclean's* articles, the first quote is clearly from an indigenous source. For example, in “Hail Chief Paleface,” the first quote is from John Thunder, the Chief of Buffalo Point First Nation whose policies some contend favour the non-indigenous cottagers on the reserve. Thunder, known as “White Chief” because he was born into a non-indigenous family, but was adopted by the former chief and inherited the chieftaincy, is quoted: “ ‘It’s about what’s in your heart... I’ve danced powwows; I’ve made my own regalia, my headdress. I was raised up that way. That’s who I am.’ ”<sup>41</sup> Another example is “The body’s evidence,” which is about indigenous opposition to a

<sup>41</sup> Nancy Macdonald, “Hail Chief Paleface,” *Maclean's*, November 19, 2007, 120-121.

genealogy study. The first quote is from Indigenous Network on Economies and Trade spokesperson Arthur Manuel encouraging indigenous peoples not to participate until land rights were addressed.<sup>42</sup> Again, there is a case to be made here that the implication of introducing the sources early in the story is that they matter enough to have some degree of influence over the outcome. However, whether indigenous peoples have agency in “The body’s evidence” is ambiguous and in “Hail Chief Paleface,” it is clear indigenous peoples do not have agency. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge how those five indigenous sources fit within the broader context of the narrative to understand whether culture is being transmitted (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Introduction of Sources (six political features in *Maclean’s* in 2007-2008)**

	“That’s it? No protest?”	“An Aboriginal ‘glasnost’ ”	“Hail Chief Paleface”	“The body’s evidence”	“Cheque imbalances”	“To forgive or forget”
Indigenous source first?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Agency in context?	Ambiguous	Yes (affecting growth with development)	No (government has the agency)	Ambiguous	No (government has the agency)	No (government has the agency)
Stereotype perpetuated?	Yes (leader as aggressor)	No	Yes (indigenous peoples as helpless victims)	Yes (leaders as aggressors)	Yes (indigenous peoples as helpless victims)	Yes (indigenous peoples as helpless victims)

Data compiled from ProQuest’s *Maclean’s* archives

In only one of the six features is the first indigenous source painted in the broader picture as neither a confrontational aggressor nor a helpless victim. There is a case to be made that these narrow understandings of indigenous peoples in their own stories not only detracts from their overall agency, but contributes to the overall stereotyping of indigenous peoples that occurs because of a lack of knowledge about the richness of their lives. Looking at “To forgive or forget,” the first three paragraphs set the stage to explore

<sup>42</sup> Alexandra Shimo, “The body’s evidence,” *Maclean’s*, January 28, 2008, 44-45.

whether a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) could really work in Canada. In the fourth paragraph, which establishes the compensation programs of the *IRSSA*, historian J.R. Miller is quoted about Phil Fontaine's public disclosure about enduring abuse in residential school: " 'That someone as prominent as he was talking about some pretty painful experiences made it easier for victims to talk openly... He made it okay.' ”<sup>43</sup> While Miller has expertise in the area and his comments are likely completely accurate, he is speaking about someone else's residential school experience. There is case to be made for introducing the one indigenous source in that story, Tomson Highway, who did attend residential school,<sup>44</sup> sooner in an article about if and how the Truth and Reconciliation Commission could work. The presentation of "To forgive or forget" points to indigenous peoples' fate as being in the hands of the Canadian government, implying that they have a marginal role to play in the reconciliation process, which is obviously not true at all.

In summary, this analysis of content *Maclean's* produced on indigenous issues in 2007-2008 suggests similar shortcomings to the *Globe and Mail's* surveying of the larger environment with respect to proportionality of coverage. Although *Maclean's* seemingly made a slightly greater effort to include indigenous voices in sourcing the coverage that was done, it is important to note its magazine format could be a contributing factor. As noted at the beginning of this case study, *Maclean's* is known for its explanatory and analytical features, which tend to be more nuanced than the average daily news in a newspaper. Furthermore, while the indigenous voices introduced early in *Maclean's* were more salient in shaping the story arcs, the overall frames of most of the stories

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<sup>43</sup> Nancy Macdonald, "To forgive or forget," *Maclean's*, June 23, 2008, 24-25.

<sup>44</sup> Nancy Macdonald, "To forgive or forget," *Maclean's*, June 23, 2008, 24-25.

promulgated stereotypes that did not foster greater cultural understanding. However, in 2014-2015, *Maclean's* consciously attempted to provide a platform for indigenous peoples to tell their own stories, said associate editor Nancy Macdonald, who produced two special projects aimed at doing just that.<sup>45</sup>

Both of the special projects were larger and more ambitious than any of the coverage that turned up in the 2007-2008 content analysis. The first project, "Welcome to Winnipeg: Where Canada's racism problem is at its worst" was a long-form piece delving into how racial dynamics between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples have kept indigenous peoples on the periphery of socioeconomic success in the prairie city.<sup>46</sup> The second, "It could have been me: Thirteen remarkable women," was a multimedia webpage of the stories of indigenous women who survived dangerous situations in which they were exploited and/or assaulted.<sup>47</sup>

The attention *Maclean's* gave to these special projects demonstrates a shift in proportionality with regards to surveying the larger environment. At the most basic level of comparison, not one of the 10 features in the 2007-2008 content analysis specifically about an issue affecting indigenous peoples was even close to being as long. The longest, "That's it? No Protest?" was 2,082 words and spanned three pages.<sup>48</sup> At 5,771 words, "Welcome to Winnipeg" more than doubled the word count over nine pages in the print edition of the magazine (and was the cover story).<sup>49</sup> Also, there are more indigenous

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<sup>45</sup> Nancy Macdonald, phone interview by author from Winnipeg, February 16, 2016.

<sup>46</sup> Nancy Macdonald, "Welcome to Winnipeg, where Canada's racism problem is at its worst," *Maclean's*, January 22, 2015, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/welcome-to-winnipeg-where-canadas-racism-problem-is-at-its-worst/>.

<sup>47</sup> Nancy Macdonald, "It could have been me: Thirteen remarkable women share their own stories," *Maclean's*, accessed February 28, 2016, <http://site.macleans.ca/longform/almost-missing/>.

<sup>48</sup> Jonathon Gatehouse. "That's it? No protest?" *Maclean's*, July 2, 2007, 22-24.

<sup>49</sup> Macdonald, "Welcome to Winnipeg."

voices in the special projects. Of the 10 features in the content analysis, an average of six sources were consulted, with three being indigenous. In contrast, “Welcome to Winnipeg” alone included 16 different people quoted directly. Of them, 11 appeared to be indigenous.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the 13 voices in “It could have been me” are the indigenous women whose stories are told. That means 100 per cent of the sources consulted were indigenous, illustrating a heightened effort to include indigenous voices in stories about indigenous peoples.

When considering consensus-building, there is a noticeable difference in the agency given to indigenous peoples in the conflicts in the six features as compared to the special projects. As in the features, the vulnerability of indigenous peoples in society is evident in the special projects. However, the special projects highlight the ability of indigenous peoples to effect positive change in their own lives. For example, the first six sources quoted in “Welcome to Winnipeg,” all of which are indigenous, have had success in overcoming less than ideal circumstances. Building on that, two of the six sources are depicted as resilient and strong survivors in the face of tragedy. Two are established as accomplished academics and two are established artists (see Table 6).<sup>51</sup>

**Table 6: First Six Sources Quoted in “Welcome to Winnipeg”**

	Ian Ross	Thelma Favel	Niigaan Sinclair	Robert Falcon-Ouellette	Charlie Fettah	Jenna Wirch
Role in the story	Playwright	Tina Fontaine’s aunt	Academic	Academic and politician	Rapper	Exploited child sex-worker
Agency in the story	Yes (because of social position)	Yes (as a resilient survivor)	Yes (via expertise)	Yes (via expertise)	Yes (because of social position)	Yes (as a resilient survivor)

Data from Macdonald, “Welcome to Winnipeg.”

<sup>50</sup> Not all of the sources that were indigenous were explicitly identified as indigenous.

<sup>51</sup> Macdonald, “Welcome to Winnipeg.”

Similarly, in “It could have been me” the decisions of all of the women to essentially take back their lives and help others who might be vulnerable are key to the overarching narrative.<sup>52</sup> For example, despite the trauma of being raped, Paula Potter went on to become a counselor, leading sharing circles and sweat lodges. She is quoted: “I believe I went through all that suffering and pain so I could help other women.”<sup>53</sup> Macdonald explained that the approach to storytelling was related to how personal the women’s experiences were, and that she felt it important the women’s own voices were showcased. The same could be said for non-indigenous survivors of sexual assaults, which are still heavily stigmatized. However, for indigenous peoples there is an added layer as they have consistently been devalued in society, including by the news media. “I think it’s incredibly important that media tell these stories,” Macdonald said. “I hope that we create a space where indigenous peoples feel willing to and open to sharing these stories.”<sup>54</sup> The special projects, much more comprehensive than any of the coverage from 2007-2008, were an important step in that direction.

The frames that Macdonald used in the special projects provided an opportunity to transmit culture from an indigenous perspective. Here, it is useful to refer back to Hall et al.’s point about primary definers of the news shaping the social construction of reality.<sup>55</sup> As indigenous peoples have historically been on the periphery of society, they have had a marginal role at best. Providing more in-depth context about the lives of indigenous peoples in special projects such as “Welcome to Winnipeg” and “It could have been me” helps combat stereotypes stemming from misinformation or a lack of

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<sup>52</sup> Macdonald, “It could have been me.”

<sup>53</sup> Macdonald, “It could have been me.”

<sup>54</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author

<sup>55</sup> Hall et al., “The Social Production of News,” 57-58.

information. In “Welcome to Winnipeg,” Macdonald used data to illustrate how a lack of cultural understanding about the circumstances indigenous peoples face affects relations between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in Winnipeg, but also more broadly throughout the country, which is a departure from 2007-2008 coverage. An example is the way data on crime is presented in relation to indigenous peoples in “Welcome to Winnipeg” versus in “The most dangerous cities in Canada,” one of the additional five features from the content analysis in which indigenous peoples were significant to the story arc. “The most dangerous cities in Canada” asserts that Regina, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg are the top three most dangerous cities based on a ranking devised using per capita crime rates. Proportionately, those cities also have the largest indigenous populations, which are known to be over-represented in prisons and courts. The linkage is weakly made via a statement that indigenous youth in those urban centres lack strong roots, which makes them vulnerable to the “allure of gangs.”<sup>56</sup> To compare, “Welcome to Winnipeg” brings in statistics that essentially paint the same picture from a different angle and considers how issues associated with the fallout of colonialism created the conditions for them.<sup>57</sup> While these statistics reinforce that indigenous peoples are marginalized, they are more broadly related to racism. Furthermore, according to polling by the Association for Canadian Studies and The Canadian Race Relations Foundation cited in “Welcome to Winnipeg,” about 90 per cent of Manitobans reported hearing derogatory comments about an indigenous person within the past year (versus about 60 per cent in New Brunswick).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Ken MacQueen, “The most dangerous cities in Canada,” *Macleans*, March 24, 2008, 38-42.

<sup>57</sup> Nancy Macdonald, “Welcome to Winnipeg, where Canada’s racism problem is at its worst,” *Macleans*, February 2, 2015, 16-24.

<sup>58</sup> Macdonald, “Welcome to Winnipeg.”

Similar to the *Globe and Mail* case study, the *Maclean's* case study shows increased efforts to survey the larger environment in 2014-2015 compared to 2007-2008 by including indigenous peoples and the issues affecting them. Indigenous voices featured more prominently in the 2014-2015 special projects, which also included more background context than any content produced in 2007-2008. However, the *Maclean's* and the *Globe and Mail* case studies are both privately owned publications that have historically been print based. The next case study adds another dimension by looking at how the national public broadcaster, CBC, covered indigenous issues during the same time periods.

## **CBC**

CBC's mandate is based on the Broadcasting Act, which stipulates that programming should not only reflect the country's multicultural demography, but contribute to the flow of cultural expression and shared national consciousness and identity.<sup>59</sup> The literature review notes that CBC has made attempts to tailor programming in northern territories to Inuit audiences,<sup>60</sup> but how CBC's mandate translates into the hundreds of diverse indigenous communities across the country is less clear. According to the mandate, CBC's programming should "reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while serving the special needs of those regions."<sup>61</sup> The fact that CBC seems to interpret its mandate as applying to indigenous communities (based on efforts to deliver programming to Inuit audiences) makes it an interesting case study for this thesis.

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<sup>59</sup> Government of Canada, *Broadcasting Act*, 1991, accessed September 27, 2015, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/B-9.01/>.

<sup>60</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 346.

<sup>61</sup> CBC, "Mandate," accessed April 5, 2016, <http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/en/explore/mandate/>.

In 2007-2008, CBC surveyed the larger environment by telling stories from its priority platforms: television and radio.<sup>62</sup> CBC's flagship hour-long television newscast, *The National*, is the basis of the first half of this content analysis, the goal of which is not to evaluate how coverage of issues affecting indigenous peoples fits in daily, but more broadly throughout the year. Searching ProQuest for archived content from *The National* in the delineated time period using the six key terms produced 135 transcripts from the show. As *The National* airs 365 days per year and the content analysis indicates that there are up to 21 segments per episode,<sup>63</sup> I estimated that there were approximately 7,665 segments during 2007-2008. That means only an approximate 1.8 per cent of them even potentially pertained to issues affecting indigenous peoples. With respect to surveying the larger environment, this is significant because indigenous peoples make up roughly 4.3 per cent of Canada's population,<sup>64</sup> indicating the coverage they received was not proportionately reflective of the country's demography. However, it is also important to note that short-term news values likely played a role here in determining what journalists covered on a day-to-day basis.

As the above calculations do not take into account subject matter (or quality), I read through all 135 transcripts. As with the *Globe and Mail* and *Maclean's* stories from 2007-2008, I excluded the ones in which indigenous peoples were just mentioned in passing or in another context, typically as being indigenous to another country. I then whittled down the list further to include only pieces of journalism by eliminating

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<sup>62</sup> CBC, "CBC to cut back supper-hour news, in-house productions: Corporation will have up to 1,500 fewer employees by 2020," June 26, 2014, accessed March 6, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/cbc-to-cut-back-supper-hour-news-in-house-productions-1.2688409>.

