

FALLEN FEATHERS IN THUNDER BAY: HOW CANADA'S NEWSPAPERS
IMPLICATE INDIGENOUS YOUTH

FALLEN FEATHERS IN THUNDER BAY: HOW CANADA'S NEWSPAPERS
IMPLICATE INDIGENOUS YOUTH

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ABSTRACT: This study asks how the media perpetuates the cycle of racism, colonialism and stereotyping of Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay, and how Indigenous news sources participate in giving voice to Indigenous peoples. The research methodology is a discourse analysis examining both mainstream and Indigenous newspaper articles on the subject of the First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay. The methodology is also influenced by critical and decolonizing theories. Findings show that Indigenous newspaper articles are overall more inclusive of Indigenous voice, therefore providing an Indigenous perspective on the issue of First Nations youth dying in Thunder Bay and leaving out racist portrayals. On the other hand, non-Indigenous newspaper articles include less Indigenous voice and use the opinion of individuals in powerful positions. They also tend to portray Indigenous people in a negative light when compared to Indigenous newspapers. Outcomes from this research include implications for social workers such as: developing an understanding of how the media perpetuates racism, colonialism and stereotyping against Indigenous youth, advocating for and empowering Indigenous youth so they can come together and fight for change in First Nations education, and improving education within schools of social work regarding advocacy in the media.

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This thesis is dedicated first and foremost to the First Nations youth who have tragically lost their lives in Thunder Bay and to their families and communities. To the seven youth included in the inquest: Jethro Anderson, Reggie Bushie, Robyn Harper, Kyle Morrisseau, Paul Panacheese, Curran Strang, and Jordan Wabasse, and the two youth who died since the inquest, Tammy Keeash and Josiah Begg. I ask that Creator watches over you all and helps you to find peace and justice.

Next, I would like to dedicate this thesis to Dr. Bonnie Freeman. All your hard work with me has finally paid off! Nya:weh kowa/meegwetch for working with me for well over the year I initially intended to have my thesis completed in. I wish you all the best in your future research endeavors. Nya:weh kowa/meegwetch to my professor and friend Krystal Summers as well for your support along the way and inspiring me to pursue Indigenous research back in my undergrad.

I would finally like to dedicate this thesis to my maternal grandparents. Without their constant motivation throughout my life I would have never gone to university, let alone complete my Masters of Social Work. Thank you so much for all your love and support to be able to get this thing done.

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Introduction

For youth living on First Nations reserves in Northern Ontario, there has never been access to secondary education in their home communities. In order to attend high school, First Nations youth must leave their families and communities and travel to Thunder Bay, a bustling city filled with many different types of people. Thunder Bay is in stark contrast to their rural homes, which consist of familiar people of the same nation with similar life experiences. For many First Nations communities in the north, education and learning was from an experiential and cultural perspective. When Treaties were introduced, they promised of education for First Nations peoples would be taken care of by the federal government; however, there are yet to be high schools on reserve or even close to their communities (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). The lack of access to education impacting First Nations communities is just one example of how colonialism is alive and well in Canada. One can only imagine the difficulties of leaving home at such a young age, let alone the loss of connection to the family, land and community traditions. These circumstances are more astounding when a shocking number of youth have died following their moves to Thunder Bay to attend high school. Unfortunately, moving to the city is unavoidable for First Nations youth who wish to pursue higher education than they can achieve in their own community.

Since the year 2000, a total of nine First Nations youth sent from their home communities from northern Ontario to attend high school have died under suspicious circumstances (Barrera, 2017g). This disturbing news has made me curious to why these stories have not been featured in the news. Inspiring my thesis title, Chris Morisseau, the

father of Kyle Morrisseau, one of the youth who died while attending high school and is fighting for change in First Nations education has eloquently referred to these youth as “fallen feathers” (Talaga, 2016a). The first seven youth that succumbed to their death in Thunder Bay and investigated in an inquest that concluded in June 2017 are the following: Jethro Anderson, Reggie Bushie, Robyn Harper, Kyle Morrisseau, Paul Panacheese, Curran Strang and Jordan Wabasse. The inquest ruled that four of these youths’ deaths were of undetermined causes, and three were accidental (Eden, 2016). The Coroner’s Jury also offered many recommendations for both on-and off-reserve education, this included: improved police protocols for dealing with missing Indigenous¹ peoples; more inclusion of youth in decisions involving their education; and ways to help youth from northern First Nations transition more smoothly to life in Thunder Bay (“Ontario Ministry,” 2016).

Tragically, two more First Nations youth became fallen feathers since the inquest, Tammy Keeash and Josiah Begg both drowned in May 2017. These additional deaths have brought forth that recommendations made by the inquest have not been implemented and the issues still contributing to the deaths of the first seven youth have not been resolved by any means. This brings forward questions about the Thunder Bay Police Service and their racist attitudes and practices that have ran rampant amongst First Nations leaders and peoples in northern Ontario (Gardam & Giles, 2016). In her dissertation, Desmoulins (2009) finds that the city of Thunder Bay has a well-known

¹ The term “Indigenous” is a general term referring to the three groups of peoples Native to Canada: First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

issue with racism, and this problem is reflected in the schools. Furthermore, Gardam and Giles (2016) find that the Canadian media have also reproduced racist attitudes in their portrayals of the First Nations youth deaths in comparison to those of Indigenous media.

In general, the literature shows that mainstream media reproduces racist attitudes prevalent in society, including those involving Indigenous peoples (Furniss, 2001; Gardam & Giles, 2016; Henry & Tator, 2002; Lambertus, 2004; van Dijk, 1993; Wilkes et al., 2010). The literature also highlights that Indigenous media sources provide more Indigenous voice and content to news stories, thus promoting empowerment to First Nations communities (Bredin, 2012; Buddle, 2008; Gardam & Giles, 2016; Ginsburg, 2002; Knopf, 2010; van Dijk, 1997). With research focusing on the unfortunate deaths of First Nations youth (Gardam & Giles, 2016), as well as the racism against Indigenous people in Thunder Bay (Desmoulins, 2009), this topic is becoming more known throughout the country. I have come to wonder how racism can continue to operate in the Canada and how two additional youth have lost their lives as a result of racism and colonialism. Since the literature also demonstrates that the media has a great deal of influence over the perspective of mainstream society (Gardam & Giles, 2016; Harding, 2006; Mahtani, 2001; Wilkes et al., 2010; van Dijk, 1993), more research is necessary to understand how racism is reproduced by the media.

As an urban Indigenous person with Mohawk, Algonquin and Jewish ancestry, I do not know the experiences of northern First Nations youth who were sent so far from their home communities to attend high school. I grew up in the city, high school education was never a question for me. I have also spent the majority of my life with my

mother's side of the family, who are of European Jewish descent and place a high importance on education. However, I am passionate about supporting the sovereignty and autonomy of all Indigenous peoples and seeing the decolonization of Canadian society. I would like to use the privilege I have due to my social location to apply my research in creating meaningful change for First Nations youth facing far more barriers than I have. With that said, my research for this thesis asks the following questions: "How does the media perpetuate the cycle of racism, colonialism and stereotyping of Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay?" and "How do Indigenous news sources participate in giving voice to Indigenous youth?" While these questions are similar to the research of Gardam and Giles (2016), my research focuses on what takes place in the media after the inquest of First Nations youth, with additional of two more deaths of First Nations youth, and an investigation into systemic racism by the Thunder Bay police. My research examines why no action has taken place in preventing additional deaths and/or acts of racism against Indigenous people in Thunder Bay.

As I illustrated in the chapters to follow, I attempted to combine my two worlds, but found myself struggling to incorporate Indigenous knowledge in to this research and thesis. Although I involve Indigenous newspapers and use them to make suggestions for non-Indigenous newspapers, my methodology and analysis are strongly academically based. The following research is a critical discourse analysis, influenced by critical and decolonization theories by examining Indigenous and non-Indigenous newspaper articles published in 2017 and after the inquest into the first seven youth deaths in Thunder Bay. This thesis examines a theoretical perspective underpinning this research, followed by a

review of the literature. Next, I will discuss the methodology of this research, followed by a presentation of the findings and a discussion including the limitations and implications of this project. My social location has undoubtedly impacted my choice of methodology and analysis.

Theoretical Perspective

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis is different from other research methodologies in the social sciences because its political motivation to achieve social justice for oppressed groups against dominant groups in society (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). According to Taylor (2013), discourse analysis in general is concerned with uncovering how language influences the meanings made in society, however critical discourse analysis is interested in the ways power is exercised in society through the use of language. More generally, critical discourse analysis understands that the language we use is set in a particular context and words, whether oral or written, give light to this context (McGregor, 2003). Our experiences, physical location, point in time and social location all influence how we as a society speak about any given topic, but there is hope for social change through changing discourse because the words we use can also impact larger social institutions. According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997) critical discourse analysis understands that while discourse is shaped by institutions and social context, there is a reciprocal relationship where discourse also influences larger social structures and events.

When applying the methodology of critical discourse analysis, discourse refers to the language used in speech and in text, and text is considered to be a form of discourse because it is set in a certain social context and can be related to other texts (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Furthermore, discourse can refer not only to the language being used, but to the institutions and people who are using it (Taylor, 2013). It is important to consider how the words used and information presented connect to the larger social structure and

societal attitudes when performing a critical discourse analysis (Taylor, 2013). Therefore, using this methodology can help to expose power imbalances between groups because all discourse is formed in the context of larger society, its institutions, and dominant ideologies (Luke, 1999).

The methodology used in this research is largely inspired by the work of van Dijk due to his similar research interests of critical discourse analyses involving racism and the media. In his more general work, van Dijk (1988) discusses how to use the methodology of critical discourse analysis on newspapers specifically. He suggests that along with analyzing the overall theme of printed texts, or the macrostructure, researchers must also examine the microstructures present, which include things such as propositions used in writing, consistency with local context and beliefs of the author, discourse style, sentence syntax, sources and quotations, and the presence of numbers or statistics.

In his work on critical discourse analysis involving racism in the press, van Dijk (1991) argues that quotations and sources used in newspaper articles might reflect a particular bias. He also states that the press might also use semantic strategies such as denial of racism, excuses or hyperboles that portray the racialized group in a negative light, outright ridicule or blaming the victims of racism, making “us” versus “them” comparisons, and including certain points to avoid accusations of racism. Furthermore, the perspective taken by the writer of the article might reflect their political views or biases regarding the topic. Finally, van Dijk (1991) explains how the headlines of newspaper articles often contain what the white or mainstream writer or editor deems as the most important information and says that this is also an important point of analysis.

van Dijk's work provides a sense of direction for researchers such as myself whose research focuses solely on newspaper articles.

Critical Theory

Critical social theory works towards creating social justice in society (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010). This perspective also empowers individuals to change society by questioning the dominant social structure and exposing power imbalances that may remain hidden (Neuman, 1997). Freeman and Vasconcelos (2010) more specifically describe that critical social theory examines how systems of oppression such as capitalism, racism and colonialism continue to cause power imbalances and other inequalities due to the benefits they bring to the dominant group. When people become more aware of the oppression they face and how their circumstances relate to the existing power structure in society, they are more likely to work towards dismantling it.

Critical theory acknowledges that there is a "false consciousness" in society, which dominates peoples' realities and impacts the way resources are distributed (Neuman, 1997). Freeman and Vasconcelos (2010) further this definition by explaining that "false consciousness" occurs when the oppressed begin to internalize the negative views the dominant group holds about them and act as passive subjects to this reality. They argue that critical consciousness-raising is required in order to empower the oppressed so that they are motivated to be active participants in creating social change that will benefit them, and this can be achieved through the use of critical theory. In this research, critical theory will help to compare and contrast the realities expressed in

Indigenous and non-Indigenous media sources and make suggestions for the empowerment of Indigenous peoples in the area of Thunder Bay based on the analysis.

Decolonization Theory

Decolonization theory is based on an awareness and recognition of the impacts of colonization and how Western knowledge, specifically research, has been used to the detriment of Indigenous peoples and knowledges. Smith (2012) explains how across the world, research has historically been done on Indigenous peoples from a Western perspective and for the benefit of colonizers, ignoring Indigenous peoples' stories and portraying them in a negative light. Therefore, decolonization theory is intended to increase the representation of Indigenous peoples in research that concerns us and provide an understanding of the context of colonialism within academic research.

Similarly, Kovach (2009) states that decolonization theory is built on critical theory and a large part of this theoretical perspective is analyzing power differences and the representation of Indigenous peoples in research that concerns us. Smith (2012) states that decolonization is a long-term process that alters colonial ideologies. Absolon (2011) explains in more detail that for her, decolonization is about "learning and practicing my culture; learning my language; speaking my language; fighting ethnocentrism in education, research and writing; battling institutional racism."

