

NEWS FROM SCHOOL:  
LANGUAGE, TIME, AND PLACE IN THE NEWSPAPERS OF  
1890s INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS IN CANADA

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## ABSTRACT

Though few documents remain showing exactly how English was taught at Indian boarding schools (a term that includes both residential schools in Canada as well as their counterpart in the U.S.), some schools produced newspapers. Newspaper production at boarding schools occurred for almost 100 years and in diverse regions across both Canada and the U.S. In this dissertation, I focus on five newspapers produced at four nineteenth-century Indian boarding schools in Canada, arguing that these documents and the printing programs that produced them afford a rare glimpse into language instruction *in situ*. They feature writing by teachers and students as well as audiences that included community members, governing bodies, and parents.

These newspapers participated in an assimilative agenda but, I argue, also feature ways in which students resisted as well as resignified and repurposed English for their own needs. Despite the schools' agenda to erase Indigenous languages, promoting what Andrea Bear Nicholas calls "linguicide," students demonstrated in school newspapers their ability to maintain Indigenous languages *and* learn English. And while much research suggests a separation between boarding schools in Canada and boarding schools in the U.S., these newspapers reveal evidence of both commonalities and communication across the border, particularly as the two systems began. Through school newspapers, this dissertation aims to contribute to what Dwayne Donald calls "excavating the colonial terrain."

This research views school newspapers as complex evidence of the disciplinary techniques driving discourses of settler colonialism as well as Indigenous students' resistance and responses. By investigating their multiple purposes and audiences, I argue

nineteenth-century school newspapers both represented and attempted to constitute language, time, and place for readers and served as a testament to linguicide. Yet even within the tightly controlled narrative of the newspaper, students resisted in their own ways and used newspapers to articulate something of their own experiences and strategies of survivance. This research asks how we might come to understand these documents in a post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission (but not post-truth and reconciliation) Canada today.

**DEDICATION**

*To Derek S. Turnbull, who was with me on my first day of university  
and continues to serve as an inspiration.*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>DEDICATION .....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
BOARDING SCHOOL HISTORY .....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	13
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	19
DISSERTATION OUTLINE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	32
<b>CHAPTER 2: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>38</b>
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND ARCHIVES.....	41
METHODOLOGY AND METHODS .....	50
ARCHIVE 1: ANGLICAN GENERAL SYNOD ARCHIVES, TORONTO .....	58
ARCHIVE 2: DESCHÂTELETS ARCHIVES, OTTAWA.....	60
ARCHIVE 3: CUMBERLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PENNSYLVANIA.....	62
ARCHIVE 4: HASKELL INDIAN NATIONS UNIVERSITY, LAWRENCE, KANSAS.....	64
<b>CHAPTER 3: THE LABOUR OF PRINTING .....</b>	<b>67</b>
THE TRADE OF PRINTING.....	69
PRINTING ON DISPLAY.....	85
LEADERS AND READERS.....	98
BARRIERS TO PRINTING JOBS: THE CASE OF GILBERT BEAR .....	112
CONCLUSION .....	117
<b>CHAPTER 4: ENGLISH IN SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS.....</b>	<b>120</b>
CONTEXT FOR NEWSPAPERS: THE IDEOLOGY OF ENGLISH <i>ONLY</i> .....	123
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PEDAGOGIES, TOOLS, AND TECHNOLOGIES .....	136
ENGLISH <i>AND</i> .....	151
CONCLUSION .....	161
<b>CHAPTER 5: INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS.....</b>	<b>163</b>
RESISTANCE: UNSANCTIONED LANGUAGE .....	165
SCHOOL-SANCTIONED INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES.....	168
<i>Language, syllabics, signmaking, and stories in school newspapers.....</i>	<i>173</i>
INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND ETHNOGRAPHY .....	184
<i>“Getting Indian words” .....</i>	<i>191</i>
CONCLUSION .....	205
<b>CHAPTER 6: TIME IN BOARDING SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS .....</b>	<b>208</b>
TIME TO CHANGE .....	211
BEFORING AND AFTERING .....	221
THE FUTURE.....	236
CONCLUSION .....	241
<b>CHAPTER 7: SPACE, PLACE, AND LAND IN SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS .....</b>	<b>244</b>
THE PLACE OF CANADA IN SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS .....	247
BOARDING SCHOOLS AND THE PLACE OF ENGLAND.....	260
THE PLACE OF AMERICA IN BOARDING SCHOOLS .....	269
CONCLUSION .....	293
<b>CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>297</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>333</b>

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Newspapers Profiled.....	313
Table 2: Wilson’s American Indian School Visits, 1888 .....	314
Table 3: Additional Canadian School.....	315



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: “Walk for Reconciliation” .....	316
Figure 2: <i>Our Forest Children</i> Masthead .....	316
Figure 3: “A Class of Printers (Indian Boys) with their Instructor” .....	317
Figure 4: “Regina School Boys Operating Handpress” .....	317
Figure 5: “Geigaboa (Some Home Girls)” .....	318
Figure 6: “Sign Language” .....	319
Figure 7: “Notes on Mandan” .....	320
Figure 8: “Taking Notes” .....	321
Figure 9: “Getting Indian Words” .....	321
Figure 10: “Two Little Flatheads” .....	322
Figure 11: “The Old Fashion” .....	323
Figure 12: “The New Fashion” .....	323
Figure 13: “Kitamaat Boys at Play” .....	324
Figure 14: “Two Little Indian Boys” .....	325
Figure 15: “Shingwauk Home” .....	326
Figure 16: “SHINGWAUK, CHAPEL and a General View of the Shingwauk Buildings from the river” .....	326
Figure 17: “Bird’s-Eye View of Shingwauk” .....	327
Figure 18: “Boarding School for Indian Children” .....	327
Figure 19: “Site of the Proposed Home at Medicine Hat, North-West Territory” .....	328
Figure 20: “Medicine Hat and CPR” .....	328
Figure 21: “A View from Medicine Hat Proper, Looking South” .....	329
Figure 22: “The Greatest Chiefess” .....	329
Figure 23: “The Secret of England’s Greatness” .....	330
Figure 24: “A Beautiful Photograph of the SHINGWAUK PUPILS who went with Mr. Wilson to Montreal and Ottawa” .....	330
Figure 25: “York University Graffiti” .....	331
Figure 26: “Wilson’s Cairn” .....	331
Figure 27: “Survivors’ Side” .....	332