<sup>63</sup> Based on the content analysis, segments are distinct stories about specific topics.

<sup>64</sup> *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada*, "Aboriginal Demographics from the 2011 National Household Survey," accessed March 10, 2016, <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1370438978311/1370439050610>.

teasers/bumpers to upcoming stories as well as commentary, formatted as viewer and/or expert responses to stories that had already aired. I was left with 101 transcripts. Of them, 63 were news reports that reporters had packaged with clips and voiceovers, 18 were documentaries (nine of which were part of a series on climate change in northern Canada), and 13 were short copy stories read by the anchor. While documentaries could conceivably contain quality journalism, they typically back-loaded the newscast. As Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder show in their study of newscasts, “lead stories matter more because viewers, taking their cues from the networks, confer special significance upon them.”<sup>65</sup> Building on that, I focused on the news reports as the primary product of *The National*, looking at how many were lead stories. Of the 63 news reports, six were the lead stories — meaning that 10 per cent of indigenous stories were in that privileged position, appearing “before the viewer’s mind begins to wander.”<sup>66</sup> Those stories were about: Canada’s refusal to sign the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*,<sup>67</sup> monetary compensation for residential school survivors,<sup>68</sup> the deaths of two toddlers on a Saskatchewan reserve,<sup>69</sup> the appointment of the TRC commissioner,<sup>70</sup> shortcomings in First Nations child-welfare services,<sup>71</sup> and then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s apology for Canada’s historic treatment of

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<sup>65</sup> Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder, *News That Matters*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 46.

<sup>66</sup> Iyengar and Kinder, *News That Matters*, 46.

<sup>67</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC September 13, 2007, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed March 6, 2016).

<sup>68</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC, September 19, 2007, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed March 6, 2016).

<sup>69</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC January 30, 2008, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed March 6, 2016).

<sup>70</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC April 28, 2008, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed March 6, 2016).

<sup>71</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC, May 6, 2008, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed March 6, 2016).

indigenous peoples.<sup>72</sup> Considering that all six stories had a national angle, I went on to examine the proportionality of sources.

In total, 25 sources were consulted in the six stories. As was the case with *Maclean's*, people who were quoted in multiple stories are counted repeatedly. For example, then-Indian Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl was quoted in four of the six stories, Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief Phil Fontaine was quoted in three, and Stéphane Dion, Liberal leader of the opposition, was quoted in two. Regardless of the fact that there were actually 19 unique voices, fewer than 50 per cent of the sources in the six stories were identified as representative of indigenous peoples (see Table 7).

**Table 7: Sources Consulted (six lead stories on *The National* in 2007-2008)**

	UNDRIP	Compensation	Toddler deaths	TRC commissioner	Failing child-welfare	Apology
National indigenous leader	1	1		2		
Local indigenous leader				1		
Indigenous person		2	3	1		
Non-indigenous leader	2	1		1	3	4
IGO/NGO	2	1	1			

Data compiled from ProQuest's *The National* archives

Two stories did not include indigenous sources at all. The story about failing child-welfare services on reserves had a split focus based on the release of the annual Auditor General's report. While the first part explored how child-welfare services on reserves fall below the standard of those off reserves, the second part dealt with the government's inadequate follow-up process on deportees. The story was reported from

<sup>72</sup> *The National*, "Segment 1," CBC, June 11, 2008, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed March 6, 2016).

Ottawa and in addition to Auditor General Sheila Fraser, Strahl and Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day were quoted as saying the government was paying attention to the issues.<sup>73</sup> Considering the severity of the child-welfare shortfalls identified by Fraser, only quoting government sources in response immediately implies indigenous peoples perspectives were not even worth including, that there was nothing indigenous peoples could bring to the situation. While a similar conclusion could be made regarding the story about Harper's apology, which was also reported from Ottawa, there were other stories based on Harper's apology in the newscast that day. Although non-indigenous political leaders were the only sources in story that aired in the first segment, the story in the second segment was reported from British Columbia based solely on reaction from indigenous leaders.<sup>74</sup> As the purpose of this analysis is not to dissect how lineup decisions were made at the time, but is to establish what content looked like, it is important to consider the impact the characters who were introduced first had on the stories' frames.

All six lead stories explored how institutions in Canada had failed or are continuing to fail indigenous peoples. When it comes to building consensus, it is important then to look at whether indigenous peoples are portrayed with agency to affect or change the outcomes of issues very clearly impacting them. Although in three of the four stories that included indigenous sources, the indigenous sources were introduced first, in only two of them were indigenous peoples portrayed with agency (see Table 8).

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<sup>73</sup> *The National*, "Segment 1," CBC, May 6, 2008.

<sup>74</sup> *The National*, "Segment 2," CBC, June 11, 2008, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed March 6, 2016).

**Table 8: Indigenous Agency (six lead stories on *The National* in 2007-2008)**

	UNDRIP	Compensation	Toddler deaths	TRC commissioner	Failing child-welfare	Apology
Agency?	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Explanation	Canada is not signing UNDRIP and although indigenous peoples are upset, they are helpless to the decision.	Indigenous peoples are depicted as deserving of compensation that they have fought to receive.	Police are introduced first and provide the account of events in which indigenous peoples are victims.	A highly respected indigenous judge was named to lead the reconciliation process.	The government's failure was pointed out, but indigenous peoples were not consulted about it.	The power dynamic is still skewed, demonstrated by Harper's quote: "It was wrong to do it."

Data compiled from ProQuest's *The National* archives

Interestingly, it is in the two stories about the reconciliation mechanisms of the *IRSSA* that indigenous peoples appeared to have the power to affect their own destinies, which begs the question of what context was provided that made the difference.

Especially important to the coverage of indigenous peoples and the issues they face is including backstory to capture the richness of their culture and avoid stereotyping. As Table 8 shows, that was only the case in the two lead stories about reconciliation. In the story about compensation for residential school survivors, reporter Marisa Dragini explained the compensation is overdue as amends for past wrongdoings: "Two billion dollars in compensation will finally begin flowing to the 80,000 surviving students. The Assembly of First Nations national chief spent years brokering the deal."<sup>75</sup> Here, not only is the mistreatment of indigenous peoples highlighted, but also how they have overcome it. However, in two other stories — the failing child-welfare story and Harper apology story, which did not have any indigenous sources at all — little context was provided and stereotypes prevailed. For example, in the failing child-welfare story, reporter Keith Boag

<sup>75</sup> *The National*, "Segment 1," CBC, September 19, 2007.

noted: “The minister responsible says there’s no argument with the Auditor General. She’s right.”<sup>76</sup> The story enforced the helpless victim stereotype by illustrating that the government was aware of the challenges indigenous communities face, but had no solid plan to help indigenous communities deal. Furthermore, because indigenous sources were not consulted, it was unclear whether the communities were making viable efforts to improve their circumstances. In the only story not explicitly about federal politics, the basic drunk and dead stereotypes the *Reporting in Indigenous Communities* website warns against were evident.<sup>77</sup> In the story about the deaths of the toddlers, reporter Kaveri Bittira explained: “Details are still sketchy, but the RCMP say the girls’ father was home shortly after midnight. At some point, he left. Police believed he had the girls with him.”<sup>78</sup> Bittira also noted: “Police do say alcohol played a role.”<sup>79</sup> Recognizing that those elements are crucial to the story and there was no way around including them, the way the story was presented points to the inferiority of indigenous lives and viewpoints. For example, although three of the four sources consulted were indigenous, the first source was a police sergeant confirming the toddlers’ bodies were found, as opposed to a quote from a family or community member. Instead, the toddlers’ uncle was quoted afterwards: “Feeling pretty sad because that was my nieces. I just lost two of them. Can’t say anymore. Sorry.”<sup>80</sup> While the sentiment is not unexpected, the uncle’s comment lends little to the story, other than indicating that he seems helpless in the situation. In other words, he’s also a victim in a tragic situation that officials — specifically the police —

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<sup>76</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC, May 6, 2008.

<sup>77</sup> *Reporting in Indigenous Communities*, “News Stereotypes of Aboriginal Peoples,” accessed January 2, 2016: <http://www.riic.ca/the-guide/in-the-field/white-characters-and-the-question-of-agency/>.

<sup>78</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC, January 30, 2008.

<sup>79</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC, January 30, 2008.

<sup>80</sup> *The National*, “Segment 1,” CBC, January 30, 2008.

are controlling. The absence and positioning of sources in those three stories no doubt contribute to both the lack of context and stereotyping. However, more telling is how the context provided in the *UNDRIP* story, where indigenous peoples were also portrayed without agency, compares to the *IRSSA* stories. All three are ultimately about legislation relating to indigenous rights. In the *UNDRIP* story, only one source, Fontaine, is indigenous. In response to Canada's decision not to sign *UNDRIP*, his quote portrays him as a victim in the situation: "You cannot pick and choose the human rights that you will defend. It's clearly a slap in the face of indigenous peoples, and it's a huge disappointment for us."<sup>81</sup> While that reaction from Fontaine is not surprising, it is hard to believe that the only comment from Fontaine — in a position to advocate for First Nations — was about how disappointed he was by the government's decision. If that were the case, my question would be whether reporters asked him any other questions about what steps indigenous peoples could take to fight for their rights. However, here it is important to acknowledge that the story was ultimately about the government's decision not to sign *UNDRIP*. In contrast, the stories about reconciliation policies — compensation for residential school survivors and the naming of the TRC commissioner — paint a different picture. To understand the way these stories are presented, it is useful to remember that journalists understand their role to be reporting government affairs.

Although the proportion of coverage *The National* gave indigenous peoples was less than half of the percentage of the proportion of the country's population that they comprise, this content analysis shows there were efforts to include indigenous sources in the stories that were produced. However, in only two of the six stories that made the top

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<sup>81</sup> *The National*, "Segment 1," CBC, September 13, 2007.

of the newscast were indigenous peoples portrayed as having agency, avoiding the stereotype of the victim prevalent in the other four. A closer look at the context in those two stories indicates a commonality: they were both about reconciliation, which had barely begun in 2007-2008. As CBC journalists affiliated with the Aboriginal Unit, which did not even exist back then, point out, there has been a noticeable change in the company's approach to coverage.

To assess how CBC's reporting on issues affecting indigenous peoples in 2007-2008 has changed in 2014-2015, it is important to acknowledge that CBC is in the midst of shifting its priority platforms from television and radio to digital. In 2014, CBC launched *Strategy 2020: A Space For Us All*, outlining the transition. A version of the document updated in 2016 cites the creation of an online-based Aboriginal Unit and the award-winning interactive database it produced profiling missing and murdered women as demonstrative of what a digital focus makes possible.<sup>82</sup> Recognizing that makes direct comparisons difficult, to understand better the diversity of content that the Aboriginal Unit produces, I spoke with four of its journalists: senior producer Cate Friesen, who manages the missing and murdered project; associate producer Kim Wheeler, who works on the nationally syndicated radio show *Unreserved*; Cecil Rosner, managing editor of CBC Manitoba, where the unit is based; and Waubgeshig Rice, a video journalist at CBC Ottawa, who contributes news stories in various formats to the unit.

The creation of an entire unit dedicated to telling stories about indigenous peoples and the issues they face shows a much greater commitment to telling indigenous stories compared to the content analysis. While the 1.8 per cent of coverage indigenous issues

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<sup>82</sup> CBC/Radio Canada, "A Space For Us All (Strategy update: Long version)," February 2016, accessed March 6, 2016, [http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/\\_files/cbcrc/documents/strategy2020/public-space-jan2016-long-version.pdf](http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/_files/cbcrc/documents/strategy2020/public-space-jan2016-long-version.pdf).

received on *The National* in 2007-2008 does not take into account what other shows were doing at the time, *Unreserved*, a program founded in the Aboriginal Unit, is the first syndicated, regular and permanent show to deal exclusively with indigenous issues. Previously, CBC had produced short series or documentaries about them instead, such as the radio show *ReVision Quest* during the summers of 2008-2011 and the *Eighth Fire* documentaries from 2012.<sup>83</sup> With the Aboriginal Unit, CBC is making a much more concerted effort to survey the larger environment. There are journalists based across the country, from Vancouver to Ottawa,<sup>84</sup> working together to tell indigenous stories on a regular basis. The missing and murdered project, a living database chronicling more than 250 unsolved cases of indigenous women, is demonstrative of the how the unit has allowed CBC to chase untold stories. “One of the questions we wanted to answer is have police done a good enough job in looking into it, in inquiring into it, investigating?” Rosner said, noting some of the families of missing and murdered women had never even been contacted by the media before.<sup>85</sup> Friesen said the situation was complicated by distrust, especially since in some cases, the families felt they had been met with skepticism when they first went to the police. “Then we’re phoning them and saying, ‘We want to tell your story now and we want to do it in a way that actually reflects that that was a real person,’ ” she said. “We want to know who your daughter, mother, cousin was.”<sup>86</sup> For example, in the database, the story of Fonassa Bruyere’s 2007 murder is told through the eyes of her grandmother, Janet Bruyere, and cousin, Crystal Bruyere, who

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<sup>83</sup> Cate Friesen, interview by author in Winnipeg, February 12, 2016; Kim Wheeler, interview by author in Winnipeg, February 14, 2016.

<sup>84</sup> Friesen, interview by author; Waubgeshig Rice, interview by author in Ottawa, February 18, 2016.

<sup>85</sup> Cecil Rosner, interview by author in Winnipeg, February 12, 2016.

<sup>86</sup> Friesen, interview by author.

searched for her with other family members and friends. The story references the official report by police, but Crystal Bruyere is quoted saying she remembers going to the police after her cousin disappeared but before her stabbed body was found only to be told: ““Oh she’s just a prostitute... She’s probably just on a binge, she’ll come home.””<sup>87</sup> The sourcing of stories in the missing and murdered project focuses on including indigenous sources and their viewpoints, which stands in contrast to the reports on *The National*, according to the content analysis. Of the six stories involving indigenous issues that led *The National* in 2007-2008, 90 per cent of the indigenous sources consulted were in three stories. One story had one indigenous source (and four non-indigenous sources) and as mentioned, two others had none at all.