These guidelines of decolonization demonstrate the necessity of including Indigenous news sources in analyzing the issue of racism against Indigenous youth in the media. Indigenous media will bring the voices of Indigenous peoples into the analysis, and also provide a point of reference to make suggestions for mainstream media when it

comes to discussing Indigenous issues. Decolonization also means using colonial settings such as the academy to do research that includes Indigenous peoples and improves our circumstances by dismantling colonial ideologies, and therefore is part of what inspired this choice of research topic.

Combining Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Theory and Decolonization

Theories

There are benefits to combining the three theoretical approaches combined above. Critical theory and critical discourse analysis have similar goals. Critical theory seeks to uncover power imbalances, dismantle false consciousness in society and create social change. Likewise, critical discourse analysis seeks to expose unequal power relations and oppressive language used in various mediums including the news media in order to achieve social justice for oppressed groups in society. Much more specifically, decolonization theory takes into account how colonization has impacted our histories and current circumstances. When each of these theories are combined, the potential arises to create awareness of the issues Indigenous peoples face, examine how the media portrays these issues and Indigenous peoples unfairly, and begin work towards eliminating the various forms of oppression Indigenous peoples face beginning with the way the media frames them. During this research process the values and knowledge of Indigenous peoples can be given adequate space due to the empowering nature of decolonization theory, critical theory and critical discourse analysis. In the case of this research, this will be accomplished by analyzing both Indigenous and non-Indigenous news articles.

Even though these theories might complement each other in some ways, there may also be challenges in combining decolonization theory, critical theory and critical discourse analysis. Decolonization theory values the representation of Indigenous peoples in research. When combining this theory with critical theory and a discourse analysis methodology that is textually based, Indigenous people become separated from the research being done. It is important to remember that the purpose is to decolonize the academy by contributing to the literature on racism in the media and working towards changing these circumstances. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that the research does not do any harm. Although text is being analyzed in this particular research, Western research methods have been used historically to oppress and harm Indigenous peoples. It is important to take this into account when using critical theory and critical discourse since this theoretical perspective and methodology have Western academic roots in the social sciences. While this chapter describes the theoretical underpinnings of this research, the following section examines the existing literature on the topics of discourse analyses, racism in the media, the role social work plays as it relates to social justice in the media and Indigenous-made media's empowerment of Indigenous peoples.

Literature Review

The following literature review refers to a wide variety of work that will assist with the critical discourse analysis of new articles surrounding the First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay. The first topic that will be examined in this section is literature about the dominating position and politically oppressive structure of mainstream media in Canada. This is followed by research examining the prominence of racism, stereotyping and colonial ideologies in Canadian news media, and how this impacts the way Indigenous peoples' stories are told. The role of social work in promoting inclusivity in the media is then examined. Finally, this section concludes with a discussion regarding the emergence and empowering role of Indigenous media, the current new media outlet Indigenous peoples in Canada are using, and how the media might be decolonized and made to be more Indigenous-friendly.

The sources referred to in the following section focus on media organizations and Indigenous peoples in Canada, since the particular case examined for this research is happening in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Attempts were made to focus only on literature that discussed newspapers specifically, as this research project focused on the analysis of online news articles, but with the evolution of the media towards radio, television and social media, current research tended to focus on these topics and I chose to include some of this literature where appropriate. This issue was more noticeable in the section on the emergence of Indigenous media, as academic research on this particular topic is also quite new.

Power of Mainstream News Media

Most of what Canadians know about Indigenous issues comes from the mainstream media (Gardam & Giles, 2016; Wilkes et al., 2010) The media also has influence over political processes that impact Indigenous peoples such as policy making (Gardam & Giles, 2016). However, the structure and influence of the media are quite problematic for Indigenous peoples and communities because the discourse surrounding the issues they face is created by outsiders responsible for writing the news. This is how the racist ideologies and power imbalances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people continue to exist in Canadian society and across the globe. The means by which the media continues to reproduce racism, colonialism and stereotypes, which are described in the literature, will be illustrated in detail below.

The majority of media organizations in Canada are owned by people in positions of power and those from racialized backgrounds are often left without voice (Mahtani, 2001; van Dijk, 1993). This allows for ideologies that support racist attitudes to be reproduced by the media since they continue to benefit the dominant group (van Dijk, 1991). Since the dominant group in mainstream society is in charge of the media, the media becomes a site for the reproduction of racist ideologies. Research has demonstrated that the media has a great deal of influence over the attitudes of mainstream society towards racialized groups (Gardam & Giles, 2016; Harding, 2006; Mahtani, 2001; van Dijk, 1993; Wilkes et al., 2010). Unless readers have alternative sources of information about or personal experience with the issues being discussed, they are likely to maintain views similar to that of the news source, or mainstream society (van Dijk, 1993).

Structure of news production replicates existing power relations in society.

The organizations in which news is created and the people responsible for producing it give light to how the news reproduces racism and the oppression of racialized groups in society. In Canada, most news organizations are owned by the same few powerful corporations, and journalists often choose to reiterate dominant ideologies in their reporting to avoid consequences such as job loss (Gardam & Giles, 2016). The failure to express alternative opinions is exacerbated by the hiring of staff who represent the dominant group. Indigenous peoples and other racial minorities with different identities and experiences are often not represented in the staff of media organizations (Henry & Tator, 2002).

In his research regarding how racism is reproduced through various types of elite discourse, van Dijk (1993) takes time to specifically examine how racism and the white perspective are reproduced by the news media. Similar to the findings of research described above, van Dijk finds that first and foremost, there are fewer racialized journalists in the media, and when they are hired they are seen as less competent than and not as impartial to the issues of racialized groups as white journalists. Moreover, when gathering news, journalists tend to look to the views of powerful institutions that are also dominated by white society (van Dijk, 1993). Whether when hiring journalists to write the news, or interviewing people for news stories, the tendency of the mainstream news media is to rely on those who are a part of the dominant group in order to back up the views of the most powerful in Canadian society.

Since the dominant group in society holds a great deal of power in news media and other media organizations (van Dijk, 1993), they have the power to disperse their own views as reality without a great deal of critique from the audience. Unfortunately, not only does the structure of the media disadvantage racial minorities, but the ideologies being reproduced in news discourse are often oppressive towards racialized groups. In the case of Indigenous peoples, the media also reflects the colonial attitudes of Canadian society, as well fails to acknowledge the government's wrongdoings towards Indigenous peoples.

Negative stereotypes depicting Indigenous peoples in the media instigate racism. Since mainstream media reproduces racist discourse for the benefit of the dominant group, Indigenous peoples are often portrayed in a negative light. Sometimes this is accomplished through the use of damaging stereotypes. As van Dijk (1993) explains, this is because today's society attempts to hide racism by using stereotypes or overgeneralization to discriminate against racialized groups and promote oppressive ideologies more covertly. The literature demonstrates that this tendency to oppress racialized groups in hidden manners can be found in news media surrounding various Indigenous issues. For example, Gardam and Giles (2016) perform a discourse analysis of news articles regarding seven youth who died under suspicious circumstances in Thunder Bay, instigating the same inquest my research refers to. They discover that although Indigenous peoples lack representation in the mainstream media, when they are given space, it is often through the use of negative stereotypes such as "angry warrior" or "pitiful victim". The use of stereotypes in this particular case has led the Thunder Bay

community and mainstream institutions to respond in a manner that supports the existing racism that First Nations people experience. This has ultimately allowed for more youth to be tragically taken while attending school in this community.

In other cases, Indigenous peoples are stereotyped as criminals or alcoholics in the mainstream media. Wilkes et al. (2010) find that the media perpetuates stereotypes of Indigenous peoples being “criminal” and “unlawful” in their discourse analysis of articles regarding various examples of collective action involving Indigenous peoples and issues. On a similar note, Henry and Tator (2002) use discourse analysis to examine one specific case where a First Nations woman accused a former white RCMP officer of sexual assault. They find that The Globe and Mail tends to stereotype the community and focus on the crime and violence occurring at the time on the reserve, rather than the crime that was going to trial. They also find that the victim is often portrayed in a negative light using the stereotype of “drunken Indian”, while the accused was portrayed in a way that might invoke readers’ sympathy even after he was found guilty. Finally, Furniss (2001) finds that Indigenous peoples are portrayed as “lazy” or “drunks” in her discourse analysis of newspaper articles regarding an inquiry into the justice system’s treatment of Indigenous peoples in an area of British Columbia. These examples demonstrate how far the mainstream media will go to further dominant ideologies by continually oppressing groups.

Mainstream news media also stereotypes Indigenous peoples as warriors or uncooperative in various ways. For instance, Lambertus (2004) perform a discourse analysis of mainstream newspaper articles surrounding the Gustafsen Lake standoff,

which was a conflict over Secwepemec land in British Columbia. She discovered that although The Globe and Mail had the highest rate of stereotyping the Indigenous peoples involved in protests as “rebels”, “renegades”, or “squatters”, all mainstream newspapers made use of these labels in one way or another when discussing the topic. Furthermore, she discovered that news stories originating from the Canadian Press were most likely to use stereotypes against Indigenous peoples in their work. The Globe and Mail received the highest proportion of stories from this source, which explains their tendency to stereotype Indigenous peoples as uncooperative or otherwise. This is especially concerning because this is a newspaper that is distributed throughout Canada (Lambertus, 2004). Each of these examples of stereotyping Indigenous peoples help to demonstrate how mainstream media uses discourse that frames us in a way that is consistent with the dominant ideologies in society, and therefore perpetuates racism.

Discourse surrounding difference promotes racism and colonial ideologies.

Ideologies surrounding the superiority of settlers when compared to Indigenous peoples are what allowed for colonization to begin in the first place, and Indigenous peoples are still portrayed negatively through the use of “us” vs. “them” discourse in the media. Harding’s (2006) discourse analysis finds that there has been this type of “Indian” vs. “settler” binary thinking in Canadian news media stretching back to the 1860s. Similarly, Wilkes et al. (2010) uncover an “us” vs. “them” binary in their discourse analysis regarding how Indigenous peoples’ collective action is framed in the Canadian news. They examine multiple instances where Indigenous peoples have rallied for social justice and find that when these issues are discussed in the media, Indigenous peoples are

portrayed in opposition to the rest of society by focusing on our differences. This impedes our abilities to create social change for our benefit since mainstream society is likely to see Indigenous peoples as a threat to their social order when we are portrayed this way through news discourse.

More specifically, in their case study involving The Globe and Mail, Henry and Tator (2002) find that the media used an “us vs. them image” to demoralize a First Nations sexual assault victim and promote reader identification with the accused and his family as opposed to the victim and her community. In this case, journalists frame the issue in a way that uses stereotypes to blame the victim, illustrating crime occurring in her reserve community to show readers how different Indigenous communities are so they fail to empathize with the victim. Discourse focusing on differences between Indigenous peoples and white Canadians fuels racist ideologies and stereotypes. In each of the cases above, Indigenous peoples and the dominant group are labelled as being in opposition to one another and the dominant group is represented as superior and right, which of course fosters colonial ideologies and racism towards the Indigenous group.

Selective use of Indigenous voices reproduces racist discourse. In general, the press has excluded the voices of racialized individuals or used them to the advantage of the dominant group in society (van Dijk, 1991). In Canadian news media, quotations from Indigenous sources are used selectively to support existing racist discourse in society. For instance, Harding (2006) finds that mainstream media in Canada includes more quotes by Indigenous people now than in the past, however; journalists still choose which Indigenous voices they use as tokens and the voices they select often help them to support

dominant ideologies rather than promote alternative ones. In a similar way to negative stereotypes, the selective use of Indigenous voices allows the media to further current racist discourse surrounding Indigenous peoples, while still appearing to be fair and impartial to the public (Wilkes et al., 2010). According to Harding (2006), one way to break the cycle of the media perpetuating racism, colonialism and stereotypes would be to ensure that everyone's story is told, and voices are included that represent alternative views. Presenting stories in a more objective way as suggested by Harding would allow readers to form their own opinions on Indigenous issues based on a variety of viewpoints.

Neglecting impacts of colonialism allows cycle of oppression to continue. In general, the dominant group in society wants to remain in power and to do so, they must make use of discourse that denies there are any issues with the current social structure. As an example, Furniss (2001) explains how the newspaper articles she analyzed regarding an inquiry into racism in the justice system in British Columbia used neutral headlines that did not confront racism because the community was not willing to admit that they had any issues. When the news media fails to acknowledge racism and colonialism, mainstream society is encouraged to maintain the status quo and not to learn and work towards reconciliation. Likewise, in Gardam and Giles' (2016) discourse analysis, they found that mainstream media downplayed the impacts of colonialism when describing the disparities remote First Nations communities face, though local newspapers provided more insight than national sources (Gardam & Giles, 2016). This might be because national media sources have more connections with federal funding sources and have more to lose by confronting the realities of colonialism.