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*I have long felt the need of such a journal. In fact, isn't a school without a journal like a child deprived of his voice? . . . I sincerely believe that great benefits can be derived from the publication of the school newspaper, therefore I wholeheartedly encourage this enterprise.*

(Written in a 1948 school newspaper by the  
principal of Blue Quills School, Etienne Bernet-Rollande)

*These records will lie. That's the strongest word I can tell you.*

(Stated by former student, Theodore Fontaine, 2014)

This first epigraph displays the words of a principal at Blue Quills School in Alberta. In 1948, Principal Etienne Bernet-Rollande wrote an article for the inaugural issue of his school's newspaper. It appears that for him, a school newspaper was akin to a child's voice. In the second epigraph Theodore Fontaine, who attended a Manitoba boarding school in the late 1950s, provides an alternative perspective: at a conference on genocide studies at which he spoke in 2014, he reminded those in attendance that the archives of boarding schools "will lie." Does a student's voice ever really make its way into a school newspaper, especially one "wholeheartedly encouraged" by a school

authority, especially at an Indian boarding school? How does the principal's claim—that school newspapers permit student voices—mask the forces that attempted to silence Indigenous children? Such a tension—between a child's voice and a lie—permeates this entire dissertation on school newspapers of late nineteenth-century Indian boarding schools in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

At Indian boarding schools throughout Canada and the U.S., children and teachers co-created newspapers that were distributed to community members, clergy, government, other schools, and parents. Newspapers appeared at many schools, over the course of almost one hundred years and throughout diverse regions. While research often cites the differences amongst boarding schools—be it along lines of denomination, time period, region, country, or type (e.g., day, boarding, industrial, on-reserve)—this study of boarding school newspapers in fact highlights continuity. No matter when or where boarding school newspapers were produced, no matter who produced them, one thing remained in common: these publications were powerful political tools. School leaders likely knew the power a newspaper held for highlighting successes and couching failures. Richard Pratt, founder of the U.S.'s flagship American Indian boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1879, ran an extensive printing program with a wide circulation of

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<sup>1</sup> I use “boarding schools” throughout this dissertation to designate any schools that both housed and taught Indigenous children. While the term “residential school” is more common in Canada, it does not accurately represent schools in the late nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1880s, Canadian schools were either classified industrial (for older students who learned an industry) or boarding (for younger students who learned basic farming or domestic skills) (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 135). This distinction meant different funding from government and also a division in class (industrial schools were considered more prestigious). By the close of the century, though, the distinction had dissipated as both systems arguably raced to the bottom. In 1923, the difference was officially collapsed and all schools were from then on known as residential (pp. 134-141). In the U.S., the term “residential” was typically not used. For these reasons, unless a school is a day school, I refer to schools that housed students as “boarding schools” no matter what time period, country, or technical designation (e.g., industrial) they originally had. When I drop the word “Indian” before the name of a school and simply name it “boarding school,” I am always referring to Indian boarding schools. I never discuss boarding schools for non-Indigenous children in this dissertation.

newspapers that unequivocally praised his efforts. He attempted to control outside media, too: when a reporter from Minneapolis visited Pratt and reviewed his school unfavourably, Pratt forced him off the premises (Eastman, 2011, p. 174). Pratt offered his American experiences to the principal of Shingwauk Home in Ontario: “Start the secular press at work in your favor” (*Our Forest Children* 1.4:19),<sup>2</sup> Pratt advised. Shingwauk’s principal argued the same point—that “there is no doubt the Press may be made a power for good if wisely made use of” (1.7:4). As Edward Said (1994) writes, “Neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations” (p. 9). These school newspapers, I argue, were one such ideological formation, supporting and impelling colonialism in Canada by broadcasting the political opinions of schools as well as showcasing the labour and literacy of supposedly assimilated students.

But to dismiss school newspapers as propaganda is too simplistic, as they reveal more than complex forms of power. Students contributed to these newspapers and while we cannot know whether students—freely—wrote every article attributed to them, these texts speak to either what students felt or what school wished readers to believe students felt. The most urgent information school newspapers offer today is for former students and families. Attempts have been mired in controversy—from limits placed on archival access to missing, redacted, forged,<sup>3</sup> and destroyed documents. School newspapers may

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<sup>2</sup> I reference archival newspapers in the following way: “*Title* volume: issue, page number.” I cite newspapers without volumes as “issue: page number.”

<sup>3</sup> Bev Sellars (2013) describes in her memoir how she found documents attributed to her family members that were never written by them, including letters home, in the national archives (p. 68).

be a starting place for survivors<sup>4</sup> and families to discover writing, art, and details in documents that evaded archival destruction.<sup>5</sup> School newspapers are also more than propaganda because, as this dissertation will show, students pushed through thick colonial layers to often resist expectations of the newspaper. One way such student writing has been taken up in the U.S. is by Robert Warrior (2005) as Native non-fiction.