The approach to telling indigenous stories of the missing and murdered project highlights the CBC Aboriginal Unit’s effort to build consensus around a new narrative in which indigenous peoples have agency. At the outset it may seem as though covering a story in which hundreds of indigenous women are victims could perpetuate stereotypes. However, as the coverage of Fonassa Bruyere shows, CBC made a concerted effort to highlight the untold stories of the women’s lives as well as the efforts their families and friends made to get justice. In a way, CBC is highlighting how the strength and determination indigenous communities have long held in the face of this tragedy is finally prompting change. As Friesen explained, some of the cases had been closed by the police, but were included in the database as unsolved based on the information the family provided. “We pushed... journalistically by giving the family a valued voice and saying we are putting this on our unsolved wall because not all parties believe that it was

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<sup>87</sup> CBC, “Missing and Murdered: Unsolved cases of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, The Case of Fonassa Lynn Louise Bruyere,” accessed March 11, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/mmiw/profile/fonessa-lynn-louise-bruyere>.

solved,” Friesen said, noting Rosner, in his role as managing editor, vetted every one of those stories, considering police reports and coroners’ reports as well.<sup>88</sup> To that end, establishing new frames for stories by adding more context or context that was usually omitted in the past was an important part of the missing and murdered project. With respect to transmitting culture to push past stereotypes, those frames are particularly important.

While more than 65 per cent of the top stories that involved indigenous peoples on *The National* in 2007-2008 promulgated the stereotype of indigenous peoples as victims, there are many more disparaging stereotypes with which they have been labeled that lend to that vulnerability. In early 2015, before the missing and murdered project went live, Wheeler, who is Mohawk and Ojibway, wrote a web story for the Aboriginal Unit on the high-profile court case in which a man was charged in the death of Cindy Gladue, whose body was found in an Edmonton hotel room bathtub. She said the headline of the story she submitted was changed at one point to refer to Gladue as a sex-trade worker. “I’d already left work. I saw the headline come up on my newsfeed and I got on the phone right away to my boss and I said, “You have to get that changed. She was a person and she’s gone and she’s still suffering this indignity,”” Wheeler said. “And if you cannot get it changed, take my name off the story because I will not be associated with that kind of writing. I will lose credibility within my own community if those words are by Kim Wheeler.”<sup>89</sup> With the launch of the missing and murdered project, CBC is making a conscious effort to avoid perpetuating stereotypes of indigenous peoples that is reverberating throughout the media at large. “How the media writes about missing and

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<sup>88</sup> Friesen, interview by author.

<sup>89</sup> Wheeler, interview by author.

murdered indigenous women has changed,” Wheeler said. “They are now being seen as mothers and sisters and cousins and aunties and nieces and best friends and before they were seen as drug addicts, runaways, sex-trade worker, prostitute, homeless...”<sup>90</sup>

In summary, the creation of an Aboriginal Unit has had a significant impact on CBC’s coverage of indigenous issues. The Aboriginal Unit has not only given CBC the wherewithal to produce large online projects, it has helped to facilitate long-term programming across other platforms, such as Unreserved, to survey the larger environment better than in 2007-2008. With respect to consensus-building and transmitting culture, the Aboriginal Unit’s approach to telling indigenous people’s stories depicts them not only as characters with agency, but also as human beings by adding context to combat stereotypes, a similar finding to both the *Globe and Mail* and *Maclean’s* case studies.

The next chapter considers the findings of these case studies with regards to this thesis’s theoretical framework, which outlines principles guiding journalists, culture of the news media, and agenda-setting.

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<sup>90</sup> Wheeler, interview by author.

## Chapter Five: Analysis of Case Studies

To varying degrees, all three case studies indicated better surveying of the larger environment in 2014-2015 than in 2007-2008 regarding the indigenous story. It was difficult to compare directly the proportionality of coverage during the two time periods because while during 2007-2008, the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC focused on print and broadcast platforms, respectively, by 2014-2015, all three were finding new venues for special projects online. The *Globe and Mail* and CBC, both daily news operations with broader reach than *Maclean's*, developed in-house teams to focus on cultivating the special projects. All three mainstream national media outlets included significantly more indigenous voices in their 2014-2015 special projects than in their 2007-2008 coverage. Furthermore, with regards to building consensus, indigenous peoples were portrayed with more agency to affect the course of their lives in 2014-2015 than in 2007-2008. In 2007-2008, the majority of the stories analyzed from the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC depicted indigenous peoples as helpless victims looking to the more advanced institutions in Canadian society for progress (or in two instances in *Maclean's*, as aggressors attempting to upset social balance). What that indicates is that it was still highly common for the mainstream national media to stereotype indigenous peoples in 2007-2008. In 2007-2008, the richness of indigenous peoples' cultures was hardly being transmitted. In comparison, the special projects of 2014-2015 all made a point of providing context around the tumultuous circumstances many indigenous peoples faced as a result of decades of subjugation. The special projects also made a point of highlighting the individual lives of indigenous peoples — particularly the victims of violence and their family members featured in the missing and murdered coverage.

At the outset of this analysis, it is worth revisiting the monumental conclusion Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge arrived at 50 years ago: “Journalists should be better trained to capture and report on long-term development and concentrate less on ‘events.’”<sup>1</sup> The case studies from the previous chapter suggest that over the past decade, that has finally started to happen with the indigenous story in Canada. Contrasting coverage of indigenous peoples and the issues they face by the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean’s*, and CBC in 2007-2008 against the special projects they produced in 2014-2015 suggests strides have been made toward quality journalism that surveys the larger environment, builds consensus, and transmits culture. This chapter builds on that using the lens of this thesis’s theoretical framework to analyze continuity and evolution with respect to principles that guide journalists, the culture of the news media, and agenda-setting and the national narrative.

This assessment is rooted in what Herbert Gans would call enduring news values, encompassing bits and pieces of themes aligned with nationhood that he argues shape journalistic decision making. They include: ethnocentrism, altruistic democracy, responsible capitalism, small-town pastoralism, individualism, and moderatism.<sup>2</sup> However, as the case studies demonstrate, the shorter-term conditions that Galtung and Ruge allude to in this chapter’s opening quote should not be overlooked. In 2001, Tony Harcup and Deirdre O’Neill revisited Galtung and Ruge’s study to come up with a more “contemporary set” of news values. To make the news, they suggest stories typically:

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<sup>1</sup> Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge, “The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba, and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers,” *Journal of International Peace Research* 1, (1965), 84.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Gans, *Deciding What’s News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 43-52.

concern the powerful elite, celebrity, and/or entertainment; have an element of surprise; are particularly bad news or good news; involve a significant magnitude of people; are perceived to be of relevance to the presumed audience; follow-up previous stories; and/or fit the news organization's agenda.<sup>3</sup>

Regarding the indigenous story, CBC Manitoba managing editor Cecil Rosner (one of 11 journalists whose reporting insights contributed to this analysis), summed up the dichotomy between longer-term and shorter-term news values: "Rather than just reporting the daily manifestations of it, which is what the media used to do — there's another crime story, it happens to be an aboriginal person, gee, what a surprise — you look at the big picture," he said. "You have to understand how did we get here and what is the history that brought us here?" This chapter explores how journalists have grappled with that transition. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in addition to Rosner, from CBC I also interviewed Cate Friesen, who heads up the Aboriginal Unit, Kim Wheeler, an associate producer on the radio show *Unreserved*, and Waubgeshig Rice, a video journalist based in Ottawa. From *Maclean's*, I spoke with associate editor Nancy Macdonald. From the *Globe and Mail*, I talked to special projects editor Angela Murphy, Parliament Hill reporter, Gloria Galloway, who has the indigenous affairs beat, and Julien Gignac, who holds a general assignment job that includes stories about indigenous peoples. I also contacted national assignment editor Murray Oliver, Montreal bureau chief Danielle Rochette, and Atlantic bureau chief Trina Roache from The Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN). As journalists with experience working in the mainstream media who have all been working for an outlet that exclusively covers

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<sup>3</sup> Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill, "What Is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited," *Journalism Studies* vol. 2, no. 2 (2001), 278-279.

indigenous peoples for years, they contributed to this analysis from yet another perspective.

### **Principles that Guide Journalists**

All three case studies uphold that journalists' first obligation is telling the truth to the citizenry,<sup>4</sup> but demonstrates how conceptions of truth are based on the availability of information. The coverage of indigenous affairs by the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's* and CBC in 2007-2008 compared to 2014-2015 suggests that journalists can survey the larger environment with more efficacy when they know more. Recognizing that the journalists interviewed are not representative of all journalists, they all said their understanding of the history of the indigenous story and how it has been affected by the colonial legacy in Canada has improved over time. Both indigenous and non-indigenous journalists from national mainstream and indigenous media outlets said their increasing knowledge bases have broadened their conception of the truth and of the citizenry. Only one of the indigenous journalists I spoke with actually grew up on a reserve, where he said he learned about his heritage at a young age. Rice, from Wasauksing First Nation, said in the 1980s following landmark changes to the Canadian Constitution to include indigenous Rights,<sup>5</sup> his community began to practice cultural traditions more openly. "I think that's when I really learned about who I was as an Anishinaabe person," he said, noting he went to elementary school on the reserve. "We learned about the Ojibway language and we had elders who would come in regularly and share stories with us. I feel like I was

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<sup>4</sup> Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 4-5.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Russell, Rainer Knopff, Tom Bateman, and Janet Hiebert, *The Court and the Constitution: Leading Cases*, (Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications, 2008), 411.

fortunate to have that influence from a pretty young age.”<sup>6</sup> It was around that time that Rochette, whose mother was from Wendake, began to explore her indigeneity more openly as well.<sup>7</sup> Wheeler was adopted into a non-indigenous family in Alberta during the Sixties Scoop, a period that began in the 1960s during which indigenous children were taken from their families to be placed in the child welfare system. Wheeler said telling the stories of indigenous peoples in journalism school was when she began to connect with her culture.<sup>8</sup> Gignac, a member of Six Nations, said his experience was similar,<sup>9</sup> even though he started journalism school in a different province 20 years after Wheeler. Roache, who is Mi’gmaq, but grew up in Halifax, said she suspects that there is no “archetype of an experience for indigenous peoples.”<sup>10</sup> The same could easily be said for non-indigenous peoples and journalists. However, those interviewed for this thesis all said they received little formal education about the indigenous story and how little interaction they had with indigenous peoples.

The pass system confining indigenous peoples to their reserves unless granted permission to leave by a federal agent was in place until the 1950s.<sup>11</sup> Rosner, who grew up in Winnipeg, said back then he remembers there being very few indigenous peoples in the city. It was through the American Indian Movement (AIM) in Minneapolis in July 1968, spawning advocacy efforts in Canada, that he started learning about the injustices indigenous peoples faced.<sup>12</sup> AIM captured international attention February 27,

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<sup>6</sup> Waubgeshig Rice, interview by author in Ottawa, February 18, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Danielle Rochette, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February 25, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Kim Wheeler, interview by author in Winnipeg, February 14, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Julien Gignac, phone interview by author from Winnipeg, February 8, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Trina Roache, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February 24, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> *Unreserved*, “The pass system: Another dark secret in Canadian history,” *CBC.ca*, November 29, 2015, accessed March 23, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/exploring-the-past-present-and-future-of-life-in-indigenous-canada-1.3336594/the-pass-system-another-dark-secret-in-canadian-history-1.3338520>.

1973 at the start of its occupation of Wounded Knee, a historic site on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. Galloway said beyond a family friend from Wahta First Nation she met a few times as a child, she had limited exposure to indigenous communities before taking on the indigenous affairs beat in the parliamentary bureau in the late 2000s. She said there was a steep learning curve processing facts she now considers basic in her reporting. “Having been professionally immersed in it for you know five or six years now, I’m starting to get it,” Galloway said. “I mean when I started writing this, I didn’t know Inuit from Innu. I didn’t understand that there was a difference, I’m not sure I could have told you there’s a difference between First Nations and Aboriginals. I certainly wouldn’t have understood the complexity and the differences between various First Nations groups.”<sup>12</sup> Murphy and Macdonald also both noted how much they learned in preparation for and through their in-depth reporting on issues affecting indigenous peoples. “I think like a lot of people in Canada, I’ve come to a better understanding of the history, and probably my reporting reflects that,” Macdonald said. “I’m kind of embarrassed by a lack of knowledge that I had before. I mean I wasn’t completely oblivious to this, but I wasn’t as educated as I should have been.”<sup>13</sup> In summary, what journalists know based on their own lived experiences impacts how they conceive both the truth and the citizenry.

The idea that journalism is a public service dates back to the late 1800s. Renowned for an aggressive style of reporting that serves as the foundation of investigative journalism today, Joseph Pulitzer argued that it is more than a public

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<sup>12</sup> Gloria Galloway, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February 17, 2016

<sup>13</sup> Nancy Macdonald, phone interview by author from Winnipeg, February 16, 2016.

service. He said it is for the public good.<sup>14</sup> Rosner, revered for his investigative journalism in Canada (and the author of a series of stories on Métis land rights in the 1980s), noted how changing demography has provided a fuller concept of citizenry that now includes indigenous peoples. Rosner said journalists should be paying attention to the fact that indigenous peoples statistically face higher rates of incarceration and disease, and lower rates of education and employment. “We’ve become immured to it. Once you understand that’s the reality, then you have to figure out, you have to understand how did we get here and what is the history that brought us here?” he said. “I think it’s proper for journalism to hold people to account and to say how did this happen?” Murphy said journalists, and broader society, should be thinking about the future as well. “We can’t just have failed and try to bury it and not think about it. You know, you have to move forward <sup>comma</sup> and what is the best way to move forward is to try and find some solutions to this crisis — like it is a crisis,” she said.<sup>15</sup> However, as the literature review shows, journalists’ understanding of how they should execute their social responsibility to report is ambiguous.