Harding (2006) reiterates Gardam and Giles (2016) finding that mainstream media disregards and adds that the media uses techniques of deflection, de-contextualization, misrepresentation and tokenization to maintain power imbalances between white and Indigenous peoples. Both Gardam & Giles (2016) and Harding (2006) label this media neglect of colonialism as “post-colonial amnesia”. It is evident that the unequal power relationship between Indigenous peoples and the dominant group is maintained through the mainstream media’s failure to confront and change racism and colonial attitudes in Canadian society. Therefore, Indigenous peoples have had to create our own alternative sources of media to ensure our voices are heard. Indigenous media exists in the form of radio, television and newspapers, examples of which will be discussed later in this literature review and throughout the research.

Social Work and the Media

When it comes to social work, representations in the media often focus on cases ending in tragedy and negative portrayals of workers, such as in child welfare when children in care die (Brawley, 1997; Briar-Lawson, Martinson, Briar-Bonpane & Zox, 2011; Laliberte et al., 2011). To counteract this tendency, Briar-Lawson et al. (2011) suggest that the media can be used to reframe the work of child welfare workers by helping the media to understand their position. Social workers might also use the media to reframe the way society views those who rely on social workers and are oppressed in society, such as racialized groups. According to Brawley (1997), the role of social workers in addressing the racism and power imbalances in mainstream media is advocacy. He describes how in the 1980s and 90s The National Association of Social

Workers used the media to create awareness around topics such as homelessness, AIDS, child welfare, aging and mental health, which resulted in decreasing social stigma surrounding these topics and those experiencing these issues. These examples are used to argue that future social workers must be educated in using the mass media for advocacy in alleviating the various oppressions service users face (Brawley, 1997).

Similarly, Brawley and Martinez-Brawley (1982) argue that social work students should begin to interact with the media so that they can learn each others' roles and future social workers can rely on these media connections to assist with public education on social issues in the future. More recently, Laliberte et al. (2011), referring to the negative portrayal of child welfare social work, suggest that workers in government child protection agencies are in a good position to educate the public on the challenges they face and the realities of the job in their communities. However, they state that at the time of their research not many social work programs have been educating their students on working with the media in their curriculums.

Emergence of Indigenous Media

There is not a great deal of literature regarding Indigenous media in Canada and the majority focuses on the use of television and radio; however, existing research demonstrates that creation of media has been a benefit to Indigenous peoples around the world. While mainstream media expresses racist and colonial discourse that does not promote social change, Indigenous media sources provide space to tell the stories of Indigenous people and promote more positive views (Gardam & Giles, 2016). The emergence of media in Indigenous communities, although initially intended to assimilate

us, actually resulted in Indigenous peoples connecting, coming together, and working towards social justice (Bredin, 2012). This overview of literature on Indigenous media begins by focusing on decolonization of the media towards reconciliation. Next, Indigenous newspapers are examined with a focus on discourse analysis and how media of television and radio are used to support the empowerment of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous media supports the empowerment of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples have been marginalized in mainstream news media since they tend to reproduce negative images of us and neglect our voices (Gardam & Giles, 2016). In challenging this oppressive and colonial discourse, Indigenous people have created alternative media sources in resisting the dominant ideologies (van Dijk et al., 1997). By creating our own media organizations that present news from our point of view, Indigenous peoples are more likely to become aware of our common circumstances and be empowered to work towards social change. Society is also more likely to see a different side of Indigenous peoples than what is portrayed by mainstream media.

For instance, in their critical discourse analysis of Indigenous and mainstream news articles, Gardam and Giles (2016) find that Indigenous news media sources promote self-determination for Indigenous peoples by pinpointing colonization and government policy as the causes of the many inequalities First Nations students in Thunder Bay face. When Indigenous peoples are consulted on the issues they face, we find that we are framed in a way that is more consistent with the reality we face. Furthermore, Indigenous media offers suggestions in achieving social justice. Gardam and Giles (2016) highlighted

the need for collaboration between the government and Indigenous peoples, where Indigenous peoples have meaningful input into the development of policy.

The emerging use of new media sources. Indigenous peoples have also created television and radio stations so that their voices are heard across the landscape of Canada. In the case of television, Knopf (2010) discusses how the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) has helped support the empowerment and self-determination of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The first airing of APTN in 1999, was made by and for Indigenous peoples, with programming fully Indigenous focused. Their motto “sharing stories with all Canadians and viewers around the world”, expresses the importance of sharing Indigenous cultures to help to counter the negative stereotyping by demonstrating that Indigenous people have something to share with the rest of society. The station further combats stereotypes of Indigenous people by banning any advertising related to alcohol or gambling (Knopf, 2010). Moreover, APTN is carried on basic cable, and therefore receives funding from cable subscriber fees. Thus, allowing them to be more independent and self-determined than smaller Indigenous media organizations (Bredin, 2012).

The structure and mission of APTN allows for Indigenous peoples to present distinct discourse surrounding our issues and present an opportunity to change the ideologies of society regarding Indigenous peoples. This network goes above and beyond to present Indigenous peoples in a positive way that does not condone stereotyping, although it should be noted that they are free to do more since they do not rely on government funding. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada acknowledges

the great work of APTN saying they are “well positioned to provide media leadership to support the reconciliation process” (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Setting the stage for APTN, Ginsburg (2002) describes how in 1991 TV Northern Canada (TVNC) brought media production to Inuit people. She interviewed people who participated in production along with viewers about how TVNC impacted them individually, as well as their communities. She found that TVNC assisted the Inuit people with cultural preservation and was a method of dispersing their political views in order to create social change.

Turning to radio, Bredin (2012) describes the regional radio organization Wawatay Radio Network (WRN), which is broadcasted in a number of Indigenous communities in Northwestern Ontario. The majority of their content is produced in Indigenous languages spoken in the communities covered, and programming focuses on a wide variety of topics of concern to these communities including religion, news, youth issues, sports, and music. A portion of WRN’s funding comes from the federal government, however, they also receive funding through advertising and paid religious programming. Even though this organization is much smaller than APTN, WRN is still able to operate and produce Indigenous media aimed at language revitalization for youth and political mobilization towards causes that are important to Indigenous peoples living in these communities (Bredin, 2012).

Radio is also an avenue for Indigenous peoples to create awareness surrounding the issues they face and come together to create changes in our communities. WRN also combats the attempted assimilation of colonialism by focusing on language revitalization

and producing a great deal of programming in local Indigenous languages. Similarly, Buddle (2008) examines how Indigenous community radio programs based in London, Ontario and Winnipeg, Manitoba work towards achieving social justice for Indigenous women in particular. Both stations allow Native women in their areas to discuss issues that are of importance to them and hear about how other women are affected by the same issues, which promotes community building and empowerment to work towards social change (Buddle, 2008).

Barriers faced by Indigenous media. Unfortunately, Indigenous media faces barriers when it comes to presenting an alternative discourse and promoting the empowerment of Indigenous peoples. For example, government funding and control might prevent Indigenous media organizations from fully actualizing self-determination (Knopf, 2010). Bredin reinforces this concern stating that Indigenous media organizations that have reduced their reliance on government funding are the most culturally represented. This finding suggests that until Indigenous media organizations are fully independent from the reliance on the government, their true potential for promoting self-determination and empowerment of Indigenous peoples will not be realized.

On a similar note, Skinner (2012) explains that alternative media organizations are not involved in the creation of media policy in Canada, therefore they do not have access to the same funding as mainstream media institutions. An additional consequence of being left out of the creation of media policy might be an inability to bring concerns to the table regarding how funding impacts the discourse being presented by Indigenous news media. Furthermore, Indigenous media sources are often not as well known since

they are not given a great deal of space in Canadian society. For instance, APTN is often high up in the list of channels so many people do not know they exist (Knopf, 2010). Until more space is created for Indigenous media sources such as APTN, the voices of Indigenous peoples will not be given the same attention as mainstream media sources.

Decolonizing the media. Bell (2016) finds that since Harper's 2008 apology for the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada, society has become more focused on reconciliation and mainstream media has been more inclusive of Indigenous stories. However, most often when the stories of Indigenous people are included, they are bad news stories portraying Indigenous peoples negatively (Bell, 2016; Clark, 2014). According to Elliott (2016), changing these tendencies and decolonizing the media is possible through challenging existing power relations in the media. Recommendations made by The Truth and Reconciliation of Canada (TRC) are intended to disrupt these power imbalances and improve relations with Indigenous peoples. These recommendations included increasing funding to CBC/Radio-Canada allowing them to be more reflective of diverse Aboriginal cultures and employ more Aboriginal peoples, calling on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) to support reconciliation by continuing and stepping up their initiatives, and calling on journalism and media schools to require all students to be educated on the history of Aboriginal peoples including residential schools, Aboriginal rights, Treaties, Indigenous law and Aboriginal-Crown relations (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).

Elliott (2016) describes challenges with the TRC's calls to action. First, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) states that

state-owned media shall reflect Indigenous cultures, however these rights for Indigenous peoples to communicate are not recognized in Canadian law. Furthermore, CBC is poorly funded to begin with and at this point in time only has 1.4% Indigenous staff, with none in high power positions (Elliott, 2016). With funding already low it will be difficult for this network to be able to employ more Indigenous staff and increase Indigenous programming. Elliott (2016) also explains that while APTN has promoted empowerment to Indigenous peoples in Canada, this network is in competition with more highly funded and well known mainstream networks when seeking funding. Most of APTN's money comes from subscriber fees and this means the network's abilities to step up and continue often being the only source of Indigenous media content on television. Bell (2016) confirms that when compared to other mainstream media networks, the influence of APTN in Canada is negligible. Finally, Elliott (2016) notes that some journalism schools in Canada are beginning to include some form of education on Indigenous peoples, but it is not at the scale called for by the TRC.

This section has explored the various literature regarding racism in and dominance in mainstream media, the role of social workers in media advocacy and the emergence of Indigenous media, which all underpins the research that follows. The following chapter will specifically describe the methodologies being used to select the articles used as research data in this discourse analysis.

Methodology and Analysis

News media related to the case of First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay was located and analyzed to understand how language used to describe this issue plays a role in the cycle of racism, colonialism, and stereotyping of Indigenous peoples. Another area that is looked at in this research is how Indigenous media makes use of discourse to attempt to break the cycle as mentioned above. The collection of data for this research was limited to news articles from mainstream and Indigenous media following the release of the inquest on the seven First Nations youth deaths between 2000 and 2011. The search was focused on those articles published between June 30th 2016 and June 30th 2017. Since online news media was examined, it should be noted that any videos or pictures that were a part of the article were not included in analysis. It is also important to note that some articles were initially published in print, while others originated online. It is important to note that this research is solely focused on the written text portion of each news article, and that the terms ‘non-Indigenous’ and ‘mainstream’ are used interchangeably when referring to newspaper articles published by non-Indigenous media organizations.

To locate mainstream news articles the terms “Thunder Bay AND First Nations AND Youth AND Deaths” were searched for on LexisNexis, which pulled up 115 articles. Many of these articles were not applicable to the particular case of interest, so the search terms were changed to “Thunder Bay AND First Nations AND Youth AND Deaths AND inquest”, and search options were set to exclude duplicate articles. This search resulted in forty (40) articles.

Three of these articles were eliminated because the search still pulled up articles that were printed in multiple papers, and two because the articles focused on areas outside of Thunder Bay. Seven more articles were excluded because they were comment pieces from the general public, an opinion piece and an editorial. This decision was made because the research questions were interested in the mainstream media's portrayal of Indigenous peoples, and public opinions regarding Indigenous issues were viewed as a separate problem. Overall, there were twenty (20) articles published by national newspapers, and eight (8) by community newspapers. Ten (10) of these articles originated online and eighteen (18) in print. One article in the research data was published each by The Windsor Star, The Guardian, Metronews.ca, and The National Post. Two articles were published by The Daily Miner and News (Kenora), three by The Globe and Mail, seven by The Chronicle Journal (Thunder Bay) and twelve by The Toronto Star. It should be noted that The Chronicle Journal is the community newspaper in Thunder Bay.