Canadian boarding school newspapers from the late nineteenth century, the focus of this dissertation, differ from those after WWI in two ways. For one, nineteenth-century examples were touted as an avenue for communication between the school and interested parties: benefactors, who would read the newspapers and be encouraged to donate; government officials, who held the ability to give and withhold funds; and non-Indigenous Canadians, interested in the Other. Indigenous people read these newspapers, too, though (other than alumni) their readership was largely unintended, or “unexpected” to borrow the language of Philip J. Deloria (2004). Twentieth-century examples were almost always promoted as a link between the school and a child’s parent, and therefore had nearly a non-existent circulation. Second, nineteenth-century school newspapers were part of a school’s larger industrial printing program. Though children in twentieth-century schools helped to manufacture school newspapers, the labour and technology differed significantly. That students in the nineteenth century were the labour behind newspapers was important—often, newspapers announced under the newspaper’s

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<sup>4</sup> I frequently refer to people who formally attended boarding schools as “survivors.” The term was used by survivors themselves in the organizations they formed in the 1990s (Niezen, 2013, p. 19) and then later by Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The term is not universally accepted: Theodore Fontaine (2010), for instance, prefers to identify himself as a victor (p.121). In 2008, journalist Wab Kinew faced opposition for using the term with the CBC to describe his own father (Shea, 2015). As well, many students did not survive. Some scholarship instead uses terms such as “alumni” or “former student.”

<sup>5</sup> Where possible, I have tried to connect families and communities to these documents, inspired by the long-lost artwork made by students at Alberni School in British Columbia that was recently repatriated to them (Steel, 2012).

masthead that students had operated the press themselves. The reason why this labour would be proudly proclaimed can be summarized by Vine Deloria Jr. (1988):

[Non-Indigenous people often wonder] whether an Indian tribe can survive in a modern setting. For the most part the question is posed as if the Indian were just coming out of the woods with their flint-tipped arrows and were demonstrating an unusual amount of curiosity about the printing press, the choochoo train, the pop machine, and other marvels of civilized man. (p. 225)

Nineteenth-century school newspapers played on the savage/civilized binary Deloria exposes: not only were newspapers created using machines, but they also were printed in English. Settlers frequently levied the charge that Indigenous peoples were illiterate or solely oral communicators. Schools that had printing programs, in contrast to other industries taught like carpentry, combined two elements of the civilization that schools purported to offer: English literacy and technology, both of which Indigenous peoples were seen to lack. What is more, the fruit of a printing program (i.e., the newspaper) was meant to be disseminated, unlike industries used to sustain the school itself (e.g., a dairy). Not many other surviving texts from the nineteenth century offer how schools wished to be perceived *and* how students pushed back in the same source.

But school newspapers are more than just a source. I am informed by Laura L. Terrance (2011), who participates in what she calls “Native feminist archival refusal.” Although Terrance studied the unpublished autograph journal of a boarding school student she found in an archive, Terrance ultimately writes only about another student,

Zitkala-Ša, who published an account of her life at an Indian boarding school. Terrance does not tell her readers the name, community, or school of the autograph journal's author, and she never mentions the name of the archive (p. 621). Instead, Terrance discusses Zitkala-Ša because she (rather than the autograph journal's author) "decided which memories and experiences to share, which painful or joyful occasions to disclose" (624). Terrance wanted to write about the autograph journal, but people like its author "cannot speak; they can only be spoken for, about, and around, becoming objects of study" (p. 622). Terrance's perspective conflicts with Jacqueline Fear-Segal (2006), who states that with first generation boarding schools, "owing to the scarcity of surviving material, every available source needs to be thoroughly explored to cede any information that can contribute to our knowledge of daily life at Indian schools" (p. 100).

I approach these school newspapers somewhere in between the perspectives of Terrance and Fear-Segal. Though I do focus on students and their resistance within school newspapers, I also turn to published accounts by survivors in the form of memoir, testimony, and literature. One archivist told me the newspapers had no access restrictions because they were originally published (unlike personal letters or medical records). These newspapers were certainly meant to be read from the perspective of *some*—teachers, school administrators, the government, church, and donors. Students who wrote in the newspaper occasionally mention their excitement at writing and appear aware that their writing would be published, too. This is a different scenario than the autograph journal Terrance describes. But not all student writing was originally composed for the newspaper. The original context of most student compositions and letters is unknown. And there is no way of knowing if what students wrote was voluntary or under duress.

Furthermore, I have not casually concluded (as the archivist did) that this work was published in the way that a daily newspaper is published—by *children*, often living under oppressive conditions—and therefore free for public consumption and academic analysis.

At the same time, completely excluding students from my discussion is impossible and runs the risk of silencing them further. Myriam Vučković's (2008) writes, "Using people's names and biographical data gives dignity to the people who lived through the boarding school experiences; it makes them the agents and actors of this book, rather than mere objects of a scholarly investigation" (p. 8). Another perspective is family members might wish to learn how to access a relative's writing. In this research I plan to catalogue at which archives survivors and their families can find school newspapers (if they wish). Informed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (2012) criticism of who gets to study and who is studied, my focus on students includes their resistance within school newspapers, making a case for the newspaper as a relational site while accounting for the complex and complicated meanings of both settlers and Indigenous peoples.

This dissertation is also inspired by what Dwayne Donald (2011) calls excavating the colonial terrain. I use Donald's concept rather than the term decolonization because of Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's (2012) oft-cited article "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor." They call out the metaphorizing of decolonization because it "recenters whiteness, it resettles theory, it extends innocence to the settler, it entertains a settler future" (p. 3). For them, decolonization means returning land (p. 7); using the term without actually giving up land, for them, is hollow and only benefits the settler (p. 10). Excavating the colonial terrain as I understand it instead means exposing the practices of settler colonialism. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2011a) asks how reconciliation is



even possible “when the majority of Canadians do not understand the historic or contemporary injustice of dispossession and occupation” (p. 21), resulting in “a kind of colonial amnesia” (M. C. Anderson & Robertson, 2011, p. 275).

But once non-Indigenous Canadians such as myself begin to chip away at our ignorance and fathom complicity, many problems can arise. For one, Martin Cannon (2012) writes of how “it is routine to think about colonialism as having little, if anything, to do with non-Indigenous peoples. As such, it is typically Indigenous scholars, teachers, and populations who are left to explain the impact of colonization and residential schooling on our communities” (p. 21). Susan D. Dion (2009), too, emphasizes how “it is important to question what non-First Nations students are taught about the First Nations” (p. 8). Another problem exists in what Paulette Regan (2010) describes as “appropriating survivors’ pain in voyeuristic ways that enable non-Indigenous people to feel good about feeling bad but engender no critical awareness of themselves as colonial beneficiaries” (p. 47). I have attempted to avoid offering student writing up for academic voyeurism or to contribute to what Michael Zembylas (2008) calls “the violence of sentimentality” by instead exposing the actions of church and state—particularly their tactics of making colonialism appear natural, unmarked, and innocent; my discussions of students highlight their resistance both in the newspapers and through their published accounts.