Whether journalists should strive to be objective in their coverage is by and large open to interpretation. As Jack Fuller argues, the notion inherently raises questions about fairness and distributive justice,<sup>16</sup> which is extremely resonant when it comes to how the indigenous story has been told and is being told in Canada. Oliver, a non-indigenous journalist who joined APTN in 2010 after a career working as a foreign correspondent in mainstream media, said his experience reporting on the dynamics of different nations

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<sup>14</sup> James McGrath Morris, *Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power*, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 3

<sup>15</sup> Angela Murphy, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February 18, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Jack Fuller, *News Values: Ideas for an Information Age*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 33.

abroad helped him to see the importance of telling indigenous stories in Canada. However, he also said his experience helped him to see why these stories sometimes do not make it to air or print. “Persistent injustice has such a hard time making it on to mainstream newscasts,” he said.<sup>17</sup> Oliver’s comment points to the same phenomenon as Rosner’s comment about the socioeconomic status of indigenous peoples. Given how short-term news values shape long-term news values over time, this is not surprising in a society that seems to have arrived at a point where it just accepts bad news about indigenous peoples as normal. However, that does not mean journalists should not be thinking critically about the bigger picture their coverage is painting.

There have been journalists fighting for years to include indigenous voices in the mainstream media. Wheeler said since beginning her career in the 1990s, she has felt a duty to offset the indigenous story being told by many other journalists by producing pieces that actually included indigenous peoples’ voices more often. “For the first 15 years of my career, people said to me, non-indigenous editors said to me time and time again, ‘Aren’t you afraid of ghettoizing yourself by just telling aboriginal stories?’ ” said Wheeler, who has built a career around focusing on indigenous success stories. “And I said, ‘No, I’m not. Because if I don’t care enough to tell my community’s stories, who’s going to care enough to tell those stories? Nobody is telling the stories that I want to tell. So, no, I’m not afraid of ghettoizing myself.’ ”<sup>18</sup> Since then, the journalistic landscape has changed drastically.

Contrasting the content analyses from 2007-2008 with the special projects from 2014-2015 shows that the change has actually been quite recent. It also points to a

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<sup>17</sup> Murray Oliver, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February

<sup>18</sup> Wheeler, interview by author.

marked departure from the traditional tool of balance that Kovach and Rosenstiel note journalists gravitate toward when telling stories,<sup>19</sup> aligning more closely with Wheeler's longstanding approach. The similar approaches that the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC took to covering missing and murdered women in particular lend weight to Lea Hellmueller, Tim Vos, and Mark Poepsel's assertion that transparency is what journalists should strive for. Hellmueller, Vos, and Poepsel suggest that with transparency, journalists are open about why they present their stories in a certain way and willing to be held accountable.<sup>20</sup> Regarding the *Globe and Mail's* coverage, a lot of weight was placed on having a "buy-in" from the families, Murphy explained. "There's the whole point about not re-victimizing people and building trust with the community," she said, adding that results in better journalism. "The drive-by just doesn't work anymore."<sup>21</sup> Macdonald said with "It could have been me," she saw *Maclean's* as an outlet for indigenous women who had survived traumatic experiences to tell their stories. "They were very personal stories and I think it was really important that they be told in the women's own voices," she said.<sup>22</sup> Friesen, who identifies herself as a settler, noted that for CBC, giving the families of missing and murdered indigenous women a voice was established at the outset of the project as the primary value. "I would say that one of the hardest things about that project was convincing families that they could actually tell us their story and that we would honour it. Not just honour it, but be faithful to that story," she said. "For every researcher, as it got closer to being published, it was the huge weight that they had gained

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<sup>19</sup> Kovach and Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*, 83.

<sup>20</sup> Lea Hellmueller, Tim P. Vos, and Mark A. Poepsel. "Shifting Journalistic Capital? Transparency and Objectivity in the 21st Century," *Journalism Studies* 14:3 (2013), 289-290.

<sup>21</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

<sup>22</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author.

these people's trust and now we needed to tell the story right."<sup>23</sup> The resulting common thread among the special projects was the prevalence of indigenous voices. Comparing 2007-2008 coverage to the 2014-2015 special projects shows an approximate increase in indigenous sources of between 21-34 per cent by the *Globe and Mail*, 35 per cent by *Maclean's*, and 53 per cent by CBC. However, those facts could also be interpreted through the theoretical framework another way: as mitigating systemic bias.

As established, journalists' biases are shaped by that to which they have been exposed. However, Galloway noted that is not an excuse to perpetuate prejudice. "I also recognized, I think as many people do, from a young age that bias is bad and to make ourselves better people we have to get over them. I certainly hope that my kids have been raised that way, I certainly was raised that way," she said. "I don't think I've become less judgmental, I don't think I've become less biased, I don't think I've become less empathetic. I have become more knowledgeable. I have become more understanding of the complexities..."<sup>24</sup>

Problematically, the indigenous story in Canada has historically been dominated by stereotypes of indigenous peoples, as demonstrated in both the literature review and the content analyses in the previous chapter. Augie Fleras and Jean Lock Kunz refer to the phenomenon as whitewashing, asserting there exists "an explicit hierarchy of racial desirability."<sup>25</sup> This is a product of Eurocentrism, a form of ethnocentrism (which Gans identifies as an enduring news value) that elevates the superiority of the European culture and values within journalists' social construction of reality, assuming that it is broadly

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<sup>23</sup> Cate Friesen, interview by author in Winnipeg, February 12, 2016.

<sup>24</sup> Galloway, interview by author.

<sup>25</sup> Augie Fleras and Jean Lock Kunz, *Media and Minorities: Representing Diversity in a Multicultural Canada*, (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc., 2001), 147.

applicable.<sup>26</sup> Building on that, indigenous and non-indigenous journalists from all media outlets noted they had encountered incidents fuelled by racism against indigenous peoples in various forms throughout their careers. Oliver, for example, cited the drowning of a Pasqua First Nation man in Regina in 2011. The man was swimming in a lake and went too far out. The man had a friend on shore who pleaded with passersbys to call 911. By the time someone did, it was too late.<sup>27</sup> “Police interviews show that a lot of people believed that this guy was going to steal their phone and wouldn’t let him use their phone,” Murray said, noting there were other people that just did not want to get involved. “That bothered me so much because it says so much about our society, about the polite well-meaning Canadian who when the crunch comes, finds themselves paralyzed by their fears and their racism,” he said, adding that while APTN’s coverage of the man’s death was national, in the mainstream, reporting on the man’s death remained regional.<sup>28</sup> Rochette cited an incident that happened while waiting to cover a story involving an indigenous man with other journalists working for mainstream outlets. “I started listening to what the people, what the media, the reporters, had to say: ‘Ah, well, he must be in a tavern drinking. He forgot...’ ” Rochette said, acknowledging she believes attitudes have changed to an extent since then.<sup>29</sup> Friesen said thinking about stories from the perspective of the Aboriginal Unit has opened her to how insidious racism can be. “We often put the work of understanding racism on the shoulders of the people who experience racism,” she said. “They’re the ones who speak out and then we

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<sup>26</sup> Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, *Unequal Relations: An Introduction to Race, Ethnic, and Aboriginal Dynamics in Canada*, 3rd ed., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1999), 73.

<sup>27</sup> APTN National News, “Pasqua First Nation man drowns while bystanders ignored help pleas,” *APTN.ca*, September 15, 2011, accessed March 23, 2016, <http://aptn.ca/news/2011/09/15/pasqua-first-nation-man-drowns-while-bystanders-ignored-help-pleas/>.

<sup>28</sup> Oliver, phone interview by author.

<sup>29</sup> Rochette, phone interview by author.

go, ‘OK, can you teach me?’ But really, that is our, my, burden.”<sup>30</sup> That is an important consideration when attempting to understand how journalists are confronting a notion of systemic racism based on a “largely inadvertent bias that is built into the institutional framework of society.”<sup>31</sup> Regarding the story of indigenous peoples in Canada, Murphy said: “Once I started learning about it, I was, for the first time in my life, ashamed to be a Canadian, like downright ashamed.”<sup>32</sup> What journalists know and how they understand it is important to their pursuit of the truth in reporting the indigenous story in Canada, suggesting that institutional relations more broadly are influential.

### **The Culture of the News Media**

As the news media inherently rely on information from other institutions to tell the indigenous story in Canada, this case study highlights the impact that changes to the institutional landscape can have. Michael Schudson argues that journalists see it as their role to report on government affairs.<sup>33</sup> The three mainstream national media outlet case studies indicate that to be true to an extent, especially in 2007-2008. There are varying degrees to which it is explicitly evident. The percentage of politicians or institutional officials consulted in the seven policy stories from the *Globe and Mail* (43 per cent) was exactly the same as the percentage of indigenous sources consulted. The picture of coverage by CBC, which also produces daily news, was very similar. In the six stories about indigenous peoples and issues that led *The National*, 47 per cent of the sources were indigenous, while 48 per cent were politicians or officials.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Friesen, interview by author.

<sup>31</sup> Fleras and Kunz, *Media and Minorities*, 194.

<sup>32</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2008), 52.

<sup>34</sup> In contrast, only 12 per cent of the sources in the articles in *Macleans*, which publishes weekly, during that time were politicians or officials while 50 per cent were identified as indigenous. Keeping in

Roache, while describing her role with APTN, inadvertently offers a logical explanation for that breakdown, but from the perspective of covering indigenous communities in Atlantic Canada: “I look at my role like any other journalist except I’m covering a different nation or multiple nations,” she said, noting the region includes Mi’gmaq, Maliseet, Passamaquody, Innu, and Inuit territories. “I’m covering the relationship between those nations and the Canadian nation.”<sup>35</sup> The opposite argument could therefore be made to explain mainstream media’s historic approach: the journalists were covering the relationship between the Canadian nation and indigenous nations. If that is the case, then it is not surprising that every single journalist interviewed noted that seemingly more indigenous engagement in society at large impacted coverage.

The changes in all three case studies in 2014-2015 indicate that the news media take into consideration how changing dynamics in government affairs impact society at large, building consensus by depicting indigenous peoples with more agency. All of the special projects deal with trauma in indigenous communities, specifically involving missing and murdered indigenous women. However, all of the special projects highlight how indigenous peoples have not given up despite the unfortunate circumstances. When it comes to what has changed, Murphy reiterated the findings of the literature review regarding international influences when she said: “It’s a global village. People are more aware of human rights issues overall. Our citizenship is more engaged, has more sympathy for people from other circumstances. I think that’s part of it. I mean, the media reflects society, right?”<sup>36</sup> According to Stuart Hall et al., the news media are a secondary

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mind that *Maclean’s* is known for its explanatory and/or analytical features, 32 per cent of the sources were academics and/or experts and six per cent were businesspeople.

<sup>35</sup> Roache, phone interview by author.

<sup>36</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

definer of society, ultimately reliant on primary definers from other institutions to set the parameters within which reality is constructed.<sup>37</sup> Indigenous peoples are now being depicted with more agency because they have more agency, Friesen said. She cited the Idle No More indigenous rights movement, which began in 2011, as an example of how indigenous peoples are engaging in society to lobby to improve the quality of their lives as well as the lives of non-indigenous peoples.<sup>38</sup> However, Friesen, like many of her colleagues, acknowledged that indigenous peoples have pushed causes before, garnering much less attention from the news media. What is different now is that there is increased institutional legitimacy.

At least one journalist from each of the four outlets, which includes APTN, mentioned the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada (TRC) on Indian Residential Schools that operated from 2008 to 2015 as having played a role in how the mainstream media have shifted their approach to covering indigenous peoples.<sup>39</sup> Rice specifically referenced both Harper's 2008 apology and the TRC, which began conducting public hearings with residential school survivors in 2010 and issued a report on its findings in 2015, as integral to changing the direction of the conversation. Rice, who was working at CBC Manitoba at the time of the apology, covered the reaction in Winnipeg. Before Harper actually stood up in the House of Commons and spoke the words, "I stand before you today to offer an apology,"<sup>40</sup> Rice said that when he tried to speak with people they withdrew.

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<sup>37</sup> Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts, "The Social Production of News," in *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1978), 57.

<sup>38</sup> Friesen, interview by author.

<sup>39</sup> Gignac, phone interview by author; Macdonald, phone interview by author; Rosner, interview by author; Rice, interview by author; Roache, phone interview by author.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen Harper, "Indian Residential Schools Statement of Apology – Prime Minister Stephen Harper," *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada*, June 11, 2008, accessed March 11, 2016, <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015677/1100100015680>.

However, he said after the apology, people were eager to talk about it. “I think it was like a brief sense of relief,” Rice said. “They finally had, not necessarily an explanation, but something to pin their pain and their grief on that wasn’t associated with them, that wasn’t their fault. Somebody else was taking responsibility for what happened to them as kids.”<sup>41</sup> That the TRC was an official forum for indigenous peoples with stories to share them corroborates with Schudson’s characterization of members of the news media as “institutionalized insiders.”<sup>42</sup> When navigating the truth, the news media inherently look for a source of legitimacy to confer the validity of their findings. With respect to the indigenous story, the TRC served that purpose. As the TRC began collecting the stories of residential school survivors, the overall narrative began to change to include indigenous voices that had been sidelined.

While the case studies demonstrate that the sources the news media are using to tell indigenous stories have changed, whether the process of sourcing stories has changed is debatable. Building on Hall et al.’s point that journalists are actually ideological reinforcers, Angela Phillips’s conducted a study that found journalists turn to the official sources they have traditionally relied on for orientation amid more numerous and fast-approaching deadlines.<sup>43</sup> As a result, the stories being told are through the same narrow lens dictated by a small number of sources. However, according to Pierre Bourdieu, as quoted by Phillips, the news media as a societal institution are “only weakly autonomous.”<sup>44</sup> That ultimately lends to the argument that changing dynamics among

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<sup>41</sup> Rice, interview by author.

<sup>42</sup> Schudson, *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press*, 60.

<sup>43</sup> Angela Phillips, “Old Sources: New Bottles,” in *New Media, Old New: Journalism and Democracy in the Digital Age*, ed. Natalie Fenton, (London: Sage, 2010), 99-100.

<sup>44</sup> Phillips, “Old Sources: New Bottles,” 89.

other institutions have helped to set the stage for new sources to tell the indigenous story in Canada, which is what seemingly happened in these case studies.