Locating Indigenous sources was more difficult and required searching individual media sites for publications on the particular topic. Four (4) Indigenous news organizations were located through online research: Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, Windspeaker, Turtle Island News, and Wawatay News. First, for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) National News website I searched "Thunder Bay AND First Nations AND Youth AND Deaths AND Inquest", which brought up 406 pages of articles (approximately 6 or 8 per page) with no way to limit the search. Each article was individually examined to determine whether it fell within the date range and focused on the case being researched. This search continued to the end of internet search page

eight where most news articles were not applicable to the case. Within the eight pages, ten (10) articles were excluded because they were about deaths not involving youth and many were excluded because they were not within the specified date range. In total, twenty-eight (28) articles were found from the APTN National News website.

The Indigenous newspaper, Windspeaker was searched through their website. Search terms “Thunder Bay AND First Nations AND Youth AND Deaths” did not bring up any results. The second search included terms, “Thunder Bay youth”, this also did not bring up any stories. Finally, the search terms “Thunder Bay inquest” were used and resulted in finding one article that had to be excluded from research data as it was just outside the specified date range. The same searches were done on the Turtle Island News website, with the terms “Thunder Bay youth” and “Thunder Bay inquest” which brought up the same four articles, all of which were intended to be included in the research data. However, at the time articles were being analyzed, these four articles were no longer on the Turtle Island News website and therefore, had to be excluded from the research data.

Wawatay News was the next Indigenous news source searched. This news organization covers the territory of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, which is the territory in Northern Ontario including Thunder Bay and the northern First Nations communities where the youth who tragically died came from. On the Wawatay News Website, the search terms “Thunder Bay youth” brought up forty-five pages of articles (approximately 450 articles), many of which were unrelated to the case in question. The second search, “Thunder Bay inquest” resulted in a more manageable forty-six (46) articles, but many of these focused on a different inquest. Finally, the search “Thunder Bay youth deaths”

pulled up thirty-eight (38) related articles. Only three (3) articles were within the specified date range and included in the research data. In total, thirty-one (31) news articles from Indigenous media sources met the criteria to be included in the research data. All of the Indigenous news articles included in the research data originated online.

As described above, data analysis was largely inspired by the work of van Dijk. Particular attention was paid to headlines, words used, article lengths and direct quotes included. These particular characteristics were drawn out in this discourse analysis as they allowed analysis regarding whether racist attitudes and/or stereotypes were present, along with examining how the context of the First Nations youth deaths were portrayed. For each newspaper article analyzed, a cue card was created that included information such as headline, newspaper, number of direct quotes, proportion of direct quotes by Indigenous people, quotes that portrayed either the empowerment of Indigenous people or racist images, and any information that involved the role of the government in the issue and/or impacts of colonialism.

The following section illustrates the findings surrounding each theme from Indigenous and non-Indigenous newspaper articles.

Findings

Each of the articles found and included in the research data were analyzed using discourse analysis, specifically examining the media discourse surrounding the Indigenous youth deaths in Thunder Bay. Articles from the Indigenous and mainstream media were looked at separately and each analyzed regarding whether the headline and article gave power to colonial views or systems, used oppressive or racist language, included negative or stereotypical images of Indigenous peoples, spoke to the role of the government in the deaths and future prevention, discussed the negative impacts of various systems on Indigenous peoples, provided space for Indigenous voices, and/or supported the empowerment of Indigenous peoples by including positive images of Indigenous peoples.

Many of the themes found in the mainstream research data participated in portraying Indigenous youth in a somewhat unfair manner and demonstrated a lack of Indigenous voice through the direct quotes chosen or location of the story in the newspaper. On the other hand, Indigenous news articles provided more space overall for the voices of Indigenous peoples in their use of direct quotes. Indigenous media sources also presented stories in more detail and with more sympathy to the experiences and opinions of Indigenous peoples than did non-Indigenous media.

The themes found during analysis included: lack of Indigenous voice, space for Indigenous voice, portraying Indigenous peoples negatively, failure to give context, systemic racism, role of government, supporting empowering Indigenous people and positive images of Indigenous peoples. It should be noted that some of the themes

contradict one another since Indigenous newspapers were often more successful than non-Indigenous news media in analyzing and presenting from an Indigenous perspective. Each of these themes has been described in greater detail below.

Throughout this section, non-Indigenous and Indigenous themes will be grouped under each main finding. First, Indigenous articles included more Indigenous voice than mainstream articles. Next, unlike Indigenous newspapers, non-Indigenous newspapers portrayed the government and policy as playing a minor role in the issue. Likewise, non-Indigenous newspapers reflected negative images and stereotypes regarding Indigenous youth, whereas Indigenous newspapers left these out and reflected more images that support their empowerment. Finally, neither Indigenous nor mainstream newspapers implicated colonialism as a root cause of the issues Indigenous youth face. Articles have also been coded and listed in tables 1, 2 and 3. Each table includes article codes, article headlines, dates of publication, word count, the newspaper each article originated from and each article's page number (if available) for reference. Table 1 includes mainstream community newspaper articles, Table 2 compiles data for national mainstream articles and Table 3 includes all information regarding Indigenous articles. Page numbers have been left out of Table 1 and Table 3 since all mainstream community and Indigenous newspaper articles originated online and not in print, meaning this information was not available for analysis. While this limits analysis, it also means that the newspaper articles are available to a much larger global audience. This limitation will be discussed at further lengths later. Article codes include letters "NI" when referring to a non-Indigenous article, and "I" when discussing an Indigenous article.

Non-Indigenous Newspapers Lack Indigenous Voice When Compared to Indigenous Newspapers

Lack of Indigenous voice. Indigenous voice is often missing when the media is presenting a story, crisis or issue regarding Indigenous people or communities. An example of this is with the Thunder Bay newspaper, The Chronicle Journal as they wrote of the death of Tammy Keeash while she was in foster care. This newspaper disregarded the Indigenous voice and totally dismissed the death of Tammy Keeash with the comment by the mayor of Thunder Bay declaring that the city of Thunder Bay did not have any more of an issue with racism than any other city when it came to allegations of systemic racism (Vis, 2016). The same was true with the Windsor Star. This newspaper featured the inquest into the deaths of Indigenous youth in care. However, this paper highlighted the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies call to First Nations leaders regarding an investigation (Cameron, 2017a). The Daily Miner and News (Kenora, ON) presented slightly more of an Indigenous perspective than The Windsor Star by writing about the deaths of Indigenous youth and of the major gaps and barriers in First Nations education in Northern Ontario prior to the death of Tammy Keeash (Reg, 2016).

A lack of Indigenous voice in the mainstream media was also analyzed through the lack of inclusion of Indigenous peoples' quotes by journalists. Across community and national newspaper articles, a number of articles did not feature Indigenous voice at all (NI01, NI05, NI06, NI07, NI08, NI10, NI14, NI17, NI22 and NI23 in Table 1). Interestingly, when mainstream news articles did feature an Indigenous voice, journalists often turned to First Nations leaders for their "expert opinion" regarding the issues.

In both community and national papers, news articles at times counter direct the quotes and opinions of Indigenous people with quotes from institutions. For example, in article NI26, the demands of First Nations leaders for RCMP assistance in the investigations into the deaths of First Nations teens are followed by the Thunder Bay Police Service stating that they cannot cure systemic racism on their own, thus denying responsibility for possibly flawed investigations in the first place (McQuigge, 2017). Furthermore, in article NI17, the author writes “The issue of police racism against Indigenous people has galvanized the country” (Talaga, 2016c). This quote came after the initiation of an investigation by the Office of the Independent Police Review Board into the Thunder Bay police for systemic racism, which suggests that as a result of this official investigation, media and therefore society are now captivated by the issue. The way the media chose to frame the issue following institutional backing devalues the voice of Indigenous peoples who have been saying there has been an issue with police racism for many years.

Table 1

Headline, Date of Publication and Word Counts for Articles from Mainstream Community Newspapers

Article Code	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
NI01	The Chronicle Journal	State of city: We are doing it well (Vis, 2016)	Dec 20, 2016	497

Article Code	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
NI02	The Chronicle Journal	Chiefs call for inquest (Kilpatrick, 2017)	May 11, 2017	389
NI03	The Chronicle Journal	No evidence of criminality in river death of teenager (Clutchey, 2017a)	May 12, 2017	381
NI04	The Chronicle Journal	Call for inquest receives big backing (“Call for inquest,” 2017)	May 16, 2017	650
NI05	The Chronicle Journal	River hangouts being watched (Clutchey, 2017b)	May 17, 2017	338
NI06	The Chronicle Journal	No headline (Giddens, 2017)	June 6, 2017	285
NI07	The Chronicle Journal	No headline (Petersen, 2017)	June 8, 2017	491

Article Code	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
NI08	Daily Miner and News	Report recommends changes to improve quality of education for native students (Reg, 2016)	Nov 25, 2016	410
NI09	Daily Miner and News	Group calls for inquest into aboriginal youth deaths (Cameron, 2017b)	May 16, 2017	642
NI10	Windsor Star	Children's Aid Societies seek inquest into group-home deaths (Cameron, 2017a)	May 16, 2017	450
<i>Note:</i> NI refers to a non-Indigenous newspaper article.				

Table 1

Table 2

Headline, Date of Publication, Word Count and Page Number for Articles from National Newspapers

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count	Page Number
NI11	The Guardian	Mysterious deaths highlight troubling lengths First Nations youth must go for an education (Kassam, 2016)	June 30, 2016	1425	Online
NI12	Toronto Star	Families of kids found dead hope tragedies bring change (Talaga, 2016a)	July 2, 2016	866	A1
NI13	Toronto Star	'Indigenous Friends' connecting with app (Winter, 2016)	Aug 2, 2016	687	GT1
NI14	Toronto Star	Thunder Bay police face allegations of 'systemic' racism (Talaga, 2016b)	Sept 23, 2016	1104	A1

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count	Page Number
NI15	Toronto Star	Grand Chief sings Downie's praises (Gallant, 2016)	Sept 24, 2016	770	A6
NI16	Globe and Mail	LAW ENFORCEMENT (Laze Aum, 2016)	Sept 30, 2016	711	A7
NI17	Toronto Star	Thunder Bay cops face probe for all missing persons cases (Talaga, 2016c)	Nov 4, 2016	935	A1
NI18	Toronto Star	Teen escaped death in Thunder Bay river (Talaga, 2016d)	Nov 25, 2016	1112	A4
NI19	Toronto Star	First Nations leaders demand inquest into deadly fires (Winter & Siekierska, 2017)	Mar, 30, 2017	897	A1
NI20	Toronto Star	Indigenous girl dies while in child protection (Talaga, 2017a)	May 10, 2017	899	A4

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count	Page Number
NI21	Toronto Star	First Nations teen’s death consistent with drowning (Talaga, 2017b)	May 13, 2017	394	A12
NI22	Metronews.ca	Children’s Aid joins call for inquest into recent teen deaths in care facilities (“Children’s Aid,” 2017)	May 15, 2017	573	Online
NI23	Toronto Star	CAS group urge inquest into foster home deaths (Contenta, Monsebraaten & Rankin, 2017)	May 16, 2017	512	A2
NI24	Toronto Star	Ontario watchdog expands probe of Thunder Bay police (Talaga, 2017c)	May 20, 2017	845	Online
NI25	Globe and Mail	First Nations leaders question safety of youth in Thunder Bay (Galloway, 2017)	May 20, 2017	689	A16

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count	Page Number
NI26	National Post	First Nations leaders call for RCMP to probe Thunder Bay teen deaths (McQuigge, 2017)	June 1, 2017	702	A7
NI27	Toronto Star	Thunder Bay foster homes shut down by province (Talaga, 2017d)	June 14, 2017	634	A1
NI28	Globe and Mail	Thunder Bay's guardians born of tragedy (Friesen & White, 2017)	June 17, 2017	1863	A4
<i>Note: NI refers to a non-Indigenous newspaper article.</i>					

Table 2

While many Indigenous news articles presented a great deal of Indigenous voice, as will be described below, there were many that left little space for Indigenous peoples' thoughts and opinions. Out of the thirty-one Indigenous articles, fourteen articles from APTN National News were under five-hundred words (articles I32, I33, I35, I36, I37, I38, I39, I40, I43, I46, I48, I51, I54 and I55). The majority of articles were once again written after the death of Tammy Keeash in May 2017. As described above, the placement of Indigenous newspaper articles on the topic of First Nations youth deaths in

Northern Ontario when compared to other news stories was unable to be examined due to all articles being located only online, and not in print.