### **Boarding School History**

Boarding school history is commonly taught as a timeline, found for instance in the book to study for the Canadian citizenship test as well as countless websites and textbooks. The timeline is as follows: schools operated for over 150 years across Canada. They were a joint partnership between government and various churches. Children were

removed from their families and communities, sometimes for years. At school, children were forced to speak French and English and to practice Christianity. At many schools, children were physically, sexually, and emotionally abused and thousands died. In 2008, the Prime Minister apologized and former students received compensation.

This list is tidy and easy to remember. But it (grammatically and otherwise) leaves out the subject, clearing the narrative of responsibility, and ends with a conclusion. Instead of a list, Roland Chrisjohn and Sherri Young (2006) provide a criticism of the “standard account” of residential school history, first published nearly 20 years ago:

- Residential schools were part of Canada’s larger goals of genocide
- These attempts were and are hidden and rationalized as help, not genocide
- Many people knew the consequences of these attempts at the time
- Survivors’ “symptoms” are natural responses to oppression
- Pathologizing survivors avoids state accountability (p. 3)

For Chrisjohn and Young, the pathologizing response to residential school in the mid-90s was yet another obfuscating technique in a long history of oppression and genocide, abdicating non-Indigenous Canadians from responsibility. More recently, Thomas King (2012) summarizes what he sees as the three abuses of residential school. The first: that residential schools claimed Indigenous peoples had no form of education and required Western education at the expense of Indigenous ways of knowing. The second abuse for King is that church and government seldom oversaw these institutions. As both Miller (1996) and Milloy (1999) also note, even basic checks for health and academic

achievement were grossly ignored. King's third noted abuse is that once church, state, and Canadians more generally knew about the death, disease, malnutrition, and abuse they stayed the colonial course. As King puts it, "They did nothing. They knew, and they did nothing" (p. 14). Unlike the listing approach, both Chrisjohn and Young's counternarrative and King's three abuses put responsibility and justice front and centre. Below, I summarize three myths of boarding schools that various scholars cite.

One form of denial dismisses survivor testimony as the result of a bad school, teacher, or clergy member, ignoring how boarding schools were part of a system. As school newspapers reveal, boarding schools—across denominational lines, regions, time periods, and the colonial border between the U.S. and Canada—were structural. As Eva Mackey (2013) observes, Harper's apology continues with the myth of the bad apple because it implies that "the transgression or wrong was based on ignorance and misunderstanding" rather than "a much larger structural, government-sponsored, racialized legal process of breaking treaties and appropriating land" (p. 54). Studying the colonial apparatus of the school newspaper helps to disprove this myth.

A second myth is that boarding schools are in the past. Glen Coulthard (2014) argues that in a settler-colonial context, state-sanctioned forms of reconciliation typically situate abuse in the past "while leaving the *present* structure of colonial rule largely unscathed" (p. 22). Treating boarding schools as in the past means that the government can neglect "to transform the current institutional and social relationships that have been shown to produce the suffering we currently see reverberating at pandemic levels within and across Indigenous communities today" (p. 121). Though the last school in Canada closed in 1996, many understand the schools as a "synecdoche for colonialism"

(Henderson, 2013, p. 67). In an American context Brenda Child (2014b) asks, “Has boarding school become an adaptable metaphor Indian people in the United States use to describe and encapsulate many different forms of colonialism and historical oppression?” (p. 279). For Mackey (2013), boarding schools “cannot be separated from the breaking of treaties and the usurping of Aboriginal territories” (p. 50). Boarding schools have also set off intergenerational reverberations (Episkenew, 2009, pp. 8–9).

Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), a 5-year investigation into the crimes of boarding schools, coincided with the writing of this dissertation. Much can be criticized about the TRC (Henderson & Wakeham, 2013; Niezen, 2013; Regan, 2010), and this dissertation is not a wholesale endorsement of it. However the Commission’s final report, released in June 2015, fights against the myth of pastness. It is significant that the first call to action in the TRC’s final report connects the legacy of boarding schools to the current crisis of children in care. It is significant that, when the commissioners of the TRC associated boarding school history with the current reality of thousands of murdered and missing Indigenous women, the Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt remained seated while everyone else stood. But the myth of pastness may also be amplified by the TRC, signaling to non-Indigenous Canadians a kind of closure. As Mario Di Paolantonio (2000) notes, TRCs may claim to master knowledge about genocide, which as he states is in fact “imponderable” (p. 163). The doors to boarding schools may have closed, but the legacies are not past.

A third myth—and of course there are more—pointed out by Indigenous Studies scholars is schools “have nothing to do with me.” Some settlers may turn to the fact they and their ancestors were not directly involved. Newcomers may claim their family was

never even *in* Canada at the time. But non-Indigenous people live in Canada because of “intersecting processes of colonial theft of land and cultural genocide,” and “non-Aboriginal Canadians are all contemporary beneficiaries of this process” (Mackey, 2013, p. 50). As Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (2014) makes clear, “Whatever historical trauma was entailed in settling the land affects the assumptions and behavior of living generations at any given time, including immigrants and the children of recent immigrants” (p. 229).