Chris Atton considers how changing norms in society and the news media can create conditions to incorporate other viewpoints. Using an analysis grounded in the proven unsustainability of smaller, private alternative media outlets,<sup>45</sup> he argues that in an increasingly interconnected world, mainstream media outlets are finding ways to incorporate perspectives previously on the periphery.<sup>46</sup> As noted in the previous chapter, CBC's mandate has long guided the public broadcaster toward trying to capture the diversity that is Canada in its coverage.<sup>47</sup> Rosner said since he began at CBC Manitoba in 1989, the number of indigenous journalists in the newsroom has increased. "We had the view and we continue to have the view — and this has evolved, and this has become much sharper... over the years — that we need be as representative in our staffing as possible, as representative of the population we're serving."<sup>48</sup> Friesen said the establishment of the Aboriginal Unit, specifically, has impacted more widely on how CBC approaches telling indigenous stories. "What has changed is the indigenous stories are being more frequently told by indigenous staff people," she said, adding it actually began earlier with the 2012 documentary series *Eighth Fire*, which was produced by indigenous peoples. "When they're not being told by indigenous staff, other parts of CBC are reaching out to make sure we're getting it right. That value weaves through more

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<sup>45</sup> Chris Atton, "Separate, Supplementary or Seamless? Alternative News and Professional Journalism," in *Rethinking Journalism: Trust and participation in a transformed news landscape*, ed. Chris Peteres and Marcel Broersma, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 131.

<sup>46</sup> Atton, "Separate, Supplementary or Seamless? Alternative News and Professional Journalism," 142.

<sup>47</sup> Government of Canada, *Broadcasting Act*, 1991, accessed September 27, 2015, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/B-9.01/>.

<sup>48</sup> Rosner, interview by author.

stories than it used to.”<sup>49</sup> At CBC Manitoba, where the Aboriginal Unit is headquartered, almost 10 per cent of the staff is indigenous, which is a greater percentage than the overall indigenous representation in Winnipeg’s labour force.<sup>50</sup> This is one way external forces can sway internal forces to create the conditions Atton is referring to in newsrooms. However, the origins of the special projects in all three case studies highlight how policy changes can intersect with short-term news values to direct the national narrative toward reassessing enduring news values.

To borrow from G. Stuart Adam, the “deeper intellectual cosmologies”<sup>51</sup> in which the missing and murdered projects developed were shaped by a confluence of events. However, the journalists directly leading the special projects at the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean’s*, and CBC all spoke to two key components: the constantly climbing number of missing and murdered indigenous women and the death of Winnipeg teenager Tina Fontaine.<sup>52</sup> This demonstrates a turnaround from the earlier points of journalists such as Rosner and Oliver suggesting society at large and the news media as an institution are unfazed by tragedy involving indigenous peoples, regardless of news values. Journalists from both the *Globe and Mail* as well as CBC said there was increased attention in their newsrooms to inconsistent statistics surrounding missing and murdered indigenous women.<sup>53</sup> With federal funding, the Native Women’s Association of Canada began the Sisters in Spirit initiative to compile a list of missing and murdered women, and as of

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<sup>49</sup> Friesen, interview by author.

<sup>50</sup> CBC/Radio Canada, “A Space For Us All (Strategy update: Long version),” February 2016, accessed March 6, 2016, [http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/\\_files/cbcrc/documents/strategy2020/public-space-jan2016-long-version.pdf](http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/_files/cbcrc/documents/strategy2020/public-space-jan2016-long-version.pdf).

<sup>51</sup> G. Stuart Adam, “Notes Towards a Definition of Journalism,” in *Journalism: The Democratic Craft*, ed. G. Stuart Adam and Roy Peter Clark, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 364.

<sup>52</sup> Murphy, interview by author; Macdonald, interview by author; Rosner, interview by author; Friesen, interview by author.

<sup>53</sup> Friesen, interview by author.

2013, had about 600 cases.<sup>54</sup> Mary Anne Pearce, a doctoral student from the University of Ottawa, released another count that she had been working on at the beginning of 2014, which added more than 200 new names to the tally.<sup>55</sup> The Royal Canadian Mounted Police released its own study a few months later in the spring of 2014, revealing there were nearly 1,200 cases.<sup>56</sup> The situation, which was controversial and implied institutional negligence, fit a number of the news values laid out by Harcup and O'Neill: the powerful elite was involved; the news was particularly bad; the number of people directly involved was growing; given the reconciliation frameworks being laid out, there was relevance; and the news media were constantly following up.<sup>57</sup> But the real catalyst for the discussions that took place in the fall of 2014 at all three mainstream national media outlets about pursuing special projects came in the summer of 2014 when Fontaine's lifeless body was found wrapped in a blanket in the Red River.

"These types of things had happened previously, but we'd become so used to them that it's almost like we'd stopped paying enough attention to them," Rosner said. "Tina Fontaine... spurred us and a whole bunch of other people to say we've got to do something. We've got to really refocus our attention."<sup>58</sup> Although Murphy and Macdonald are not based in Winnipeg, they had similar reactions. As noted, Macdonald is from there. "As a Winnipegger, it really shook me. I grew up in that city and the act that a 15-year-old child could end up in that river wrapped in a blanket was just deeply

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<sup>54</sup> CBC, "RCMP questions claim of 600 missing aboriginal women," February 16, 2013, accessed <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/rcmp-questions-claim-of-600-missing-aboriginal-women-1.1341730>

<sup>55</sup> Mary Agnes Welch, "New database lists 824 murdered, missing native women in Canada," *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 24, 2014, accessed March 11, 2016, <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/grim-number-jumps-in-study-241776001.html>.

<sup>56</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women, A National Operational Overview," May 27, 2014, accessed March 11, 2016, <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/mmaw-faapd-eng.htm>.

<sup>57</sup> Harcup and O'Neill, "What Is News?" 278-279.

<sup>58</sup> Rosner, interview by author.

saddening,” Macdonald said.<sup>59</sup> She said what she went to Winnipeg to report on for “Welcome to Winnipeg” was actually what she saw as a shift in sentiment toward having conversations about racism against indigenous peoples. “There was a lot going on at the time and after Tina died, there was a huge outpouring of emotion and support from a hugely diverse group of Winnipeggers,” Macdonald said. “So there was also a sense that something was changing in that city.”<sup>60</sup> While changing social dynamics obviously influenced “Welcome to Winnipeg” and all of the special projects, another important consideration was that there was editorial support.

While it has been established that the news media’s traditions are institutionalized and deeply engrained, the case studies reveal that the mold can be broken. Speaking further with the journalists involved in the special projects indicates that newsroom hierarchies and the overarching organizational goals as shaped by newsroom leaders have led to increased coverage of indigenous peoples and the issues they face. For example, at the *Globe and Mail*, Galloway said David Walmsley, who became editor-in-chief in 2014,<sup>61</sup> has been supportive of her beat. Typically, journalism is “give-and-take,” she said, where reporters pitch stories to their editors and editors come up with ideas for reporters to carry out. “When you’ve got something that both seems to work from down below radiating up and above radiating down, then it becomes a good situation,” Galloway said.<sup>62</sup> Building on that, when Macdonald was asked why *Maclean’s* was interested in the special projects, she said the angle of “Welcome to Winnipeg” was

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<sup>59</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author.

<sup>60</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author.

<sup>61</sup> *Globe and Mail*, “The *Globe and Mail* appoints David Walmsley as editor-in-chief,” *Globe and Mail*, March 19, 2014, accessed March 23, 2016, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/the-globe-and-mail-appoints-david-walmsley-as-editor-in-chief/article17566145/>.

<sup>62</sup> Galloway, phone interview by author.

suggested by a higher-ranking editor (interestingly, also from Winnipeg). “There was no hard sell,” said Macdonald, noting that when she proposed “It could have been me,” her supervisors jumped on it as they did “Welcome to Winnipeg.” Interestingly, Macdonald indicated that she presented “It could have been me” from what she considered a unique perspective when the news media at large were paying increasing attention to missing and murdered women. There is a case to be made for the story’s commercial appeal to *Maclean’s* (a private company owned by Rogers Media) as a potentially popular product unavailable elsewhere. As Nick Russell points out, newsrooms may strive to operate at a distance from the business of journalism, but are ultimately susceptible to the forces driving it.<sup>63</sup> Further to that point is the blanket validation of new perspectives on old stories involving indigenous peoples, as seen in comparing “The most dangerous cities in Canada” to “Welcome to Winnipeg.” Ultimately, it allows for new characters with untold stories to contribute to the metanarrative of the history of Canada in a way that could potentially be marketable. While in the past it would be fair to assume those top-down decisions would directly contribute to agenda-setting and the national narrative, the case studies suggest the broadening scope of institutional engagement must be considered.

### **Agenda-setting and the Narrative of Nationhood**

The case studies highlight reciprocity in agenda-setting by showing how changes in society can influence the news media’s delineation of what issues are of public importance. There has very clearly been a shift in the way the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean’s*, and CBC are telling the indigenous story. As Wheeler said, it could be “just a

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<sup>63</sup> Nick Russell, “The Media and Money,” in *Morals and the Media: Ethics in Canadian Journalism*, 2nd ed., (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 51.

flash in the pan,” but she suspects it won’t be. “There’s more understanding. There’s more education opening up and I think it will probably just keep going forward and then it will just be natural,” she said. “It won’t feel like we’re giving extra special attention to the indigenous community. It only feels like that because it was never there before.”<sup>64</sup> To that end, when it comes to transmitting culture, institutional dynamics in Canada have changed, albeit slowly, to promote a human rights culture in line with reigning international ideologies, as established in the literature review. With regards to indigenous peoples, the news media as an institution have struggled to adapt. However, the rise of the Internet, and specifically social media, has proliferated both the number of stories to which the media have easy access as well as the number of people sharing them. All of the journalists interviewed noted that whether the news media are still transferring items to the public agenda — historically the case<sup>65</sup> — is now up for debate.

“I’m not sure that it’s media that’s pushing this. I’d love to say that it was, but I’m not sure that it is,” Macdonald said. “I think that it’s probably indigenous people who are pushing these stories and I think that they probably more than media and probably more than the general population deserve credit for these stories gaining the widespread media attention that they seem to be now gaining.”<sup>66</sup> Murphy said the media are only part of it. “I don’t think we should take credit for doing it, and if these people who are activists in their own communities weren’t doing their activism, then we wouldn’t be covering it. I think it’s a hand-in-hand thing.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Wheeler, interview by author.

<sup>65</sup> Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2014), 6.

<sup>66</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author.

<sup>67</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

Journalists from CBC pointed to examples of how the information exchange works in practice. From CBC's end of the spectrum, Friesen noted how stories that were previously regionalized are now being shared more widely online.<sup>68</sup> "Within regional media on CBC, especially radio and radio and TV, we actually tell a lot of really people-centered positive stories. And a lot more of those are coming to light because they're making it online," Friesen said. Kovach and Rosenstiel explore how technology has enabled citizens to contribute to the news by, for example, sharing it.<sup>69</sup> Building on that, while the indigenous story has traditionally been sidelined, it has clearly become more prominent with the rise of the Internet. It is interesting then to consider why the indigenous story has garnered so much attention amid what McCombs refers to as the increasing diversity of the public agenda.<sup>70</sup>

As Rosner pointed out, CBC Aboriginal has twice the followers on Facebook that CBC Manitoba does. As of March 2016, CBC Aboriginal had more than 78,700 followers whereas CBC Manitoba only had 38,300.<sup>71</sup> One likely reason for this corroborates with increased reciprocity in agenda-setting. According to Wheeler, before social media really began to pick up in the late 2010s, indigenous peoples living on reserves were relatively isolated from indigenous peoples on other reserves. "Where did we get our news from? We get our news from the mainstream media. And if the media isn't talking about, say, what's happening in Nova Scotia, how do people in Haida Gwaii hear what the stories are? They don't," Wheeler said. "Now because of social media,

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<sup>68</sup> Friesen, interview by author.

<sup>69</sup> Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*, 246.

<sup>70</sup> McCombs, *Setting the Agenda*, 83.

<sup>71</sup> CBC Aboriginal, *Facebook*, accessed March 11, 2016, <https://www.facebook.com/CBC.caAboriginal>; CBC Manitoba, *Facebook*, accessed March 11, 2016, <https://www.facebook.com/cbcmanitoba>.

everybody is now telling their own stories... The more fame a handful of indigenous people get, the more important their role," she said, noting the importance of cross-posting information on social media.<sup>72</sup> Rochette made a similar comment, specifically in reference to the impact of having a national indigenous newscast. "Aboriginals in the east understood that people in the west were living the same thing as they were under the same politics and things like that because it's all the same everywhere," she said. "That's a reality that they didn't realize before maybe as much."<sup>73</sup>

Although the literature review established that APTN has significantly less reach than the three national mainstream media outlets considered in the case studies, Oliver, Rochette, and Roache all spoke to the same phenomenon as Wheeler. When Roache began working at APTN in the early 2000s, social media did not yet exist. She said the national news was only broadcast twice weekly at 7 p.m. and the network was only beginning to gain an audience.<sup>74</sup>

Oliver said nowadays APTN's stories are consumed in bits and pieces online that get shared hundreds of times over, which has only been made possible by platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. "You know, 10 years ago, APTN was a voice in the dark. You could tune into the newscast every night, but it was still largely Indian TV, as one guy accused us of being one time — 'Ah, you guys are just Indian TV' — Now we're not. Now it's breaking through," he said. "People who might not be able to tune in every night or might not be able to find APTN on their dial are now seeing APTN's stories that are broken up and sent to them by people they know, people they trust."<sup>75</sup> That is not the

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<sup>72</sup> Wheeler, interview by author.

<sup>73</sup> Rochette, phone interview by author.

<sup>74</sup> Roache, phone interview by author.

<sup>75</sup> Oliver, phone interview by author.

only way APTN's content is getting out there, either. Oliver said that when he began at APTN in 2010 it was rare to hear from the mainstream national private network CTV, with which APTN has a content-sharing memorandum of understanding. "Their assignment desk is now regularly sending me emails, keeping me updated on what CTV national news is working on, asking what we're working on and I love that. I love that. I like that they view us now more as a partners," Oliver said. "That, to me, is a reflection of our growing professionalism but also of the importance of the issues we're raising."<sup>76</sup>

Macdonald spoke to another type of feedback regarding "Welcome to Winnipeg." She said she was caught off-guard by how widespread and intense the response to the story was by both other news media outlets as well the public at large. She said the day that the story was published she was contacted by other national news media outlets that wanted to interview her about it as soon as possible. At the same time, her email and social media inboxes were being flooded. "The Winnipeg story blew up in a way that I didn't expect and it was intense and often, you know, sometimes difficult," admitted Macdonald, who said she was contacted "around the clock for a while" via email as well as on Facebook and Twitter by people she did not know who were angered by her portrait of racism in Winnipeg. However, she acknowledged that some of the criticism of the story has been "really smart" and spawned broader discussion.<sup>77</sup> There is a case to be made that the special projects have received attention because they make compelling arguments that prompt engagement.