Seventeen articles had less than half of direct quotes by Indigenous people, or no direct quotes at all (articles I31, I32, I33, I35, I38, I40, I41, I45, I46, I48, I49, I50, I51, I53, I54, I55 and I56). In a similar way to non-Indigenous news articles, people with authority or power, such as First Nations leaders and police and government officials, were given the most space regarding the story in Indigenous media. Furthermore, while most headlines did not feature direct quotes by individuals, two articles presented those in power backing up the opinions of Indigenous peoples. For example, article I53, which had the headline: “Thunder Bay police doesn’t have ‘competency’ for proper death investigations: top detective” (Barrera, 2017f). The other was article I56 entitled: “Ottawa needs to fund independent investigation into Thunder Bay deaths: Angus,” Angus being an NDP MP (Jackson, 2017d). Previous headlines featured First Nations leaders’ requests for these same things.

Table 3

Newspaper, Headline, Date of Publication, and Word Count for Indigenous Newspaper Articles.

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
I29	Wawatay News	Student inquest final recommendations (Garrick, 2016)	July 4, 2016	979

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
I30	Wawaytay News	Chiefs call for inquest as NAN mourns loss of another youth in care (Scura, 2017)	May 12, 2017	501
I31	Wawatay News	First Nation leaders call on RCMP to investigate youth deaths in Thunder Bay (Wesley, 2017)	June 15, 2017	936
I32	APTN National News	Concerns of racism remain after Thunder Bay inquest into 7 Indigenous student deaths (Fiddler, 2016a)	June 30, 2016	64
I33	APTN National News	Thunder Bay police officer suspended over allegedly making racist comments on Indigenous people (Pugliese, 2016)	Oct 5, 2016	497
I34	APTN National News	Terms of reference for Thunder Bay police review includes whether officers	Nov 3, 2016	681

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
		handled cases in “discriminatory way” (Blackburn, 2016)		
I35	APTN National News	Ontario police watchdog wants input from Indigenous people on review of Thunder Bay police (Fiddler, 2016b)	Dec 21, 2016	317
I36	APTN National News	Thunder Bay First Nation student inquest sparks first ever “political table” (Fiddler, 2017a)	Jan 20, 2017	264
I37	APTN National News	Former NHLer John Chabot in Thunder Bay to help kids play the game (Fiddler, 2017b)	Jan 31, 2017	335
I38	APTN National News	First Nations students in Thunder Bay raise money towards safe place to live (Fiddler, 2017c)	Apr 19, 2017	58

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
I39	APTN National News	Another First Nations girl dies while in care, this time in Thunder Bay (Fiddler, 2017d)	May 10, 2017	407
I40	APTN National News	Thunder Bay police rejects First Nation leaders' call for RCMP probe of river deaths (Barrera, 2017a)	May 16, 2017	446
I41	APTN National News	Ontario NDP joins call for mandatory inquests into child welfare deaths (Pugliese, 2017a)	May 16, 2017	694
I42	APTN National News	Thunder Bay police under fire over handling of death and missing First Nations youth (Pugliese, 2017b)	May 17, 2017	511
I43	APTN National News	Northern Ontario chiefs call on RCMP to investigate Thunder Bay deaths (Pugliese, 2017c)	May 31, 2017	493

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
I44	APTN National News	Evidence from First Nations student who survived Thunder Bay river attack resurfaces following eye-witness claim (Barrera, 2017b)	May 31, 2017	792
I45	APTN National News	Ontario exploring ‘options’ for Thunder Bay policing crisis triggered by suspected botched probes into river deaths (Barrera, 2017c)	June 1, 2017	975
I46	APTN National News	Account of 2008 attack in Thunder Bay (Pugliese, 2017d)	June 1, 2017	235
I47	APTN National News	Did Thunder Bay police botch the investigation into Stephan Banning’s river death? (Barrera, 2017d)	June 2, 2017	880
I48	APTN National News	Thunder Bay’s acting police chief faces challenges as she	June 2, 2017	498

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
		takes over force in crisis (Fiddler, 2017e)		
I49	APTN National News	Chief questions politics behind OPP’s revelation it reviewed botched Thunder Bay police death probe (Barrera, 2017d)	June 7, 2017	693
I50	APTN National News	There’s no crisis in Thunder Bay and it’s ‘business as usual’ says acting police chief (Jackson, 2017a)	June 7, 2017	629
I51	APTN National News	Thunder Bay police investigating who wrote ‘I killed those kids’ on train car (Jackson, 2017b)	June 8, 2017	342
I52	APTN National News	Thunder Bay police ruled out foul play in Jordan Wabasse’s death two days before receiving tip	June 9, 2017	1960

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
		suggesting murder (Barrera, 2017e)		
I53	APTN National News	Thunder Bay police doesn't have 'competency' for proper death investigations: top detective (Barrera, 2017f)	June 10, 2017	1320
I54	APTN National News	Thunder Bay man charged with 'I killed those kids' denies he wrote it (Jackson, 2017c)	June 12, 2017	428
I55	APTN National News	Thunder Bay city council approves plan in wake of inquest recommendations (Fiddler, 2017f)	June 13, 2017	62
I56	APTN National News	Ottawa needs to fund independent investigation into Thunder Bay deaths: Angus (Jackson, 2017d)	June 14, 2017	747

Article Number	Newspaper	Headline	Date of Publication	Word Count
I57	APTN National News	Death and questions along Thunder Bay’s ‘river of tears’ (Barrera, 2017g)	June 19, 2017	3116
I58	APTN National News	Coroner calls in outside police force to investigate Thunder Bay deaths of Begg, Keeash (Pugliese, 2017e)	June 22, 2017	602
I59	APTN National News	Indigenous deaths in Thunder Bay: A timeline (Pugliese, 2017f)	June 27, 2017	2509
<i>Note:</i> The letter I refers to newspaper articles published by an Indigenous news organization.				

Table 3

While the lack of Indigenous voice is significant and noticeable in mainstream newspapers, there is also a lack of space when it comes to placement regarding Indigenous issues.

Lack of space for Indigenous issues. Although this theme was not relevant to Indigenous newspapers, in mainstream community newspapers and mainstream national

newspapers, the headlines and the placement of articles focused on Indigenous issues was a concern.

Mainstream community newspapers. The lack of space for Indigenous issues was particularly noticeable in the headlines from Thunder Bay's The Chronicle Journal. For example, the articles "No evidence of criminality in river death of teenager" and "River hangouts being watched: safety audits were recommended by inquest into youth deaths" focus on deaths of First Nations youth, yet the headlines neglected to acknowledge that the youth are First Nations.

Two community newspaper articles did not provide headlines and were only accessible on the LexisNexis database, not on the newspapers' websites (articles NI06 and NI08). Furthermore, the length of the articles regarding the deaths of First Nations youth in Thunder Bay are minimal in length when compared to articles in major newspapers. Interestingly, since the inquest into the first seven youth who died suspiciously, the city of Thunder Bay was presented in a positive light by their local newspaper, as well this newspaper minimally covered the first two First Nations youth that went missing and were found dead in the waters surrounding Thunder Bay (articles NI02, NI03 and NI04).

In the two other local community papers, the topic of First Nations youth deaths and the 2016 inquest in Thunder Bay were quite similar. For instance, The Daily Miner and News (Kenora) reported on the topic twice. Once in article NI08 to shed light on the funding gap in education for First Nations peoples, and then second in article NI09 to discuss how a request for an inquest into First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay was

being backed by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (Cameron, 2017a). Furthermore, article NI09 was written by a journalist at The Canadian Press and was reprinted by The Daily Miner and News. Article NI10 in The Windsor Star was also about the deaths and inquest of First Nations youth and written by the same Canadian Press journalist, this article was reproduced and presented in multiple community papers.

Additionally, the placement of articles in non-Indigenous community papers demonstrates how Indigenous issues are not given space in mainstream media. As described above, The Chronicle Journal articles were online so their placement in the newspaper in relation to other news stories was unable to be analyzed. However, the other three community articles on First Nations issues were initially in print and were not found to be presented as frontpage news. Article NI08, which was presented on page A4 featured a report from a policy analyst rather than the voices of First Nations youth who have been impacted by education policy. The two other articles NI09 and NI10, written by the Canadian Press journalist, appeared on page A8 in The Daily Miner and News (Kenora) and page A7 in The Windsor Star respectively.

Mainstream national newspapers. While reviewing the headlines, dates of publication, word count and placement of articles by The Toronto Star, The Guardian, The National Post, The Globe and Mail, and Metronews.ca; a table was constructed (Table 2) to get a clearer view of how First Nations youth were presented in media. The table presents, The Toronto Star as the only mainstream newspaper found to report on the topic of First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay throughout the year following the inquest. Although The Toronto Star had a four-month gap in reporting the news regarding

First Nations youth deaths in Northern Ontario, they continued to follow the investigation of systemic racism by the Thunder Bay police, as well as including additional news surrounding Indigenous peoples in Ontario. For instance, in article NI17, when news of a First Nations teen who escaped a violent death by a waterway broke, The Toronto Star was the only national paper to present a fuller and more in-depth story, as well questioned the violence experienced by Indigenous people in Thunder Bay (Talaga, 2016c). As illustrated by Table 2, The Toronto Star was also the only national newspaper that presented the topic of Indigenous youth dying suspiciously in Thunder Bay closer to front page headlines.

Finally, in a similar way to community newspapers, national mainstream newspapers often presented Indigenous issues buried farther back in their papers. However, it was found that when there was a crisis involving First Nations youth in Thunder Bay, the article tended to be closer to the front of the paper. For instance, when it came to the inquest into the deaths of the seven First Nations youth, the issue made front page news in The Toronto Star in article NI12 shortly following the completion of the inquest (Talaga, 2016a). The same was true when it was described in article NI27 how a number of foster homes in Thunder Bay were shut down by the province (Talaga, 2017d). Interestingly, in article NI24, it was announced that the Thunder Bay Police Service was under investigation by the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) and this made front page news in The Toronto Star (Talaga, 2016c). Unfortunately, the topic of First Nations youth deaths most often failed to make front page news in

mainstream papers when the community was not facing a tragedy. This trend generally included when the police were facing allegations of racism against Indigenous peoples.

Space for Indigenous voice. One theme found among Indigenous and not mainstream newspapers was the inclusion of Indigenous voice. Indigenous news sources in and of themselves provide more space for Indigenous voices and Indigenous issues in the media. Out of the thirty-one Indigenous news articles, thirteen were found to include more than half of the article with direct quotes from Indigenous peoples (articles I29, I30, I37, I39, I42, I43, I44, I47, I52, I57, I58 and I59). Two articles stood out by including a great deal of family voice and the stories from other Indigenous people in Thunder Bay who had been attacked or witnessed attacks (articles I57 and I59). Article I59 described all events surrounding Indigenous deaths in Thunder Bay on a timeline, beginning with when the first youth (Anderson) was found dead, to the deaths of DeBungee, Gliddy, and Ketner. The same article also included interviews and quotes from a family member of most victims along with the circumstances leading to each death. For example, the aunt of Anderson described him as “a nice quiet boy who always obeyed curfews.” (Pugliese, 2017f). Another article, I57, interviewed and quoted twelve people, nine of which were Indigenous people. This article also told the stories of the deaths in a somewhat different way by following Nishnawbe Aski Nation lawyer, Falconer on a flight along The Kaministiquia River, following the river and land where seven Indigenous people were found dead, including four of the youth involved in the inquest (Barrera, 2017g).

Headlines chosen for Indigenous news articles also reflected more inclusion of Indigenous voices and views on the issue of First Nations youth dying in Thunder Bay.

One finding when examining the headlines was that many headlines draw the reader's attention to the potential wrongdoings of the Thunder Bay police force. For instance, article I34 titled, "Terms of reference for Thunder Bay police review includes whether officers handled cases in 'discriminatory way'" (Blackburn, 2016), article I42, "Thunder Bay police under fire over handling of death and missing First Nations youth" (Pugliese, 2017b), and article I49, "Chief questions politics behind OPP's revelation it reviewed botched Thunder Bay death probe" (Barrera, 2017d) each call out the Thunder Bay police for mishandling investigations involving First Nations youth.

Other racist occurrences impacting Indigenous peoples in Thunder Bay were described. One example would be article I33, which was about Thunder Bay police officers posting comments that were racist towards Indigenous people on the APTN National News Facebook page (Pugliese, 2016). The headline of article I51 described the racism of a citizen stating, "Thunder Bay police investigating who wrote 'I killed those kids' on train car" (Jackson, 2017b), and article 54 was about the same topic. Finally, it was also found that APTN National News connected the youth deaths to the stories of more adult victims of attacks in Thunder Bay than did the mainstream media. The tragic deaths of Barbara Ketner, Christina Gliddy and Stephen Banning were all reported and described by the APTN (articles I45, I57 and I59).