The myth of non-complicity denies both the process and the benefit, a deeply entrenched desire “to be made innocent” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 9). One way of beginning to combat the myth of non-complicity has come from Bryan Smith, Nicholas Ng-A-Fook, and Julie Corrigan (2014), who created a phone app that identifies, using GPS, boarding schools closest to the user’s location.<sup>6</sup> Even beginning to learn a boarding school was not “somewhere out there” but perhaps in a neighbouring town may start to bring non-Indigenous Canadians into an understanding of complicity. I grew up on Vancouver Island, which had six residential schools. Six! I cannot claim non-complicity even though my parents moved to Vancouver Island after the last one closed: my family benefited from them being there. My goal, in the words of Roger Simon (2005), is to develop a “learning from ‘the past’ that is a critical recognition or discovery that unsettles the very terms on which our understandings of ourselves and our world is based” (p. 106). This is similar to the ways Dion (2009) promotes for non-Indigenous Canadians to hear stories of Indigenous presence—past, present, and future—as 1) examples of

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<sup>6</sup> Tools such as this app have their limits: it only includes schools endorsed by the TRC (which excluded many institutions, including day schools). What is more, the use of a map may inadvertently reinforce colonial history rather than destabilize it. Finally, what happens after understanding that schools are nearby?

survival and strength rather than pity and requiring help and 2) as triggers for investigating their subject positions (pp. 112-113).

The myth of non-complicity also emerges in denying that no one knew at the time the schools were wrong. In 1907 Dr. P.H. Bryce, a government medical inspector, published a damning report after visits to 35 boarding schools, signaling high levels of disease and an average death rate of 24%, with one school as high as 75% (Green, 2006). Newspapers such as the *Ottawa Citizen* and *Saturday Night* summarized Bryce's report (Milloy, 1999, p. 91; 101–102) and turned criticism of residential schools into “general knowledge” (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 134). Bryce was forced to retire, but his report reached wider audiences when he self-published it again in 1922 under the title *The Story of a National Crime*.<sup>7</sup> Bryce was not alone: a government accountant named F.H. Paget also published a report in 1908 on the poor condition of boarding school buildings (Milloy, 1999, pp. 77–78; 82) and representatives from churches as well as the law also weighed in during the early twentieth century (Green, 2006, p. 224). That boarding schools were criticized contemporaneously should be unsurprising: Simon (1994) notes that even in Columbus' day, colonization was actively debated (pp. 24-25). Like the myth of the bad apple and of pastness, scholars argue that refuting complicity contributes to denial.

## **Literature Review**

This dissertation draws from three bodies of scholarship: critical literacy studies, boarding school history, and Indigenous studies. With critical literacy studies, this research seeks to expose the pernicious myth that English teaching and speaking in Canada is natural and neutral, taking cues from scholars such as Andrea Bear Nicholas

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<sup>7</sup> Not to be confused with the 1999 historical monograph, *A National Crime* by John S. Milloy.

(2011) who work with the concept of *linguicide*—killing the language, not (necessarily) the speaker. Rather than language loss, disappearance, or spread, these chapters turn to the newspapers and ask *how* Indigenous languages were denigrated and how schools sought to eradicate them. While loss and disappearance vacate the doer, terms such as linguistic imperialism (“asymmetrical, unequal exchange, where language dominance dovetails with economic, political and other types of dominance” [2013, p. 2]) shine an accusatory light on the processes, policies, and people responsible in the first place.

While some scholarship connects literacy in contemporary North America to race and to justice (Prendergast, 2003; Stuckey, 1991), it often neglects to include the history of the English language and Indigenous peoples. Other scholars such as Craig Womack (1999), Jace Weaver (1997), and Simon Ortiz (1981) claim English as an “Indian language.” For Scott Lyons, claiming English as an Indian language helps “to ‘unbrainwash’ people in Native communities who may feel a little less Native for having their languages taken away” (2010, p. 158). Lisa Brooks (2008) writes how Indigenous peoples have always used literacy for their own purposes. And as Daniel Heath Justice (2006) describes, “although the English language was often imposed on Native peoples, many Cherokees eagerly embraced it as another tool for decolonization and access to social, political, and economic resources” (p. 12). Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird call this “reinventing the enemy’s language.” For them, “these colonizers’ languages, which often usurped our own tribal languages or diminished them, now hand back emblems of our cultures, our own designs: beadwork quills, if you will. We’ve transformed these enemy languages” (pp. 21-22). Other scholars such as Marie Battiste (2000) as well as Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel (2011) argue that Indigenous languages *are* Indigenous knowledge.

The second body of scholarship on which this dissertation builds is boarding school studies. Prior to the 1980s, little was publicly written that was critical of boarding schools. Basil Johnston (1989) was one of the first to publish his own account, titled *Indian School Days*. Scenes of constant hunger, escape attempts, inept teachers, and servitude undergird its lighthearted moments.<sup>8</sup> Isabelle Knockwood's *Out of the Depths* (1992) is more explicit about the physical, emotional, and sexual abuse she and her classmates endured. More survivor testimonies have come out since these first two (Fontaine, 2010; Merasty, 2015; Metatawabin, 2014; Sellars, 2013). Another body of work includes qualitative research (Dyck, 1997; Furniss, 1995; Lomawaima, 1995). One of the earliest is Celia Haig-Brown's (1988) landmark study *Resistance and Renewal*, featuring interviews that highlight abuse, their day-to-day lives, and most importantly their ability to survive and resist the assimilationist goals of the school. The Aboriginal Healing Fund has also published several monographs on boarding school history (Castellano, Archibald, & De Gagné, 2008; Younging, Dewar, & DeGagné, 2009). Two historical monographs loom large in boarding school scholarship in Canada: J.R. Miller's *Shingwauk's Vision* (1996) and John Milloy's *A National Crime* (1999). Both chart Canadian boarding school history writ large, offering an avalanche of evidence and interpretation derived from archives. Milloy focuses on the chronic underfunding of schools by government, arguing that the schools were designed to fail.

In addition to critical literacy studies and boarding school history, the third body from which I draw is Indigenous studies—though of course many scholars cited above also belong to this body. I particularly look to Indigenous studies scholars in formulating

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<sup>8</sup> In 2007, Johnston bravely qualified *Indian School Days* by disclosing the sexual abuse he faced at school, which in his 1989 text he did not (or could not) include (McKegney, 2007).



concepts of language (Armstrong, 1998; Lyons, 2010; L. Simpson, 2011a; Warrior, 2005), time (V. Deloria, 2003; O'Brien, 2010; A. Simpson, 2014), and place (Coulthard, 2014; Moreton-Robinson, 2015; L. T. Smith, 2012; Wolfe, 1999). After I contextualize my research and the newspapers, I organize chapters 4-7 around one of these concepts.