When it comes to transferring an item from the media agenda to the public agenda using compelling arguments, the frames that journalists invoke in their narratives are

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<sup>76</sup> Oliver, phone interview by author.

<sup>77</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author.

important. As Fleras and Kunz explain, these frames are journalists' way of "imposing a preferred meaning."<sup>78</sup> Considering the special projects of 2014-2015, it is evident that all three national mainstream media outlets put effort into creating frames to counter the one associated with the colonial legacy that has shaped the national narrative. Referencing "It could have been me," Macdonald said that because the stories were so personal, they demanded a certain technique. "You have to be extremely respectful if you're going to ask people to tell the stories they have," said Macdonald, who travelled to gather them. "Those are not conversations I would ever have over the phone. Those are conversations I would only have in person."<sup>79</sup> She said that before the interviews for "It could have been me," she invited the women to bring people who could provide support. During the interviews, she retreated from her questions if the interviewees were upset.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, Murphy noted how quotes were read back to family members. "The whole interview process itself is very traumatizing for people and they need to have that feedback and that sense of control. You don't want to strip them of that," Murphy said. "It's not a gotcha game. It's not about, 'Oh, you said this and we're going to put it in and you regret saying it? Well tough luck.' No, no. That's not how we're rolling with this. It is a different kind of journalism."<sup>81</sup>

There is evidence that using frames that make compelling arguments can still work to transfer items from the media agenda to the public agenda. According to CBC's *Strategy 2020*, since the missing and murdered project went live, the RCMP have re-

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<sup>78</sup> Fleras and Kunz, *Media and Minorities*, 190.

<sup>79</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author.

<sup>80</sup> Macdonald, phone interview by author.

<sup>81</sup> Murphy, phone interview by author.

opened two cold cases and solved one.<sup>82</sup> This shows how the news media are challenging society's Eurocentric bias and resulting stereotypes of indigenous peoples. For example, indigenous activism was typically framed as a departure from established norms, according to Fleras and Elliott, who explain protestors in the past were depicted as "dangerous" and/or "irrational."<sup>83</sup> Now, the news media are now more or less crediting indigenous activism, particularly Idle No More,<sup>84</sup> for bringing to light the nuances of longstanding issues journalists had previously failed to identify.

Robert McChesney suggests that it is in democratic societies that unfavourable ideas are stealthily repressed.<sup>85</sup> The former chair of the CBC board of directors, Patrick Watson, explains the role that journalism can play in that: "I am becoming convinced that it is very much in the interests of global corporatism to keep bad news on the screen. The viewer is so powerfully persuaded by the night's review of death and disaster that the opportunity for personal salvation represented by buying happiness off the shelf or at the car dealership becomes insanely seductive."<sup>86</sup> Although Watson's statement could be seen as over the top with regards to the commercialization and commodification of the news, it actually resonates outside of the sphere of consumer culture. On a sociopolitical level, keeping "bad news on the screen" with regards to the indigenous story reinforces the stratified ordering of societies by elevating the biases that marginalize certain groups on the periphery. As Gigac explained: "If you don't talk about something, people are going to be pretty ignorant to it. They're not going to be able to understand things and it's

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<sup>82</sup> CBC/Radio Canada, "A Space For Us All. (Strategy update: Long version)."

<sup>83</sup> Fleras and Elliott, *Unequal Relations*, 340.

<sup>84</sup> Friesen, interview by author; Rice, interview by author; Wheeler, interview by author.

<sup>85</sup> Robert McChesney, "Corporate Media, Global Capitalism," in *Media Organization and Production*, ed. Simon Cottle, (London: Sage, 2003), 36.

<sup>86</sup> David Taras, "The Ownership Juggernaut," in *Digital Mosaic: Media, Power, and Identity in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 100.

just going to be kept out of sight or out of earshot. The longer that happens, the risks are higher for having a populous that is in the dark about certain things they don't have to be."<sup>87</sup> These case studies demonstrate how journalists can take advantage of a window of opportunity to make compelling arguments to challenge ideas that may have once suffered that fate. For example, CBC coverage in 2007-2008 shows reporting on the advent of federal policies geared toward reconciliation with indigenous peoples in Canada was markedly different than on other policy issues involving indigenous peoples at the time. Building on that, the way that the mainstream national media outlets reported the indigenous story in 2014-2015 is inconsistent with mediacentrism (a form of Eurocentrism). While mediacentrism suggests that the reality that journalists construct in their stories is "routinely and automatically shaped from the point of view of those in positions of power,"<sup>88</sup> it does not account for alterations to those viewpoints. Previously, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky's claim that members of the news media who fail to conform to the parameters of acceptability<sup>89</sup> explained why mediacentrism continued to permeate the news media. Now, their claim explains why journalists are reframing the indigenous story given the increasing amount of available information and the unacceptability of discounting it. As Oliver noted: "You hear some things and then you want to learn more, but it's got to start somewhere. The ball has to start rolling."<sup>90</sup>

In summary, this chapter illustrates how the mainstream national media outlets' coverage of the indigenous story in Canada started shifting after 2007-2008, when the process of reconciliation began. While telling the truth to the citizenry remains a guiding

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<sup>87</sup> Gignac, phone interview by author.

<sup>88</sup> Fleras and Kunz, *Media and Minorities*, 191.

<sup>89</sup> Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), 304.

<sup>90</sup> Oliver, phone interview by author.

principle for journalists, they now have a different conception of both the truth and the citizenry. This highlights the significance of institutional dynamics that shape how members of the news media perceive what is true and what is not, and demonstrates that news media's agenda-setting function is influenced by social forces beyond its control in an increasingly interconnected world. As the climate for a deeper understanding of the indigenous story has developed, the traditional mainstream narrative is beginning to reconcile with indigenous viewpoints. The next chapter extrapolates from this analysis of the case studies to draw more pointed conclusions about the factors that have influenced the continuity and evolution in the way that journalists have told the indigenous story in Canada.

## Conclusion

The recent shift in the mainstream national media's coverage of the indigenous story in Canada has been a seemingly complex phenomenon, but CBC Manitoba managing editor Cecil Rosner summed up the most important part quite simply when he said: "A lot of stuff was ignored and swept under the rug before, but that's not a very good reason to keep doing it."<sup>1</sup> As established in the literature review, for more than 150 years, indigenous peoples have been the targets of oppressive and assimilative federal policies fostered by a myriad of institutions, including the news media. In the most recent and sweeping study of portrayals of indigenous peoples in Canadian journalism, Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson found that as of 2009, "colonialism remained intact in the press."<sup>2</sup> However, it was in 2007 that federal legislation geared toward reconciliation with indigenous peoples came into effect, and in 2008, the federal government apologized for historic treatment. Using the time period during which those key events occurred as a starting point, this thesis took a cultural studies perspective to the central question: What factors influence the continuity and evolution of the way journalists have covered the indigenous story?

Each of the five chapters built on the previous ones to explore some answers. In Chapter One, I laid out the findings of my review of existing journalism and communication scholarship in a theoretical framework based on principles that guide journalists, the culture of the news media, and agenda-setting and the national narrative. Focusing specifically on the history of the indigenous story as told by journalists and the news media in Chapter Two, I applied the theoretical framework in three time periods:

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<sup>1</sup> Cecil Rosner, interview by author in Winnipeg, February 12, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson, *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers*, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011), 276.

colonialism (1869-1968), redress (1969-2007), and reconciliation (2008-2015). While the legacy of colonialism in the news media clearly translated into stories about indigenous peoples and the issues they faced during redress, the counter-narratives that emerged during reconciliation were not as easy to explain. To paint a fuller picture of what appeared at the outset to be a shift, in Chapter Three I presented my methodology for investigating case studies to compare coverage by the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC in 2007-2008 and in 2014-2015. To determine whether the journalism produced was quality journalism, I expanded on Maxwell McCombs's assessment that mass communication should survey the larger environment, build consensus, and transmit culture.<sup>3</sup> Chapter Four shows that when it comes to the indigenous story, the three mainstream national media outlets did a better job surveying the larger environment in 2014-2015 through online platform than in their traditional platforms in 2007-2008. Additionally, all three mainstream national media outlets included more indigenous sources in 2014-2015 than in their 2007-2008 stories. With respect to building consensus, indigenous peoples were portrayed with more agency in 2014-2015 than in 2007-2008, when stereotypes were still fairly common. While the richness of indigenous peoples' cultures was barely being transmitted in 2007-2008, by 2014-2015, journalists were including much more backstory in their reporting. The analysis that followed in Chapter Five included interviews with journalists from all three mainstream national media outlets, as well as from APTN. These interviews helped synthesize why in 2014-2015 it appears a change in reporting finally began to happen.

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<sup>3</sup> Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2014), 134.

## Factors Influencing Continuity and Evolution in the Indigenous Story

Trina Roache, APTN's Atlantic bureau chief, was one of the journalists I spoke to who noted journalism is like a mirror. While in many indigenous communities, there is misery and there is tragedy, there is also hope and resilience. "There's so much richness and colour and beauty and positive things, people doing great things, that you don't want to just be holding up a mirror that's showing substance abuse and addiction and dysfunction. That's not all that there is."<sup>4</sup> Assuming journalism "reflects society," to borrow from the *Globe and Mail's* special projects editor, Angela Murphy, it comes as no surprise that how journalists perceive society is integral. Pulling from the analysis in Chapter Five, there are five broad factors that have influenced the continuity and evolution in the way indigenous story has been told by the news media.

1. More information: A seemingly basic concept, but if journalists understand their role to be telling the truth to the citizenry,<sup>5</sup> what they know ultimately impacts their capacity and ability to deliver. As the case studies and analysis reveal, many journalists working in the mainstream, especially non-indigenous journalists, did not have a very deep historical knowledge of the indigenous story in 2007-2008 compared to what they knew by 2014-2015. The broader knowledge base has helped journalists start to communicate a more truthful version of the indigenous story in Canada to a broader citizenry that they now more fully recognize includes indigenous peoples.
2. Institutional legitimacy: Through a series of events dating back to the 1960s, the longstanding policies of subjugation defining the federal government's

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<sup>4</sup> Trina Roache, phone interview by author from Ottawa, February 24, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007), 5.

relationship with indigenous peoples in Canada began to erode. The literature review highlights how changes in the international climate shaped legislative amendments in Canada (some of which were in response to landmark Supreme Court rulings) to uphold, and in some cases, reinstate indigenous rights. However, for journalists, having a forum such as the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada on Indian Residential schools, from which official and deeply personal counter-narratives began flowing, legitimized a version of the national narrative that had been by and large omitted from coverage in the past. The best example of this is perhaps found in the 2007-2008 part of the CBC case study, where in the two stories directly focused on reconciliation, enough background context was provided to depict indigenous peoples with agency by avoiding stereotypes.

3. Indigenous activism: Institutionalization, while important, was not enough on its own to catapult the indigenous story to prominence. As the literature review and case studies reveal, policies can change — and regarding the indigenous story — have been changing for decades previously, but if no one is speaking up, they might as well have stayed the same. With globalization, the world is becoming interconnected. The fact that people can relate to each other better through shared experiences can inspire advocacy efforts for groups facing worse circumstances elsewhere. As highlighted in the analysis, if this is not happening, if people are not speaking up, journalists are not challenged to change their reportage.
4. Indigenous journalists (or guidance): All of the journalists from CBC, which, as established, has made a conscious effort to have indigenous journalists in the newsroom, noted the insights of indigenous journalists have helped to generate

more nuanced reportage on a large scale. Really, what it comes down to, as illuminated by Aboriginal Unit senior producer Cate Friesen's comments in the analysis, is greater consultation with indigenous people on stories about indigenous peoples and the issues they face. While the *Globe and Mail* does not have the same proportional representation in its newsroom, as noted in the case studies, it did establish an advisory panel specifically to help navigate the complexities of undercurrents in the indigenous story overlooked in years gone by.

5. A digital vista: The analysis shows how the Internet and social media have opened up a digital vista for gathering indigenous stories as well as presenting them, begging questions about whether the special projects, mostly based online, would even have come to be without it. I would argue that they would not have, based on the fact that my research links the development of the special projects with increased reciprocity in agenda-setting made possible by the Internet. The online world not only proliferates indigenous voices (another factor contributing to continuity and evolution), but also creates more space to project those voices directly into the mainstream.

All in all, the chapters cumulatively point to how integral the news media have been and continue to be when it comes to communicating the indigenous story in Canada. Now, journalists appear to be telling a different version of it based on the factors listed above. While the special projects of 2014-2015 were a watershed moment, the real test will be whether the factors that influenced the reporting resonate in the long run.

### **Areas for Future Research**

The ideal would be to get to a point where it does not take special projects to properly reflect indigenous peoples and their story in Canada in the news media. To see whether the special projects are signaling more permanent change in the way journalists cover the indigenous story in Canada on a regular basis, I did an initial survey of 2016 federal budget coverage by the same mainstream national media outlets in the case studies: the *Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, and CBC's *The National*. I chose to zero in on the federal budget because the government indicated indigenous peoples were a priority, implying that there would be policy coverage of issues affecting them in the news media. Given that I aligned the discourse analysis in the case studies on policy stories with scholarly frameworks built on institutionalism, I kept my approach consistent. Using the same six key search terms and adding the word "budget," I searched the ProQuest archives between March 20-26, 2016 (the week the federal budget was released). Referring back to McCombs's methodology for evaluating content in the case studies, I examined the coverage to see how it surveyed the larger environment, built consensus and transmitted culture.

With regards to surveying the larger environment, the search produced 28 results: 20 from the *Globe and Mail*, one from *Maclean's*, and seven from *The National*. I read the stories to see which ones focused specifically on how indigenous peoples were impacted by the budget. In the majority of the articles and reports — with the exception of three about different topics (see Appendix D) — indigenous peoples were mentioned as part of the broad reportage about the budget. However, my focus was on how indigenous peoples were portrayed when issues affecting them were the crux of the story.