Indigenous Newspapers Exceeded Non-Indigenous Newspapers in Implicating the Government and Systemic Issues

Role of the government. The government's involvement in First Nations education has had a horrific impact on Native youth and children. The deaths of the seven youth which sparked an inquest in 2016 are but one example of these impacts.

Four non-Indigenous articles called out the government in some way for their involvement in Indigenous issues. First, in article NI08, *The Daily Miner and News* described the education funding gap for First Nations peoples, claiming that this was the reason why schools are failing Native youth (Author unknown, 2016). Two articles in *The Toronto Star*, numbers NI20 and NI27, called out the government of Ontario as being partially responsible for the deaths of First Nations youth in foster care. In article NI20 the Provincial Child Advocate stated that Indigenous youth are dying “on Ontario’s watch” (Talaga, 2017a). Then the Deputy Grand Chief of Nishnaabe Aski Nation was referred to in article NI27 describing how the government has the power to shut foster homes down, but they also have the power to open them as well (Talaga, 2017d). Finally, in a more indirect way, article NI12 in *The Toronto Star* acknowledged the responsibility of the government by calling for policy change in First Nations education (Talaga, 2016a).

Indigenous newspapers were much more confrontational than mainstream media in its ‘call out’ to the governments’ roles in the deaths of youth and adults in Thunder Bay. The theme focusing on the “role of the government” arose in ten out of thirty-one Indigenous news articles (articles I29, I30, I36, I37, I41, I45, I48, I55, I56 and I57), and these ten Indigenous news articles sometimes referred to how this role contributed to the deaths of First Nations youth, and other times their role in solving this issue. Indigenous

newspaper articles placed responsibility on all levels of government: federal, provincial, and municipal. For instance, article I29 from Wawatay News described that “the government has neglected on-reserve education for decades” and was a part of the problem (Garrick, 2016). Article I56 highlighted the Minister of Children and Youth Services arguing that the First Nations youth deaths are a provincial issue, and NDP MP Charlie Angus accusing the Government of Canada of causing the issue by not having high schools on reserve (Jackson, 2017d). Finally, articles number I44 and I48 explained how First Nations leaders were calling on the province to assist in getting involved in the investigations of some of the First Nations deaths in Thunder Bay. Both articles presented the government response as being that only the city police could call for outside involvement, and they were unwilling to ask (Barrera, 2017b; Fiddler, 2017e).

On a different note, some Indigenous news articles called out the municipal government for not stepping in to help solve the problem or implement inquest recommendations. One article, number I36, stated that “despite verbal commitments government reps said lack of funds remains a barrier” (Fiddler, 2017a). Article I37 described how the city of Thunder Bay was providing facilities to help ensure First Nations students’ recreational needs were being met (Fiddler, 2017b). Finally, article number I55 described the city being in the process of approving a budget to implement some of the inquest recommendations (Fiddler, 2017f). Each level of government from federal, to provincial, to municipal have all been implicated by Indigenous newspapers as playing a role in the deaths of First Nations youth from Northern Ontario communities.

Systemic racism. Throughout mainstream news media, there were nineteen articles that mentioned how Indigenous people in Thunder Bay face racism and that it is a systemic issue, although journalists were not always using the words “systemic racism” (articles NI01, NI02, NI06, NI07, NI08, NI11, NI12, NI13, NI14, NI16, NI17, NI18, NI19, NI20, NI21, NI24, NI26, NI27 and NI28). Journalists in the mainstream media tended to negate the seriousness of the issue of racism against First Nations people by the Thunder Bay police. For instance, the term systemic racism is often presented in quotations or is labeled “alleged.” In article NI01, “State of city: We are doing it well” by Thunder Bay’s The Chronicle Journal, the city is presented as operating normally and that racism is normal (Vis, 2016). Furthermore, in article NI26, “First Nations leaders call for RCMP to probe Thunder Bay teen deaths,” The National Post presents the police as understanding systemic racism against First Nations peoples, but denying that they are solely to blame. This article also describes the inquest into the deaths of the seven First Nations youth as “scrutinizing” the police force’s actions (McQuigge, 2017). It is the way these non-Indigenous newspapers are framing the issue that leads the reader to doubt whether racism against First Nations people is a serious allegation and come to the conclusion that the Thunder Bay police and the city of Thunder Bay are just under scrutiny for doing good work.

Similarly, the words “systemic racism” were not often used in Indigenous media. When the term was used, it appeared in only five of thirty-one articles. Interestingly, racism or discrimination by systems was discussed in twenty-eight out of thirty-one articles. For instance, while article number I30 does not directly label “systemic racism,”

it quotes Chief of Fort Albany First Nation, Andrew Solomon as saying, “the system is stacked against First Nations when our children are in care,” which implies a system plagued by racism. “Systemic racism” was also discussed without necessarily being called out by mentioning First Nations chiefs, people and communities had been unable to trust the Thunder Bay police to solve the crisis First Nations youth in the area are facing (articles I31, I34, I35, I40, I42, I43, I44, I48, I50, I51, I57, I58 and I59). Whether systemic racism was directly labeled or not, the negative impact systems have had on Indigenous peoples in Thunder Bay was one of the most common themes found throughout Indigenous news articles.

In both mainstream and Indigenous newspaper articles, there were two areas acknowledged by journalists to negatively impact First Nations youth in Northern Ontario by means of systemic racism: systems of the police force and the education system. Each area will be discussed individually below.

Police force. A great number of non-Indigenous articles make mention of an investigation into systemic racism when it comes to the Thunder Bay police force’s work involving First Nations peoples (articles NI01, NI06, NI12, NI14, NI16, NI17, NI20, NI21, NI24, NI25, NI26 and NI28). Interestingly, the words “systemic racism” are often presented in quotations or labeled simply as racism, therefore minimizing the issue and concern regarding Indigenous people in non-Indigenous newspapers. For instance, in article NI25 The Globe and Mail presented the issue of racism by the Thunder Bay police, but denied that the issue impacts the whole police force (Galloway, 2017). Finally, in article NI28 the acting Thunder Bay Police Chief responded to allegations by saying “the

trust has to be rebuilt and that might mean getting rid of some officers with a long history of complaints against them” (Friesen & White, 2017). This way of framing the issue might lead readers to doubt whether the racism exists with First Nations people or that the issue is systemic.

With regards to non-Indigenous newspapers, The Toronto Star presented more serious examples of racism against Indigenous peoples in Thunder Bay. For instance, article NI14 mentioned that the police released results of an investigation far too early in the case of the death of a First Nations man (Talaga, 2016b). In article NI17, The Toronto Star continued to recognize the severity of the issue when they described how First Nations peoples in Thunder Bay have a huge lack of trust in the police because they have “repeatedly failed them” (Talaga, 2016c), as in article NI18 when they present an incident where a First Nations youth was attacked near the water and police did not respond to the victim for years afterwards (Talaga, 2016d). Article NI24 by The Toronto Star presented First Nations leaders as arguing that investigations into the deaths of First Nations people were often dismissed without “proper examination.” The same article also presented the Director of the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) as saying that Indigenous peoples and the police need to work together to solve the problem and that “the onus is on the police in this regard” (Talaga, 2017c).

The Chronicle Journal did not shed nearly as much light on systemic racism by their city’s police force as the national papers described above. They only acknowledged the OIPRD investigation into the Thunder Bay police once in article NI06, with “systemic

racism” was presented in quotations (“City police”, 2017). The other three community newspaper articles also failed to acknowledge the issue of systemic racism by the police.

Indigenous newspaper articles provided a more contemptuous review of the Thunder Bay Police. Twenty of thirty-one articles described racism against Indigenous people by the Thunder Bay police in one way or another (articles I31, I33, I34, I35, I40, I42, I43, I44, I45, I47, I48, I49, I50, I51, I52, I53, I56, I57, I58 and I59). Throughout the Indigenous news articles on the First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay, the question of whether foul play was involved was mentioned far more often than in non-Indigenous articles. Many articles by APTN National News mention that it was the position of Nishnawbe Aski Nation and some families of the youth victims that foul play was involved and that the Thunder Bay police had not taken the investigations seriously. For instance, article I40 describes two attacks on Indigenous people by the river and how the police were not investigating them properly (Barrera, 2017a). In article I52, there was also discussion of the possibility of a failed investigation into Wabasse’s death, with two separate tips about him being murdered never having been properly investigated by Thunder Bay police (Barrera, 2017e).

The failings of the Thunder Bay police were also described in article I44 by Julian Falconer, a lawyer for Nishnawbe Aski Nation whom felt it was possible that “at least in some of these cases there was a strain of racist, vicious thugs who found tossing Indigenous people in the river a fair sport (Barrera, 2017b). Furthermore, in article I50 Tammy Keeash’s mother, Pearl Slipperjack was quoted in saying; “I think something more happened to her. Something more than what cops are telling me” (Jackson, 2017a).

Finally, NDP MP, Charlie Angus, was quoted in article I54 saying; “the evidence of the levels of abuse and violence perpetrated against these youth is shocking. What is even more shocking is that evidence was presented in the inquest alleging that some of the river deaths may have been the result of murder” (Jackson, 2017d). Indigenous news sources urged the reader to consider the possibility of foul play, and if this is the case, presented even more distrust towards the Thunder Bay police.

Some pieces published by APTN National news also went into far greater detail regarding the OIPRD investigation into the Thunder Bay police. For example, articles I34 and I35 quote OIPRD director Gerry McNeilly as saying that the investigation into systemic racism in the Thunder Bay Police Service is necessary because “Indigenous leaders and community members say that these investigations, and other interactions with police, devalue Indigenous lives, reflect differential treatment and are based on racist attitudes and/or stereotypical preconceptions about the Indigenous community” (Blackburn, 2016; Fiddler, 2016b). In article I59, reasons behind the OIPRD review of the Thunder Bay police were described to include: discriminatory death investigations, lack of training for work with Indigenous people, over policing and under policing based on racism, officers not being held accountable, failure to engage with the Indigenous community, Indigenous peoples’ fear of reprisal when reporting to the police and questions about whether polices need to be changed (Pugliese, 2017f). Each example drawn from Indigenous news articles provides a greater amount of detail into the reasoning behind the OIPRD review than did non-Indigenous news sources.

Finally, the Indigenous news articles regarding Indigenous youth deaths in Thunder Bay mentioned that the Thunder Bay police were influenced by idea of stereotypes. The director of the OIPRD was quoted in articles I34 and I35 describing that “racist attitudes and/or stereotypical preconceptions” of police as one reason contributing to the deaths of Native youth (Blackburn, 2016; Fiddler, 2016b). A lawyer for Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Julian Falconer, was described as saying that he felt that the Thunder Bay police had the stereotypical view Native people as the “drunken Indian” in article I33 (Pugliese, 2016). Article I50 also stated that First Nations leaders made this same accusation against the police (Jackson, 2017a), that police were acting on their stereotypical views.

Education system. The negative impacts the education system has had on First Nations peoples was discussed in mainstream newspapers only in the five months following the inquest. First, while it did not implicate colonialism as a root cause of the issues First Nations peoples face, article NI11 in The Guardian, “Mysterious deaths highlight troubling lengths First Nations youth must go for an education,” compared residential schools to the current state of First Nations education, saying Native youth must leave their home communities to attend high school (Kassam, 2016). Article NI13, “‘Indigenous friends’ connecting with app,” was published by The Toronto Star and described Indigenous students leaving their homes to attend school as being “stripped of their communities and support systems” (Winter, 2016). Another article, NI14, described how a student was violently attacked while attending school in Thunder Bay and returned home and “lost his opportunity for a secondary education.” This article also promoted the

idea of putting schools on reserves so that youth didn't have to leave their homes, families or communities (Talaga, 2016d). This affirms how serious the issue education is for First Nations youth in Northern communities.

Indigenous newspapers implicate the failure of the education system much more directly. Four articles discussed the negative impacts the education system had on Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay (articles I29, I32, I38 and I56). For instance, in article I29 published by Wawatay News, Rebecca Mandamin, a member of Ontario's First Nations Young Peoples' Council shared the impact of youth having to leave their communities for school, "That can result in some really terrible things, and in this case it resulted in the deaths of our beautiful young people" (Garrick, 2016). Similarly, in article I29 another youth member of the council, Quinn Meawasige, was quoted saying, "The government has neglected on-reserve education for decades and so students leave the reserve unprepared and vulnerable- it is so unfair" (Garrick, 2016). Another article, number I56, discussed how NDP MP, Angus, argued that the Government of Canada in refusing to put high schools on reserves, helps create this situation where youth are forced to come to the city for an education (Jackson, 2017d). Finally, article I38 described how "A safe place for First Nations students to live while attending high school in Thunder Bay has long been a concern" (Fiddler, 2017c). Each of these examples from Indigenous newspapers illustrated how if it was not for the flaws in the education system, the youth that died would never have been in Thunder Bay to begin with.