Fictional accounts appeared later than memoirs (Alexie, 2009; Bartleman, 2011; Highway, 1998; Wagamese, 2012), and an emerging genre includes books for children (Campbell, 2008, 2008; Loyie, Brissenden, & Holmlund, 2005; Pokiak-Fenton & Jordan-Fenton, 2010; Sterling, 1992). My work is particularly inspired by the poetry of Rita Joe, who attended Shubenacadie School in Nova Scotia. Sam McKegney's *Magic Weapons* (2007) highlights how the literary output of Canadian boarding school survivors demonstrates survivance. Gerald Vizenor (1999, 2008) defines the term in Indigenous studies to mean far more than just survival. He emphasizes that survivance is instead the opposite of victimhood and nihilism. Besides an insistence on the present and future, boarding school literature in McKegney's eyes is imaginative, "affording the Indigenous author interpretive autonomy and discursive agency while transcending the structural imperatives of proof and evidence embedded in historical paradigms" (p. 7). For McKegney, boarding school literary texts

invigorate what survived, recreate what didn't, and re-imagine the place of the creative Indigenous individual in relation to her or his community (or, better, communities). They articulate—and so proclaim—the beauty and power of writing as an Indigenous individual in a post-residential school Canada. (p. 8)

More recently, *Reconciling Canada* (2013), *Truth and Indignation* (2013), and *Unsettling the Settler Within* (2010) have probed the possibilities and pitfalls of reconciliation, all critical of the immense onus on Indigenous peoples with little responsibility asked of or offered by non-Indigenous Canadians. Scholarship on American Indian boarding schools has taken a different trajectory. While early reports emphasized boarding schools as merely misguided, later studies such as David Wallace Adam's *Education for Extinction* (1995), which is archival-based, focused on oppression. Scholarship has also identified both how communities and families resisted as well as how they made schools work to achieve their own goals (Child, 1999; Cobb, 2000; Jacobs, 2006; Lomawaima, 1995).

Most scholarship on school newspapers of boarding schools has come from the U.S. Some scholarship treats the newspapers like sources, as they are indeed rich records of the day-to-day. But other research seeks to understand the newspapers as objects of study in themselves (Fear-Segal, 2007; Goodburn, 1999; Katanski, 2005; Spack, 2002; Warrior, 2005), “not just as repositories of information but as complex ideological texts” (Pfister, 2004, p. 23). Veronica Strong-Boag (2002) lists some of these newspapers as examples of early Indigenous-led presses (p. 55). Most scholarship, though, acknowledges these newspapers—particularly those from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—as censored, as propaganda, as puff pieces selling the achievements of the school. Child (1999), whose work is on letters sent between boarding school students and parents, rightly warns that school newspapers must be “approached with a measure of skepticism” because they were published under the scrutiny of the larger school administration (p. xii). For Child, unpublished letters are less censored and therefore a better “opportunity to study Indian motivations, thoughts, and experiences”

(xii). Vučković (2008), too, in her study of Haskell Institute in Kansas chooses interviews with survivors so as to build “the narrative around the students’ voices” (p. 7). K. Tsianina Lomawaima (1995) also bases her study of Chilocco School in Oklahoma on interviews rather than the documentary record, making the important point that student life “barely crept onto the margins of the printed pages of federal records and correspondence” (p.159). Clyde Ellis (1996), too, finds such sources and models “do little more than tell us what bureaucrats *hoped* would happen, and they often ignore what *did* happen” (p. 68).

Some studies acknowledge the newspapers were censored but find ways of identifying students’ voices. Jacqueline Emery’s (2012) work on the newspaper of Hampton Institute in Virginia treats the newspaper as a “student-run newspaper” borne out of relationships amongst students, school authorities, and “the audience who held multiple and often competing views on Native American culture and identity” (p. 195). Fear-Segal (2006) too, writes that although Carlisle School’s *Indian Helper* was censored, “This white-edited school magazine can enable us to reconstruct aspects of day-to-day life at the school, meet some of the Indian children, uncover tiny fragments of their lives, and even hear the whisper of their voices” (p.119). Warrior (2005) reads the newspapers from Carlisle School and Santee School as indeed published under the watchful eye of school administrators; however, his work pushes beyond treating the newspapers as categorically propaganda, providing examples of student thought and resistance. My reading of these newspapers engages with many of these sometimes-contradictory perspectives—that the newspapers are examples of Indigenous-led media; that they are propaganda; that they are ideologically complicated; that they provide facts

about the day-to-day; that they quash students' voices; and they represent Indigenous resistance. In some chapters, I seek to understand what newspapers offer in terms of new knowledge about boarding schools: newspapers-as-repositories. In other places, I attempt to uncover what the newspapers offer with regards to students: newspapers-as-resistance. And elsewhere, I read these newspapers for what they reveal about the "colonial terrain": newspapers-as-propaganda. Reading the newspapers as repositories, as resistance, *and* as propaganda helps to consider a publication's different authors, audiences, and purposes.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Patrick Wolfe (1999) is often credited with first naming settler colonialism, though of course Indigenous peoples have named, fought, and faced it for centuries. Wolfe and others distinguish settler colonialism from colonialism. Examples of colonialism elsewhere (e.g., India) required some colonizers on the ground but mostly depended on the labour of those Indigenous to the land. The goal was rarely for vast numbers of colonizers to remain in the colony and consider it their own. Settler colonialism, in contrast, never completely depends on Indigenous labour—just land. Indeed, settler colonies "were not primarily established to extract surplus value from indigenous labour. Rather, they are premised on displacing indigenes from (or *replacing* them on) the land" (p. 1). The ultimate fantasy of the settler colonizer is that Indigenous peoples disappear, allowing the settler colonizer to construct a narrative in which they, not Indigenous peoples, are the original, rightful inhabitants. This is why Catherine Parr Traill's (1987) infamous *Canadian Settler's Guide*, originally published in 1855, only lists the word "Indian" in the table of contents in relation to rice and to corn. A key tenet of settler colonialism is a denial of violence. Although "settler projects are inevitably