Three of the 20 *Globe and Mail* articles fit the description: “Indigenous issues to reap budget benefits,”<sup>6</sup> “Budget promises to ‘transform’ reserves,”<sup>7</sup> and “Funding for First Nations heartens former Liberal PM.”<sup>8</sup> There were two reports from *The National* that fit the description: “What Canadians want from the budget: First Nations,”<sup>9</sup> and “What the budget means for indigenous peoples.”<sup>10</sup> The lone story from *Maclean’s* was actually about a climate change conference in Vancouver and not the federal budget,<sup>11</sup> so I did not consider it for further analysis. To sum up, five of the 25 articles referencing indigenous peoples and the budget were exclusively about indigenous peoples and the budget. Focusing on those five articles, I compared how the number of indigenous sources compared to the number of non-indigenous sources. As was the case in the case studies of daily coverage in 2007-2008, about half of the sources were indigenous (see Table 9).

**Table 9: Sources in 2016 Federal Budget Coverage of Indigenous Issues**

	(CBC) What Canadians want: FNs	(CBC) Budget impacts on indigenous...	(Globe) Indigenous peoples to reap benefits	(Globe) Budget to ‘transform’ reserves	(Globe) Martin heartened
Indigenous source		3	1	1	1
Non- indigenous source	1	3	2		2
<b>TOTAL SOURCES</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

Data compiled from ProQuest’s *Globe and Mail* and CBC *The National* archives

<sup>6</sup> Robert Fife and Bill Curry, “Indigenous issues to reap budget benefits,” *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 2016, A1.

<sup>7</sup> Gloria Galloway, “Budget promises to ‘transform’ reserves,” *Globe and Mail*, March 23, 2016, A12.

<sup>8</sup> Gloria Galloway, “Funding for First Nations heartens former Liberal PM,” *Globe and Mail*, March 24, 2016, A5.

<sup>9</sup> *The National*, “What Canadians want from the budget First Nations,” CBC, March 21, 2016, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed April 8, 2016).

<sup>10</sup> *The National*, “What the budget means for indigenous people,” CBC, March 22, 2016, transcript, ProQuest, (accessed April 8, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> John Geddes, “So, not so easy after all,” *Maclean’s*, March 21, 2016, 18-21; *Maclean’s* published on March 21, the day before the federal budget was released, and did not publish again during the search period. Changing the search dates to any time after March 21, the next most recent articles were from April 11.

Unlike in the content analyses from 2007-2008, there was an indigenous source in every story, except for the look-ahead to what Canadians wanted to see in the budget in First Nation communities. That story was a short synopsis by reporter Cameron Macintosh from Winnipeg, and was based on comments previously made by the government and First Nation leaders. The only clip was a file clip of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau noting the government will work with First Nations. That being said, the clip was important because it established a frame for the story in which the government and First Nations were seen more as equals.

To delve deeper into whether the coverage contributed to consensus building, I again considered whether indigenous peoples had agency. I found that in all five stories, that was the case (see Table 10).

**Table 10: Indigenous Agency in 2016 Federal Budget Coverage of Indigenous Issues**

	(CBC) What Canadians want: FNs	(CBC) Budget impacts on indigenous...	(Globe) Indigenous peoples to reap benefits	(Globe) Budget to 'transform' reserves	(Globe) Martin heartened
Indigenous source first?	No indigenous source	Yes	No	Yes	No
Indigenous agency?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Explanation	AFN Chief cited saying he will hold government to promises	Mention of the "nation-to-nation" relationship	Noted indigenous lobby efforts paid off	Noted indigenous lobby efforts paid off	Martin said he has confidence in First Nations to manage their allocations

Data compiled from ProQuest's *Globe and Mail* and CBC *The National* archives

Compared to the policy stories of 2007-2008, it seems to matter less now whether the indigenous source comes first in the story because the frames are different; indigenous peoples are depicted as partners with and not dependent on the federal government. That sentiment is evident in both of *The National* reports, which use terms

such as “work with”<sup>12</sup> and “nation-to-nation.”<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, two of the *Globe and Mail* articles point to lobby efforts of indigenous peoples as putting the need for increased funding on the government’s radar.<sup>14</sup> The other *Globe and Mail* article was unique because it focused on the reaction of former Prime Minister Paul Martin — who had championed improving relations with indigenous peoples a decade earlier — to the \$8.4 billion allocated to First Nations and other investments. The significant part of this article with respect to indigenous agency is that Martin is quoted: “I have every bit of confidence in the capacity of the First Nations to run this adequately.”<sup>15</sup>

Building on that, when it comes to transmitting culture, journalists avoid key stereotypes of indigenous peoples as victims and aggressors in this coverage. While there are mentions of indigenous lobby efforts, it is made clear that the lobby efforts are related to the inadequate conditions on many reserves because of insufficient assistance in the past. Establishing that the funding allocation represents the growth of a relationship between First Nations and Canada helps to mitigate against suggestions that First Nations are victims. The fact that indigenous peoples were depicted as equal partners with Canada as opposed to threats to nationhood goes a long way in combatting stereotypes that have marginalized indigenous peoples in the past.

To summarize, this initial survey of how indigenous peoples were impacted by the federal budget in 2016 suggests the precedent set by the 2014-2015 special projects is soaking into more regular coverage of indigenous issues. However, further study in this area would be beneficial to determine if this change will be widespread. It will also be

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<sup>12</sup> *The National*, “What Canadians want from the budget First Nations.”

<sup>13</sup> *The National*, “What the budget means for indigenous people.”

<sup>14</sup> Fife and Curry, “Indigenous issues to reap budget benefits”; Galloway, “Budget promises to ‘transform’ reserves.”

<sup>15</sup> Galloway, “Funding for First Nations heartens former Liberal PM.”

important for the change to be seen in the way other stories that are not policy based are reported — breaking news and day-to-day coverage need to reflect this, too. The best case scenario for the indigenous story would be for short-term news values to align with enduring news values.

### **Closing remarks**

Kim Wheeler, an associate producer in CBC's Aboriginal Unit who works on the nationally syndicated radio show *Unreserved*, said when she began her career telling indigenous stories, she was more or less on her own. Acknowledging that is not the case right now, she said she hopes "it's not just a flash in the pan." She said she thinks otherwise, that journalists will keep developing the indigenous story. "Hopefully," Wheeler said, "it will just become the norm."<sup>16</sup>

Like Wheeler, I suspect it will become the norm as well. The longstanding and inaccurate version of the indigenous story in Canada promulgated in the news media found resonance in other institutions, which had historically been oriented toward assimilating indigenous peoples, or at the very least, repressing them on the edge of society. Those institutions are now navigating the fallout from those disparaging federal policies and as a result, so are journalists. More information, supported by official institutions legitimizing louder indigenous voices, has led journalists to bring counter-narratives into the mainstream national media. With insight from indigenous journalists and guidance from indigenous peoples themselves in this new digital vista, the news media is empowered to pursue the truth about this story for all of the peoples living in Canada today.

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<sup>16</sup> Kim Wheeler, interview by author in Winnipeg, February 14, 2016.

**Appendix A: Stories filed as national news in the *Globe and Mail* in 2007-2008**

Article title	Author	Length	Page	Type	Theme	Secondary Themes	NOTES
Band had tried to ban alcohol from reserve	Joe Friesen	640	A10	news report	Crime	Crime follow up	Day after Pauchay sisters died
HIV rate soars among Vancouver's native drug users	Andre Picard	720	A11	news report	Health	--	Following an academic study that was released
Emergency cash for native institute sparks furor over funding	Kate Harries	482	A7	news report	Education	Politics (federal and provincial)	Provincial and federal governments squabble over who should take responsibility for funding First Nations post-secondary
Innu village bans alcohol in bid to halt tragic abuse	Globe and Mail	316	A11	news report	Health	(band) Politics	Village in Labrador votes to outlaw sale, distribution, and possession of alcohol
Wake held for sisters who froze to death	Globe and Mail	102	A11	brief	Crime	Crime follow up	Wake for Pauchay sisters
Retrial of native leader called 'vindictive'	Katherine O'Neill	384	A11	news report	Court	Crime, justice	Saskatchewan leader David Ahenakew to be retried for hate crimes
Media banned from girls' funeral	Globe and Mail	101	A11	brief	Crime	--	Media banned from Pauchays' funeral
BC's plan calls for industrial, residential development of farmland	Justine Hunter	486	A5	news report	Land claim	Politics (federal and provincial)	Tsawwassen First Nation to develop protected farmland if Ottawa ratifies treaty
Vancouver police part of cover up in man's death, lawyer says	Camille Bains	361	A5	news report	Court	Crime, justice	Frank Paul's death covered up by RCMP, BC civil liberties charges
Grieving grandmother calls for change	Tim Cook	685	A7	news report	Crime	Crime follow up	Pauchays' grandma meets media at edge of reserve asking her granddaughters' deaths not be in vain
Former NWT premier knew of abuse in schools,	Sara Minogue	677	A5	news report	Court	Crime, justice, (education)	Allegations that Joe Handley new about Ed Horne's abuse of

victims' lawyer says								Inuit students
Native towns at risk of going up in flames	Bill Curry	616	A5	news report	Environment, natural resources	Politics?		Aboriginal leaders warning dry timber from beetle outbreak could light up and their reserves could go up in flames
Fate of sex abuse trial in hands of Nunavut judge	Sara Minogue	391	A10	news report	Court	Crime and justice		Judge to decide on trial on whether Joe Handley new Sex abuse of Inuit students
Ontario natives to get share of gambling revenues	Chinta Puxley	366	A7	news report	Economy, businesses	Politics		Casino deal in Ontario between FNs, province renegotiated
Details demanded on children missing from residential schools	Michael Oliveira	495	A10	news report	Politics	Justice		Protest to ATIP unmarked graves of residential school children
Medical team targeting stomach cancer in North	Andre Picard	888	A6	news report	Health	--		High rates of stomach cancer in Aklavik is likely caused by a bacteria
Natives say they're shut out of apology process	Bill Curry	513	A4	news report	Politics	Reconciliation		Fontaine says Harper not consulting AFN to draft apology
The Inuit cultural matrix reloaded	Dawn Walton	747	A3	news report	Culture (heritage)	Science, technology		University of Calgary academics replicated traditional hut for Inuit elders to see if it could help heritage preservation
Police launch probe into women's disappearances	Katherine O'Neill	70	A6	brief	Crime	Investigation		Project Kare is probing disappearances of two aboriginal women
Four held after death on Alberta reserve	Globe and Mail	78	A10	brief	Crime	Investigation		Arrests follow the death of a man on Stoney FN
Charges against official of VANOC partner revealed	Leslie Young	101	A9	brief	Crime	--		Four Host FNs executive director facing mischief, uttering threats charges
RCMP hands Crown file on Yellow Quill	Globe and Mail	101	A13	brief	Crime	(court)		Crown prosecutor to decide charges in Pauchay case

deaths							
Crown stays sex charge against deaf man	Sara Minogue	718	A8	news report	Court	Crime (culture)	Inuit sign language discovered during trial of deaf Inuit sex abuser
Edmonton Stragglers' have come home to collect	Bill Curry	576	A3	news report	Land claim	Politics, court	Descendants of Papschase band make case for territory in urban Edmonton before SCC
Agencies at odds over how grant money parceled to band's councilors	Christie Blatchford	966	A9	news report	(band) politics	Crime	Money from AHF for sex abuse survivors squandered by council members
Graphic list of abuse to settle claims	Katherine O'Neill	1598	A12	news report (feature)	Politics	Reconciliation	Compensation plan for IRS survivors
Help for natives falls far short, chiefs say	Gloria Galloway	607	A18	news report	Politics	Economy	Chiefs respond to budget
Fantino under fire	Globe and Mail	114	A8	brief	Land dispute	Crime, politics	Activists peeved over aboriginal occupation on housing project complain to OPP commissioner

**Appendix B: All articles in *Maclean's* about indigenous peoples and/or issues affecting them in 2007-2008**

Article Title	Month published	Author	Length	Type	Theme (secondary themes)	Topics
That's it? No protest?	July	Jonathon Gatehouse	2082	Feature	Politics	Land claims, protests
An Aboriginal 'glasnost'	September	Nancy Macdonald	1490	Feature	Politics (economics)	Development, internal conflict
Hail Chief Paleface	November	Nancy Macdonald	1452	Feature	Politics (economics)	Development, legislative loopholes
Landscape with a sexy transvestite	December	Jordan Timm	1488	Feature	Arts	Artist, art exhibition, sexuality
The body's evidence	January	Alexandra Shimo	1059	Feature	Science (politics)	DNA collection, genealogy, land claims
Spirited away	January	Ken MacQueen	1035	Feature	Culture	Customary practices
Christopher Thomas Morriseau	February	Michael Friscolanti	844	Feature	Obituary (justice)	Prison, crime, film industry
Cheque imbalances	February	Jonathon Gatehouse	724	Feature	Politics (justice)	Residential schools settlement
40,000 (Controversial) tiny stone men	April	Jonathon Gatehouse	779	Feature	Arts (culture)	Arts, sculpture, mainstream production
To forgive or forget	June	Nancy Macdonald	1663	Feature	Politics (justice)	Truth and reconciliation commission
Paying back churches first, then natives	November	Jonathon Gatehouse	278	Brief	Politics (justice)	Residential school settlement
Quality of life in Canada a relative thing	January	Jordan Timm	335	Brief	Health	Socioeconomic study
Everyone's business	February	Anonymous	~80	Brief (Bad news)	Crime (justice)	Crime, death, poverty, child welfare
Playing with fire	May	Anonymous	~130	Brief (Bad news)	Politics (sports)	Olympic Games, threat of protests
Pay it forward	May	Anonymous	~80	Brief (Bad news)	Politics (health)	Child welfare
Did Harper inhale?	June	Mitchel Raphael	~190	Brief (Bad news)	Politics (justice)	Apology to indigenous peoples