Indigenous Newspapers Portray Indigenous Youth in a More Positive Light

Portraying Indigenous peoples negatively. While this theme was not uncovered in Indigenous newspapers, there were a shocking number of examples in the non-Indigenous media. Headlines in newspaper articles are used to draw readers in, therefore they illuminate how Indigenous peoples are portrayed to the society by the media by portraying what information is expected to catch peoples' attention (see Table 1 and Table 2). For the most part, topics reported on by the mainstream media included youth dying while attending school and/or youth dying while in foster care. These situations were often linked to a lack of services back in their home communities requiring youth to leave their homes to receive education, safety and or care. In the Toronto Star, article NI12 with the headline, "Due to a lack of mental-health and child-protection services in Northern Ontario, many youth are taken out of their communities and placed in group homes hundreds of kilometres away from their families" gives the impression of the lack of services on Northern Ontario reserves without providing any context of why there are a lack of services. Furthermore, First Nations communities were portrayed in a pitiful manner by such newspapers as The National Post when they write headlines such as in article NI26: "Seven students who had come to Thunder Bay to pursue an education beyond their remote fly-in communities" (McQuigge, 2017). This particular headline suggests that the lives the youth would have led in their own communities would not have been much better than the circumstances they faced in Thunder Bay.

Moreover, many mainstream newspaper articles drew attention to how many First Nations children and youth are in foster care without providing any context about the history of colonization and assimilation through residential schools and the child welfare

system, and the impacts these circumstances have had on the loss of traditional parenting knowledge of Indigenous peoples. In one instance, The Daily Miner and News (Kenora) presented article NI09 with commentary from the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth stating that First Nations children are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system (Cameron, 2017b). While the information presented was accurate, the article left out the historical oppression and the genocidal strategies of the government and residential schools that contribute to the dysfunction of Indigenous families and in the child welfare system. The construction of such a title and article without providing the historical context leaves readers to stereotype and blame Indigenous peoples for these circumstances. Along with drawing attention to the high representation of Indigenous children and youth in the child welfare system, some newspapers published information that insinuates youth leaving their communities to come into care are trouble-makers.

Article NI19, published in The Toronto Star, described Tammy Keeash prior to her disappearance as a delinquent that caused problems, “missed her curfew” and was “under conditions” (Talaga, 2017a). In article NI25 The Globe and Mail labeled her as “troubled” (Galloway, 2017) and in article NI03, The Chronicle Journal quoted a Thunder Bay detective as saying he did not “know how Nishnawbe Aski Nation officials got the impression that Keeash’s death may have involved foul play” Similarly, in article NI27 The Toronto Star highlighted how Johnson Children’s Services ran the group homes where First Nations kids were dying in care and quoted the organization’s website stating that the youth they serve have issues such as “chronic delinquency, aggression, substance

use, and chronic AWOL²” (Talaga, 2017d). Negative and stereotypical ideologies such as these lead readers to believe Tammy and other First Nations youth in care in Thunder Bay have somehow contributed to their own tragic deaths.

Unfortunately, Indigenous peoples have been portrayed negatively and in a stereotypical image in mainstream newspapers in three of twenty-eight articles (articles NI11, NI25 and NI28). While some may think this number is low, even one negative or stereotypical perspective can have a lasting impact on First Nations people. A common stereotype of “drunk Indian” was presented subtly on a few occasions in a few articles. For example, when the topic of the inquest in to the seven First Nations youth deaths was presented in The Guardian in article NI11, the journalist highlighted that a parent was told her child was “likely just out partying somewhere” when they were reported missing. In the same article, a former student was quoted as saying that “many students turned to alcohol and drugs to help cope” (Kassam, 2016). While these statements were not presented as inferring that all Native people are drunks, their presence can cause readers to refer to Indigenous people in light of these stereotypes. Therefore, such articles contribute to the assumptions that Native youth having been at fault for their demise. This same stereotype was also found in article NI28, which illustrated how Native people were stepping up to protect their community by patrolling the areas where Indigenous youth commonly run into trouble. The article spoke of two Native men that were helped and one was described as “sprawled on his back near a river bank” and “a man in mud stained

² AWOL refers to being absent without permission.

clothes who is stumbling and appears highly intoxicated” (Friesen & White, 2017). Once again, this imagery and stereotyping contributes to the views and labels that all Indigenous people as drunks and trouble makers, thus making Canadian society wary and judgemental of Indigenous people.

Supporting the empowerment of Indigenous peoples. The empowerment of First Nations peoples is presented in six articles by the non-Indigenous media (NI08, NI11, NI12, NI13, NI15, and NI28). Examples drawn from these articles illustrate family members of the deceased youth and community members speaking out or taking action to create change. Article number NI12 in The Toronto Star quoted, Christian Morriseau, the father of one of the youth who died stating: “I will speak and teach others about what these seven fallen feathers did for other students” (Talaga, 2016a). In the same article, Stella Anderson, mother of Jethro Anderson, said that “something must be learned from the inquest and that recommendations must be followed so the lessons learned from Jethro’s death are not wasted” (Talaga, 2016a). In article NI11 by The Guardian, it was briefly mentioned that older Indigenous students were patrolling the river and areas on the look out for youth (Kassam, 2016). It was also reported in article NI28 by The Globe and Mail that a group of Indigenous volunteers called “Bear Clan Patrol” were patrolling the streets and riverbanks in Thunder Bay. A member was quoted saying, “ever since those bodies been found in the river, we had to step up as Anishinaabe people” (Friesen & White, 2017). Each of these examples show Indigenous peoples empowering themselves within the context of racism in Thunder Bay by helping their own community stay safe.

Unfortunately, the local community papers failed to highlight this empowering aspect pertaining to First Nations peoples. However, in article NI08, *The Daily Miner and News* (Kenora) did refer to a recommendation by a policy analyst saying that “a full transition to First Nations control of education take place through community-based school management” (Author unknown, 2016).

With regards to the Indigenous research data, each newspaper article was published by Indigenous organizations set out to empower Indigenous peoples. Nine articles in Indigenous media truly included this focus in their discourse (articles I29, I30, I35, I37, I38, I42, I52, I57 and I59). Primarily, article I30 described how the families of youth who died in care were able to share their stories with the Minister of Children and Youth Services (Scura, 2017). Article I37 presented youth from Mattawa Learning Centre learning to play hockey and hoping to bring skills back to their communities to share with future students (Fiddler, 2017b). Focusing on and supporting empowerment examples in the media provides Indigenous peoples with examples of resiliency and hope.

Furthermore, two articles presented Indigenous peoples as participating in cultural traditions. First, article I52 which illustrated family members asking seers to use dreams and visions to direct them to where Wabasse’s body was (Barrera, 2017e), as well as in article I57, which showed an Elder praying and putting tobacco down (Barrera, 2017g). On a similar note, in article I30 Chief of Fort Albany First Nation, Andrew Solomon was reported in saying; “We have a better way of caring for our children based on our culture and traditions. We are the ones who should be caring for our children, close to their homes and families” (Scura, 2017).

Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Newspapers Fail to Implicate Colonialism

Failure in providing context. Indigenous peoples in Canada have experienced generational trauma through colonization in having our land stolen and our children removed from our families and communities by the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop. Throughout non-Indigenous news media there was an all-around failure to acknowledge the colonial context in which Indigenous peoples live. Similarly, there were also very few times when the role of the government in creating such issues was ever mentioned. Unfortunately, no article in this research data directly calls out colonialism as a root cause to the issues Indigenous peoples face. Even in article NI15 from The Toronto Star, which was about how the former lead singer of the Tragically Hip, Gord Downie advocated in support of Indigenous issues, only the goal of reconciliation was briefly mentioned. The journalist did not make reference to the contributing factors of colonialism and how this is the need for reconciliation (Gallant, 2016).

With regards to Indigenous newspaper articles, although the pieces analyzed were published by Indigenous organizations and included more Indigenous voice, Indigenous media also failed to acknowledge the colonial context in which Indigenous people have experienced and continue to exist. Unfortunately, the history of colonialism, residential schools and the Sixties Scoop were never acknowledged in any of the Indigenous research data.

Although many of the themes were found to be the same across non-Indigenous and Indigenous newspapers, it was clear through analysis that Indigenous newspaper articles were overall more inclusive of Indigenous voices and were more subjective by

providing an Indigenous perspective on the issue of First Nations youth dying in Thunder Bay, also leaving out negative portrayals and stereotypes. On the other hand, non-Indigenous news articles provided a much more objective view on the topic, including more powerful individuals in direct quotes, and as a result of not including our voices, tended to portray Indigenous people somewhat less fairly than Indigenous newspapers. The following discussion section will connect these findings to the literature in order to answer the questions posed in this study.

Discussion

The questions being asked in this research study are, “How does the media perpetuate the cycle of racism, colonialism and stereotyping of Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay?” and “How do Indigenous news sources participate in giving voice to Indigenous youth?” By using critical and Indigenous theories in this discourse analysis, this research uniquely examines both Indigenous and non-Indigenous newspaper articles regarding the tragic deaths of First Nations youth in Thunder Bay and analyze how the cycle of racism is being perpetuated by the mainstream media not only in Thunder Bay, but across Canada. Furthermore, this research analyzes how Indigenous newspapers are able to do things differently and participate in ending this cycle and changing the way Canadian society thinks about Indigenous peoples, which is of interest to the social work profession and our mission of social justice and the elimination of oppression.

Generally, in non-Indigenous newspaper articles journalists are discussing issues Indigenous youth are facing and the deaths that are occurring in Northern communities, however they do not go to Indigenous communities, youth or experts to discuss possible causes or contributing factors relating to the issues. When one reads such articles, journalists appear to only be reporting on the surface of facts pertaining to the deaths of Indigenous youth rather than the deeper oppressions they face as a result of colonialism and oppression. van Dijk (1991) explains that this is because the mainstream media only makes use of the voices of racialized groups to back up the dominant viewpoint on issues. This is also related to the failure of mainstream media to employ those from diverse

backgrounds (Henry & Tator, 2002), and to their unwillingness to disperse views that diverge from those that are dominant in society (Gardam & Giles, 2016).

With the exception of The Toronto Star, it was noted that the time period that national papers reported on the circumstances of First Nations youth in Northern Ontario happened to coincide with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies support for the inquest, which had been previously requested by the First Nations Chief's regarding the First Nations youth dying in care. Prior to this backing, most major newspapers aside from the Toronto Star neglected to report on the issues First Nations youth from Northern Ontario face. van Dijk (1993) argues that this is because of the tendency of the mainstream media to turn to dominant institutions when looking for opinions and stories. On a similar note, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous articles were found to use the opinions of experts and those with power and authority to back up the opinions of Indigenous peoples.

Alternatively, Indigenous news sources were found to provide more space for Indigenous voice. For example, data analysis demonstrated that APTN National News wrote far more often than any mainstream media organization on the issue of the deaths of First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay. APTN published twenty-eight articles during over the time period being analyzed, which surpasses the twelve articles published by The Toronto Star, the non-Indigenous source with the highest number of articles published on the topic. APTN also suggested a connection between the suspicious youth deaths to the deaths of three First Nations adults that were never mentioned by the non-Indigenous media: Barbara Ketner, Christina Gliddy and Stephen Banning (in articles

I45, I57 and I59), provided even more space for Indigenous voice by including the stories of more victims. Furthermore, in over half of the Indigenous newspaper articles, at least half of the direct quotes were from Indigenous people. These findings are not surprising given that APTN is a news organization made by and for Indigenous peoples with the mission of Indigenous empowerment (Knopf, 2010). In article I29, Wawatay News also provided a unique perspective on the issue when compared to mainstream newspapers since they included the quotes of youth directly impacted by the failures of the education system when it comes to First Nations. The inclusion of these voices resulted in a fairer picture of the struggles of First Nations youth sent to Thunder Bay and in why their communities lack education.

It is important to note that although all Indigenous newspaper articles are solely available online, which limits analysis in terms of placement of stories in comparison to other news, this means that these articles are available to readers at a global level, so long as they have access to internet. This accessibility might draw in a larger audience than the non-Indigenous print media, which is only accessible to those in the immediate area where the newspaper is published.

In the mainstream newspaper articles reviewed, Indigenous peoples were often portrayed negatively. For example, Indigenous peoples were often portrayed as coming from remote communities with poor living conditions. There are also stereotypes found to be used at times in non-Indigenous newspaper articles. The conditions Indigenous peoples live in are a result of colonization, assimilation, and government policies such as the Indian Act; however, such headlines allow readers to make assumptions as to why First

Nations communities are unable to provide for their own children and youth.