premised on the traumatic, that is, *violent*, replacement and/or displacement of indigenous Others,” settler colonialism will typically deny it (p. 75), adopting instead the persona of migrant or refugee. Indeed, Canada “appropriates the identity of marginalization and victimization to create national innocence, locating the oppressors safely outside the body politic of the nation” (Mackey, 1999, p. 12). An example comes from the touchstone text *The Empire Writes Back* (2002), which labels literature by non-Indigenous Canadians as postcolonial. To adopt this persona requires what Tuck and Marcia McKenzie (2015) call “a continual disavowal of history, Indigenous peoples’ resistance to settlement, Indigenous peoples’ claims to stolen land, and how settler colonialism is indeed ongoing” (p. 60). As Wolfe observes, settler colonialism is a structure, not an event.

Other techniques of settler colonialism include what Mark Rifkin (2013) calls “settler colonial common sense,” which he defines as how the everyday and quotidian dispossess Indigenous peoples from their land. Rifkin identifies how the everyday structures that “enable non-native access to Indigenous territories come to be lived as given” (p. xvi). Using other terms, Michel-Rolph Trouillot remarks how “the ultimate mark of power may be its invisibility; the ultimate challenge, the exposition of its roots” (p. xix). Another concept comes from Andrew Woolford (2014), who conceives of settler colonialism as a set of mesh nets—they constrain but also have holes. For Woolford, the first net is the widest: the economy, education, government, and religion. The meso-level net represents state-sponsored agencies such as the military, police, law, health, and welfare. Within each of these agencies are lower parts of the net—different kinds of schools, for instance. The third level of mesh nets includes parents, children, teachers, principals, and communities. Woolford insists these nets also include non-human

actors—disease poverty, animals, and territory. For Woolford, all three layers of net create a mesh, and understanding any school requires thinking of all three levels. In some places, the mesh tightens; in other places, it loosens. Loosening and tightening happens differently across time and space, “but the genocidal frame of reference remains” (pp. 31-32). For Woolford, even in places of loosening with a nice teacher, a kind Indian agent, students who enjoyed themselves, or examples of resistance, “because of this initial destructive framing, there can be no exculpatory or redemptive story” (pp. 31-32).

But settler-colonial studies presents its own dangers. Coulthard (2014) cites how otherwise critical theories downplay colonialism (p. 12). Robert Nichols (2014), too, differentiates between the political theory *of* settler colonialism and political theory *as* settler colonialism—where theory becomes a continuing example of dispossession (p. 100). Rifkin identifies how the case could be made “that the turn away from Native voices to white men whose representations already are privileged redoubles that privilege” and “recenters settler framings and experience” (p. 36), paralleling what can also occur in whiteness or masculinity studies. Corey Snelgrove, Rita Kaur Dhamoon, and Cornassel (2014) are more pointed in their misgivings. They write, “Without centering Indigenous peoples’ articulations, without deploying a relational approach to settler colonial power, and without paying attention to the conditions and contingencies of settler colonialism, studies of settler colonialism and practices of solidarity run the risk of reifying (and possibly replicating) settler colonial, as well as other, modes of domination” (p. 4). They call out Lorenzo Veracini’s (2010a) theoretical overview of settler colonialism, which they see as largely erasing Indigenous studies, Indigenous framings of settler relations, Indigenous resistance, and the “transformative visions

entailed within Indigenous political thought,” crediting instead white historians (p. 11). They further ask, “What good is it to analyze settler colonialism if that analysis does not shed light on sites of contradiction and weakness, the conditions for its reproduction, or the spaces and practices of resistance to it?” (p. 27). Finally, they take issue with the concept of settler colonialism being quotidian, banal, or commonsensical. They ask, “For whom is settler colonialism in the background and invisible?” (pp. 9-10).

Another fault some Indigenous Studies scholars cite is the notion that settler colonialism is totalizing and inescapable. Such a line of inquiry would miss what Tuck and McKenzie (2015) describe as the “internal contradictions, cracks, and fissures through which Indigenous life and knowledge have persisted and thrived despite settlement” (p. 61). A complete reliance on settler-colonial studies might ignore that “Indian people at boarding schools were not passive consumers of an ideology or lifestyle imparted from above by federal administrators. They actively created an ongoing educational and social process” (Lomawaima, 1995, p. 167). Settler-colonial studies might evade Lyons’ (2010) important distinction between “Indians as ‘things’ and toward a deeper analysis of Indians as human beings who *do* things—things like asserting identity, defining identity, contesting identity, and so forth” (p. 59). For Lyons, “Being vanishes. Doing keeps on doing” (p. 60). So I am informed by settler-colonial studies, but see many problems with it. For these reasons, I do three things: 1) privilege Indigenous frames of settler colonialism—through scholarship, art (especially poetry and novels), and survivor memoirs; 2) I identify resistance throughout newspapers; and 3) I try in all chapters to tie these newspapers to the settler-colonial present, avoiding the mistake that settler colonialism is an event (in the past) rather than an ongoing structure.