## Appendix C: Coverage by CBC's *The National* in 2007-2008

### News Reports

Month	Segment	Region	Length	Type	Format	NOTES
Feb	15	QB	479	Arts	Report	Indigenous myth turned into Cree opera
Dec	15	UNKN OWN	544	Arts	Report	Turtle Gals do wild west shows from indigenous perspective
Feb	18	QB	258	Arts	Report	Indigenous artist honoured in exhibit at Museum of Civilization
June	21	UNKN OWN	626	Arts	Report	Composer works with quartet, throat singer for new piece
Sept	15	BC	2141	Feature	Report	High-power judge commits sex crimes against indigenous women
Sept	1	MB	543	Hard	Report	Compensation for residential schools
Sept	1	ON	462	Hard	Report	Refusal to sign UNDRIP
April	1	ON	545	Hard	Report	Reaction from indigenous leaders to naming of TRC commissioner
May	1	ON	610	Hard	Report	Auditor's report: gov't failing child welfare services on reserves
June	1	ON	603	Hard	Report	Harper apologizes for historic treatment of indigenous
Jan	1	SK	458	Hard	Report	Child death (Pauchay toddlers)
June	1	SK	470	Hard	Report	First Nations child snatched, beaten: attempted luring across northern Saskatchewan
April	2	AB	363	Hard	Report	Child shot follow (Asia Saddleback)
June	2	MB	459	Hard	Report	Child death (Tristan Dunsford)
April	2	ON	482	Hard	Report	Residents of north ON First Nations airlifted off reserve due to flooding
June	2	ON	UNKN OWN	Hard	Report	Indigenous leaders respond to harper's apology in Parliament
June	2	ON	614	Hard	Report	Pre-Harper apology: what it could mean (indigenous leaders not to speak on floor...)
Jan	2	SK	462	Hard	Report	Child death follow (Pauchay toddlers)
July	2	SK	446	Hard	Report	Work force shortage could be filled by indigenous workers
June	3	BC	492	Hard	Report	Indigenous response in BC to Harper apology
Feb	3	SK	380	Hard	Report	Child death follow (Pauchay toddlers)
June	3	MB	UNKN OWN	Hard	Report	Grade 6 class project to come up with what Harper apology should say
April	4	AB	394	Hard	Report	Child shot (Asia Saddleback)
Dec	4	NS	398	Hard	Report	Woman who launched residential school lawsuit found dead in her home
July	4	ON	394	Hard	Report	Water issues in the north

May	4	UNKN OWN	464	Hard	Report	Protection for polar bears could damage hunt (new measures in US)
May	4	YK	673	Hard	Report	Deaths of residential school survivors in the Yukon related to intense substance abuse funded by compensation cheques
July	4	BC	472	Hard	Report	Pepper spray incident (kids soccer victory turned violent)
Jan	5	BC	392	Hard	Report	Cop who left an indigenous man to die on the street on sergeant's orders breaks down testifying in court
July	5	MB	458	Hard	Report	Child death (Gage Guimond)
Jan	5	SK	568	Hard	Report	How a First Nation is dealing with urban migration
April	6	SK	430	Hard	Report	Saskatchewan First Nation federation reinstates leader who made anti-Semitic remarks
July	7	BC	361	Hard	Report	Land treaty (First Nation can develop agricultural land)
Dec	7	MB	429	Hard	Report	Some residential school survivors don't know they can get compensation
August	7	MB	423	Hard	Report	Child death (Adam Keeper)
Oct	8	BC	390	Hard	Report	Protest (against land claim agreement terms and/or process)
Sept	8	MB	425	Hard	Report	Indigenous siblings adopted to non-indigenous families reunite
May	8	ON	358	Hard	Report	Youth raise issues of reserves (on Aboriginal Day of Action)
May	9	AB	UNKN OWN	Hard	Report	Concerns some residential school survivors can't handle compensation cheques (follow up)
June	9	AB	UNKN OWN	Hard	Report	Harper apology follow: Pollievre's offensive comment
July	10	MB	409	Hard	Report	Band council drug tests
March	11	MB	415	Hard	Report	TRC commissioners not yet appointed, but campaign to inform Canadians about TRC launched
July	11	QB	415	Hard	Report	Protest (Aboriginal Day of Action)
July	12	AB	368	Hard	Report	Based on just released study
March	13	ON	454	Hard	Report	Six First Nations leaders jailed over protesting against mining on land claim land
June	14	SK	546	Hard	Report	Labour shortage in SK could be filled by aboriginals
June	17	NFLD	465	Hard	Report	Inuit, Innu in Newfoundland left out of apology, <i>IRSSA</i> ; taking legal action
Jan	17	BC	485	Hard	Report	Census follow up (life on a reserve)
Jan	18	ON	465	Hard	Report	Census (indigenous migration to cities)

Oct	7	BC	307	Hard	Report	Rights complaint filed against CRA for discriminatory comments in an indigenous man's tax file
Oct	3	ON	465	Soft	Report	Environmental activist nominated for Nobel Prize
April	10	BC	383	Soft	Report	Research results on the DNA of a hunter found frozen in a glacier
June	10	BC	492	Soft	Report	Archaeology: ancient bones taken from island First Nation be returned
Feb	12	MB	403	Soft	Report	Reaction to naming new February holiday Riel day in Manitoba
July	14	BC	440	Soft	Report	First Nation heritage home (to be demolished)
August	16	MB	351	Soft	Report	Chief One Arrow's body exhumed
Oct	10	SK	465	Soft	Report	Native pictographs on rocks fading
August	20	YK	525	Soft	Report	Discovery (artifacts)
Dec	3	ON	503	Sports	Report	Ojibway New York Islander Chris Simon gets longest suspension in NHL history
April	12	BC	535	Sports	Report	The family of Carey price, playing well in NHL playoffs, is proud
March	13	MB	454	Sports	Report	Manitoba Métis makes curling, jigging shoes
July	16	QB	478	Sports	Report	Lacrosse (as the native sport)
Sept	16	ON	596	Sports	Report	Canadian as head coach and assistant coach of New York Islanders

## Documentaries

Month	Segment	Region	Length	Type	Format	NOTES
May	11	AB	2456	Feature	Documentary	Special report - child shot: gang violence in Samson Creek (Asia Saddleback)
July	14	BC	3730	Feature	Documentary	Part of a series ("Seven") not specifically on indigenous issues
April	12	BC	1746	Feature	Documentary	Stolen children: series (special report on how reconciliation could work, what it means)
July	14	MB	915	Feature	Documentary	Group homes compensation wanted
Sept	11	NFLD	1266	Feature	Documentary	Road Stories-series
July	18	NV	1469	Feature	Documentary	Sports - kids meet soccer stars
August	14	NV	2399	Feature	Documentary	Scientists work with Inuit to get close to rare whale
Sept	14	NV	1184	Feature	Documentary	Road Stories-series
Sept	14	NV	1427	Feature	Documentary	Road Stories-series

Sept	13	NV	1405	Feature	Docu- mentary	Road Stories-series
Nov	18	NV	1237	Feature	Docu- mentary	“Don't call me Eskimo” video has lessons for viewers, creators
Nov	15	NV	2731	Feature	Docu- mentary	Road Stories-series
Dec	15	NV	2161	Feature	Docu- mentary	Road Stories-series (encore?)
Dec	14	NV	1140	Feature	Docu- mentary	Road Stories-series
Dec	16	NV	UNKNO WN	Feature	Docu- mentary	Road Stories-series (encore?)
Nov	16	NWT	1287	Feature	Docu- mentary	Road Stories-series
Nov	18	QB	811	Feature	Docu- mentary	Nunavik is facing a baby boom, stretching thin resources
June	18	QB	1234	Feature	Docu- mentary	How northern community is struggling and dealing w/ poverty and suicide
May	21	UNKN OWN	826	Arts	Docu- mentary	Career of aboriginal filmmaker who focuses on indigenous justice issues
June	15	UNKN OWN	2265	Feature	Docu- mentary	Stolen children: series

## Anchors

Month	Segment	Region	Length	Type	Format	NOTES
April	9	ON	94	Hard	Anchor	Northern FNs by the Albany River being evacuated because of flooding
May	5	ON	UNKNO WN	Hard	Anchor	FN chiefs jailed over protesting mining released; injunction not to protest further and company not to explore area anymore
May	4	ON	141	Hard	Anchor	child death: police lay charges in Pauchay toddlers' deaths
Dec	12	STUDIO	126	Arts	Anchor	Obit - famous aboriginal painter dies from Parkinson's
August	13	STUDIO	99	Hard	Anchor	Labour shortage could be addressed with indigenous
August	4	STUDIO	144	Hard	Anchor	Self governance deal with Inuit in the province
Nov	8	STUDIO	183	Hard	Anchor	New leg to speed up land claims
Dec	7	STUDIO	87	Hard	Anchor	Provincial park given back to FN w/ claim to it
April	9	STUDIO	118	Hard	Anchor	Serious potable water issues across Canada (even w/out including FNs)
April	14	STUDIO	119	Hard	Anchor	Animal rights groups' graphic footage of seal hunt from east coast; Canada says hunt is humane, stopping could damage Inuit livelihood

June	5	STUDIO	159	Hard	Anchor	Land claim: FN suing gov't over developing oil sands on its land
June	8	STUDIO	105	Hard	Anchor	Teen death (from 1990): inquiry that led to firing of two police officers upheld
Jan	4	STUDIO	94	Hard	Anchor	New trial ordered for FN leader who made anti-Semitic remarks
August	12	STUDIO	93	Soft	Anchor	Chief one arrow's body exhumed

**Appendix D: Coverage of indigenous issues in the 2016 federal budget (March 20-26, 2016)**

*Globe and Mail*

Title	Author	Date	Length	Page	Type	Themes	NOTES
Indigenous issues to reap budget benefits	Bill Curry; Robert Fife	22-Mar	776	A1	Report	Politics; economy	Budget to have "historic investments" in First Nations
THE LIBERAL BUDGET: Where will the money go?	Bill Curry	22-Mar	1444	A6	String of briefs	Politics; economy	Breakdown of expected budget (just a mention)
Spending in Search of Growth	Bill Curry; Robert Fife	23-Mar	834	A1	Report	Politics; economy	Budget was a 'spending spigot' (just a mention)
Going for broke with bold activist budget	John Ibbitson	23-Mar	684	A1	Column	Politics; economy	Budget is a polarizing 'social revolution' (just a mention)
How the budget was made	Robert Fife	23-Mar	718	A4	Report (analyses)	Politics; economy	PM's priorities, including FNs, shaped budget (significant mention)
Inside the federal budget: Who gets what	No author noted	23-Mar	575	A5	String of briefs	Politics; economy	Summary of where the money went (just a mention)
Low-cost loans aim to spur building of low-cost rentals	Tamsin McMahon	23-Mar	533	A8	Report	Politics; economy; housing	Focus on how housing money will be spent(just a mention)
Ottawa to tighten military purse strings	Steven Chase	23-Mar	511	A8	Report	Politics; economy; defence	Defence budget holding (just a mention)
Promises, promises	Laura Stone	23-Mar	1062	A11	String of briefs	Politics; economy	Breakdown of changes in the budget from the previous government (just a mention)
Budget promises to 'transform' reserves	Gloria Galloway	23-Mar	605	A12	Report	Politics; economy; social justice	What the \$8.4 million to FNs means for their futures
Budget boosts	Erin	23-	867	A 13	Report	Politics;	New child benefit's

child benefit	Anderssen	Mar				economy; child welfare	implications (just a mention)
A good start, but watch the future	No author noted	23-Mar	822	A22	Editorial	Politics; economy	Spending OK, but Liberals need a plan (just a mention)
Fulfill campaign promises now. Bill us later	Jeffrey Simpson	23-Mar	714	A23	Editorial	Politics; economy	Liberals had a strong mandate to spend; but will pay for it later (just a mention)
Infrastructure binge lacks overarching strategy	Barrie McKenna	23-Mar	713	B1	Report (Report on Business)	Politics; economy; infrastructure	Government needs to think carefully about infrastructure investments (just a mention)
A deficit can be stimulus, but debt can be a burden	Craig Alexander	23-Mar	767	B4	Column (Report on Business)	Politics; economy	Budget has worthy goals, but could be overreaching (just a mention)
Funding for First Nations heartens from Liberal PM	Gloria Galloway	24-Mar	522	A5	Report	Politics; economy	Former PM Paul Martin lauds FN investments in the budget
NAC to launch indigenous theatre in 2019	Kelly Nestruck	24-Mar	792	L2	Report	Arts; culture	NAC to launch indigenous theatre program
Stocks That Should Be On Your Radar Screen	Tim Shufelt	25-Mar	397	B9	String of briefs	Finance; stock market	Stock projections (just a mention of a company that could do well based on budget investments in FNs)
Safe water finally on tap at some reserves	Wendy Stueck	25-Mar	644	S1	Report	Development	FN has water treatment system (not related to the budget)
What Albertans got — and did not get — in federal budget		26-Mar	411	S3	Report	Politics; economy	How the budget impacted Alberta (just a mention)

### *Maclean's*

Title	Author	Date	Length	Type	Themes	NOTES
So, not so easy after all	John Geddes	21-Mar	2584	Feature	Politics; climate change	Analysis of Canada's climate change policy (indigenous peoples just a mention)

## CBC

Title	Reporter	Date	Length	Type	Themes	NOTES
Justin Trudeau's first budget: Alison Crawford on what's to be expected	Alison Crawford	20-Mar	354	hit	Politics; economy	Summary of what's going to be in the budget (just a mention)
What Canadians want from the budget: British Columbia	Chris Brown	21-Mar	377	hit	Politics; economy; energy; infrastructure	BC's priorities (just a mention)
A look ahead to budget day	Terry Milewski	21-Mar	670	report	Politics; economy	Budget to have large deficit/debt (just a mention)
What Canadians want from the budget: First Nations	Cameron MacIntosh	21-Mar	264	hit	Politics; economy; social justice	Focus on FN education from Winnipeg
What the budget means for indigenous peoples	Cameron MacIntosh	22-Mar	410	report	Politics; economy; social justice	\$1.8 billion for safe water and other investments to help FNs
At Issue' political panel: Federal budget 2016	N/A	22-Mar	2068	panel	Politics; economy	Discussion about budget (just a mention)
Federal budget 2016: Liberals push deficit to spend big on families, cities	Terry Milewski	22-Mar	1034	report	Politics; economy	Synopsis of what was in the budget (just a mention)

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