Furthermore, racism against Indigenous peoples is only mentioned in nineteen out of twenty-eight non-Indigenous newspaper articles, mainly national papers. According to van Dijk (1993), framing issues of racism to appear less serious helps to support negative stereotypes in society and participates in concealing racism. Gardam and Giles (2016) also argue that disseminating stereotypes also reproduces racist attitudes, which appears to be the case in the city of Thunder Bay.

Some Indigenous newspaper articles present the Thunder Bay police as acting on stereotypes against Indigenous people and neglecting foul play in their police work, which are not ideas that are presented in the mainstream media. This illustrates how Indigenous media organizations allow Indigenous peoples to tell their sides of the story and to not be held back by the dominant views of the mainstream media. If any Indigenous person directly quoted in the mainstream media had mentioned the police acting on stereotypes or the possibility of foul play in the deaths, this was not included in the published articles.

Not surprisingly, there are no negative images of Indigenous people within the Indigenous newspaper articles. Twenty-eight of thirty-one Indigenous articles were published by APTN, which is an organization that strives to dismantle stereotypes against Indigenous peoples by sharing the positive aspects of Indigenous cultures (Knopf, 2010). Alternatively, there are nine empowering images of Indigenous people uncovered in Indigenous newspaper articles. Some of these articles even provided space to illustrate Indigenous peoples participating in our cultural traditions (articles I52 and I57), thus

portraying Indigenous identity in a much more positive light than the mainstream media, as is a goal of APTN (Knopf, 2010).

The reason behind this discrepancy is that the mainstream media is profiting by perpetuating this cycle of racism in colonialism in society because the dominant group in society remains in power, while Indigenous people continue to suffer. The most powerful in society are able to remain privileged and the rest of white society remains comfortable with this status quo. As explained by van Dijk (1993), the majority of media organizations are owned by people from the dominant group in society who possess the most power and without alternative sources of information, this dominant group's views are those that continue to be reproduced in society. The emergence of Indigenous media has proven to be integral in the production of positive images and alternative ideologies. As van Dijk (1997) describes, alternative media sources produce discourse that disrupts racist ideologies and promotes alternative views, which will be discussed later.

Non-Indigenous newspapers also failed to acknowledge the role of the government in general when it comes to causing and preventing First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay. In contrast, Indigenous newspapers often labelled the role of the government, thus giving more voice to Indigenous peoples in Canada about the horrific history of government imposed policies that have so negatively impacted us. Specific to the case of the deaths of First Nations youth attending high school in Thunder Bay, Indigenous newspaper articles mention that there is need for increased funding for the education of First Nations children and youth. With more funding from the government, there might be able to have high schools closer to home for these youth or at the very

least more programs and service providers dedicated to keeping them safe when they are forced to come to Thunder Bay. This is supported by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in recommendation eight, since this had been promised in Treaties between the government of Canada and First Nations peoples (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015).

The finding that Indigenous newspapers more effectively called out the government was not surprising given that most Indigenous newspaper articles in this research are published by APTN, whose mission is to change societal ideologies around Indigenous peoples. The findings of this research also reiterate Gardam and Giles' (2016) finding that Indigenous media empowers Indigenous people by pinpointing government policy as a root cause of the issues Indigenous youth face in Thunder Bay. Additionally, this research discovered that when discussing the role of the government in the deaths of the Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay and potential solutions, Indigenous newspaper articles implicate all levels of government: municipal, provincial and federal. This finding was unique to this research study and further illustrates the way in which Indigenous media provides us with the space to dig deeper into the root causes of the issues our people are facing.

Finally, this research found that the media has failed to acknowledge that Canada is a colonial society. Both Indigenous and mainstream newspaper articles fail to label colonialism and forced assimilation as a root cause of the issues Indigenous youth in Thunder Bay are facing. This finding is in contrast to the research of Gardam and Giles (2016) who argued that Indigenous media acknowledged colonialism as a cause of the

First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay. The tendency of both non-Indigenous and Indigenous newspaper articles to neglect colonialism could be because the atrocities of colonization, forced assimilation and broken Treaty promises are too much for Canadian citizens to bear. Non-Indigenous newspapers in particular also fail to mention colonialism due to their dispersion of dominant ideologies. Once again, those employed by mainstream media organizations continue to benefit from these ideologies being reproduced, as does the rest of mainstream society (van Dijk, 1993).

Limitations

First and foremost, news articles that originate online do not have a page number to analyze how much importance was placed on the issue of First Nations youth deaths in Thunder Bay. While the majority of mainstream news articles were published in print, Indigenous news articles were solely online and a page number is not given. This limits the analysis of where each article was included in the newspaper and findings regarding the themes of Indigenous voice or lack thereof. However, this characteristic was used to provide insight into how much importance the newspaper places on Indigenous issues, and Indigenous newspapers solely discuss issues of concern to Indigenous people. Therefore, this limitation had more impact on the analysis of articles from The Chronicle Journal in Thunder Bay, all of which were mainstream community newspaper articles that were published online.

Another limitation of this research is that four articles from Turtle Island News were unable to be included because they originated online and were deleted prior to analysis. This could have been avoided if Indigenous news sources were included in

online data based like LexisNexis. There could have been more articles out there to analyze that could add to or alter the findings regarding Indigenous newspapers.

A final limitation is that this is still an ongoing issue in Thunder Bay with constant news coverage. This research only covers the issue and the news discourse surrounding it at a specific point in time, from June 30, 2016 to June 30, 2017. An increased time window for data inclusion might have altered the findings, but this choice was made to make the research data more manageable to analyze.

Implications

Implications of this research for social workers include the need to advocate for those oppressed groups whose oppressions are being perpetuated by the media, including Indigenous peoples. With the ever-increasing prevalence of the media in today's society, it is becoming increasingly important that social workers are prepared for this role of media advocacy as a part of our education. Furthermore, social workers working with Indigenous youth need to work towards decolonization and how oppression is partially the result of the media perpetuating colonial and racist ideologies. It is also important that Indigenous youth are treated fairly and have the same access to resources as the rest of Canadian society which will help Indigenous youth and communities feel empowered to fight for real change in First Nations education.

The research findings also have implications for both mainstream and Indigenous newspapers. To begin, non-Indigenous newspapers should begin holding the government accountable for their role in both creating the issues Indigenous peoples face, and in creating solutions. By not providing this insight, mainstream articles allow readers to

develop an unfair representation of Indigenous issues, which perpetuates the cycle of racism and colonialism in society. Education regarding the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada including colonization, genocide and forced assimilation might assist journalists in providing a more objective picture of the circumstances of Indigenous peoples in Canada today. Further recommendations for non-Indigenous newspapers to disrupt the reproduction of colonial ideologies and racism include hiring more Indigenous journalists and consultants, as well as including more Indigenous voice through their use of direct quotes.

Indigenous newspapers are on a good path towards empowering Indigenous peoples. They provide more space for Indigenous voice in the media and do not portray our people negatively. However, this research argues that in order to provide a fair depiction of our circumstances, both Indigenous and mainstream newspaper articles need to have more discussion surrounding the impacts of colonialism and forced assimilation. Without this information, non-Indigenous readers might continue to have racist views even when there are empowering images of Indigenous peoples presented in the content of articles.

Future research on the topic of racism against Indigenous peoples in the news media should focus on areas such as how social workers can be educated to participate in decolonization towards the dismantling of racism in the mainstream media, how education regarding Indigenous peoples might impact the abilities of journalists to write from a more objective perspective and/or how Indigenous peoples are represented in the staff of mainstream media and social work organizations.

Overall, this discourse analysis answers the research questions by finding that non-Indigenous newspaper articles tended to minimize the significance of the issue of First Nations youth dying when coming to attend school in Thunder Bay by leaving out Indigenous voice and portraying Indigenous peoples negatively. This negative portrayal is accomplished partially through neglecting the negative impacts colonialism, forced assimilation and the government have on our lives. Alternatively, Indigenous newspaper articles provide a space for Indigenous peoples to share their thoughts and concerns regarding the issues First Nations youth face in Thunder Bay, and they portray us in a more positive light by acknowledging the role of the government in both creating and solving this particular problem.

To summarize, this research finds that while Indigenous newspapers are on the path and in position to empowering Indigenous peoples, mainstream newspapers tend to perpetuate the cycle of racism and colonialism in Canadian society. These findings suggest that social workers should be prepared to advocate Indigenous youth, both in the media and in direct practice. Social workers should also develop an understanding of decolonization in regards to the cycle of racism, colonialism and violence that is reproduced by the media and the education system so that Indigenous youth feel empowered to pursue higher education and understand that these socially constructed circumstances are not their fault. When Indigenous youth feel empowered, they will be more likely to come together to create meaningful change in First Nations education policy.

These findings also implicate both non-Indigenous and Indigenous newspapers. First, in order to combat the reproduction of racist ideologies by the non-Indigenous media, this research recommends that journalists working for the mainstream media should be educated on the history and current circumstances of Indigenous peoples in Canada, they should be required to include more Indigenous voice when discussing the issues we face, and more Indigenous journalists and consultants should be hired by the non-Indigenous media. Finally, this research implicates both Indigenous and non-Indigenous newspapers as they both fail to acknowledge the colonization and forced assimilation of Indigenous communities that lead to the issues we face. Therefore, this research argues that Indigenous newspapers should include more discussion of colonialism in order to inform non-Indigenous readers on the larger reasons behind the oppression of Indigenous peoples.

Conclusion

Despite promises made in Treaties and the deaths of nine youth, each school year more students are sent from Northern Ontario First Nations to Thunder Bay in order to attend high school. My research examines both Indigenous and non-Indigenous newspapers' discourse surrounding the multiple deaths of First Nations youth sent to school in Thunder Bay. Using a discourse analysis methodology influenced by decolonization and critical theories, non-Indigenous and Indigenous newspaper articles published during the year following the inquest are located and analyzed. I chose this methodology to examine how the media plays a role in these deaths by continuing to reproduce racism and colonialism in their publications. Furthermore, this methodology allows analysis regarding the ways Indigenous newspapers participate in changing these societal ideologies.

As an Indigenous researcher, I had hoped to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and teachings into my methodology and analysis. However, I struggled with finding a way to do this in an academic setting and using a mainstream methodology. Had I approached the methodology and analysis with a particular teaching in mind, rather than the academic methodology of discourse analysis, I might have had more success honouring Indigenous knowledge in my work. Furthermore, as an Indigenous person, I had to consistently be aware of the bias I have on this topic and analyze all data as objectively as possible.

My research discovers that Indigenous newspaper articles are overall more inclusive of Indigenous voices in direct quotes. Moreover, they are more subjective by

providing an Indigenous perspective on the issue of First Nations youth dying in Thunder Bay, and by discussing how the government plays a role in the deaths. Finally, Indigenous newspaper articles portray more empowering images of Indigenous peoples than do mainstream newspapers. Non-Indigenous news articles provide a much more objective view on the topic, failing to call out the government for their role in the deaths and including more dominant, powerful individuals in direct quotes. As a result, mainstream newspaper articles tended to portray Indigenous people somewhat less fairly than Indigenous newspapers. Shockingly, negative stereotypes regarding Indigenous peoples are even uncovered in mainstream newspaper articles. These findings clearly implicate the non-Indigenous media in the continued cycle of racism and colonialism, both in Thunder Bay and across Canada.

Social workers are implicated by my research in a number of ways. First, social work education should be shaped to accommodate the increasing need for advocacy in the media. Next, social workers should participate in decolonization by learning how racism is produced by the media and advocating for groups that are unfairly represented in the news, including Indigenous youth. Finally, social workers working with Indigenous youth should help them to become empowered to create real change in First Nations education by helping them to understand the barriers they face, and that these barriers are not their fault. Social workers can also help Indigenous youth feel empowered by advocating for them to receive the same access to services as non-Indigenous youth.

My research also makes suggestions for the media. First, non-Indigenous newspapers should ensure they portray the entire context in their newspaper articles by

calling out the government for colonialism, broken promises and their role in the deaths of these youth. Furthermore, in order to develop a fair understanding of Indigenous peoples, journalists employed by the mainstream media should be educated on our history including colonization and forced assimilation through residential schools. These organizations should also look to hire more Indigenous journalists and consultants so that they are able to include more Indigenous voice in their publications. Finally, both non-Indigenous and Indigenous newspapers should include discussion of colonialism, in order to provide all readers with the real circumstances behind the issues we face. There is a great deal of work to be done to achieve social justice for Indigenous peoples in Canada and a fair portrayal in the media could be a first step towards social change.

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