## Historical Contexts

This dissertation focuses on five newspapers from four Canadian boarding schools in the late nineteenth century, a period of great change. There was mass immigration to Canada, due in part to new governmental policies, the Yukon gold rush, and the completion of the railroad. There were many changes for Indigenous peoples as well, most notably an increased colonial clampdown. The year 1885 saw the Northwest Resistance—a series of battles pitched by Cree, Métis, and Assiniboine peoples. The year also saw the largest mass hanging in Canada’s history, which included the death of politician and Métis leader, Louis Riel.<sup>9</sup> From 1881 to 1905, various amendments to the already devastating *Indian Act* included bans on ceremonies such as the Potlach and the Sun Dance; laws requiring approval before anyone on reserve could trade with white communities; and increased powers to Indian agents. James Daschuk’s (2013) work shows how forced starvation of the Plains peoples at this time by the government led to death, suffering, and tuberculosis epidemics triggered by this purposeful famine and immune suppression (p. 124). But boarding school newspapers frame student deaths from TB as inevitable or due to hereditary weakness. Of course, TB spreads and is triggered in overcrowded, malnourished populations, which boarding schools represented on both accounts. The late nineteenth century also comprised a shift in how Indigenous peoples were perceived. While the 1850s saw European artists such as Paul Kane catalogue Indigenous peoples and their ways of life because they were thought to be vanishing (the ultimate settler-colonial fantasy), at the end of the nineteenth century the narrative began to change. After 1885, Indigenous peoples came to be viewed no longer as merely a

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<sup>9</sup> Battleford School in Saskatchewan, one of the schools that had a newspaper, brought students to witness the hanging as a field trip (Cuthand, 2007, p. 35).



nuisance on the way out but a threat to property (Pettipas, 1994). As this dissertation will show, school newspapers reflect this ambiguity, finding new attempts beyond the “vanishing Indian” myth to manage and contain Indigenous resistance during.

The 1890s also saw changes to boarding schools following earlier decades of equally great change. After 1812, the state switched from viewing Indigenous peoples as sovereign allies to wards. After the Bagot Commission of 1842 concluded that no progress had been made in civilizing Indigenous peoples since 1830 (Milloy, 1999, p. 13), in 1846 the Superintendent of Indian affairs met with chiefs and missionaries at a conference in Orillia to pitch manual labour schools as the answer (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 83). In 1847, the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada Egerton Ryerson fleshed out what these schools might look like. Despite advocating for secular education in the Common School Act the year before for non-Indigenous children, Ryerson (1847) believed, “The North American Indian cannot be civilized or preserved in a state of civilization (including habits of industry and sobriety) except in connection with, if not by the influence of, not only religious instruction and sentiment but of religious feelings” (p. 73). Another change was the new per capita system in 1892, a disastrous funding model. It forced schools to recruit and retain unhealthy children, to serve even unhealthier food, and to require more student labour, leading to higher death rates (J. R. Miller, 1996, pp. 128–133; Milloy, 1999, pp. 61–67). Another change to the *Indian Act* in 1894 made attendance (and therefore parent-child separation) compulsory.

Reading how the numbered treaties discuss education demonstrates how colonial tactics were intensifying at the end of the nineteenth century. The insistence on education in the treaties, Miller (1996) reminds us, importantly came from Indigenous peoples

themselves (p. 99). Chief Shingwauk from Garden River, Ontario is perhaps the most famous advocate. In 1832 and again in 1871, he demanded that government provide “a big teaching wigwam” where children from the area would learn to read, write, and farm and then return to their own people to teach them (p. 6). Reading the educational sections of the numbered treaties helps to see the perversion of Shingwauk’s vision. The first two treaties (1871 and 1873) use similar language when it comes to schools:

Her Majesty agrees to maintain a school on each reserve hereby made whenever the Indians of the reserve should desire it.

But in the third numbered treaty, the language changes to on-reserve schools when “Her Government of Her Dominion of Canada may seem advisable whenever the Indians of the reserve shall desire it.” Treaties 4 (1874) and 7 (1877) promise on-reserve schools, but only for those settled on reserve. And then the language changes more drastically:

8 (1899): Her Majesty agrees to pay the salaries of such teachers to instruct the children of said Indians as to Her Majesty's Government of Canada may seem advisable.

9 (1905/1906): His Majesty agrees to pay such salaries of teachers to instruct the children of said Indians, and also to provide such school buildings and educational equipment as may seem advisable to His Majesty's government of Canada.

- 10 (1906): His Majesty agrees to make such provision as may from time to time be deemed advisable for the education of the Indian children.
- 11 (1921): His Majesty agrees to pay the salaries of teachers to instruct the children of said Indians in such manner as His Majesty's Government may deem advisable.

Further and further, these treaties turn away from on-reserve, Indigenous-directed institutions to off-reserve, government-controlled schooling.

A different trajectory was taking place in the U.S. By 1890, the U.S. already had a standardized program of study for American Indian boarding schools (Adams, 1995, p. 62), which the Canadian system never had. Although attendance at American schools also became compulsory around the same time as in Canada, by 1893 superintendents in the U.S. received instruction that they required full consent from parents to send children to off-reservation schools (p. 63-65). This law was often disobeyed, but it would be decades before Canada adopted similar legislation. Also, the U.S. phased out religious partnerships by 1900 (which did not happen in Canada until 1969) and an annual report came out in 1901 deeming American schools a failure (p. 307), with another scathing critique and sweeping overhaul recommended by the Meriam Report in 1928.

In addition to focusing on the late nineteenth century, I am privileging the newspapers of boarding school over other documents for several reasons. For one, they speak directly to the myth of non-complicity because they were written to be read by a public. As Anthony Di Mascio (2012) writes of Canadian newspapers in the first half of the nineteenth century, “Through print media, private thoughts and ideas could be made

part of a broader public discourse” (p. 11). Marshall McLuhan popularized this concept, describing media history as a move from a private to a group confession requiring participation. For Benedict Anderson (1991), newspapers are a key part of his notion of the imagined community. For Anderson, newspapers create an “extraordinary mass ceremony” because although we read newspapers privately, we are aware everyone performs the same ceremony at the same time and day (p. 35). It is important to remember that media typically reinforces already-held opinions (Rutherford, 1982, p. 7). These newspapers, then, both constituted and reflected a settler-colonial community.

Newspapers are also an important area of study because they were coded as a civilizing tool in the late nineteenth-century. Indian agents would sometimes comment on the “progress” of Indigenous peoples in annual reports by mentioning who subscribed to newspapers. In 1904, the Indian agent for the Sioux of Birtle in Manitoba wrote, “To give an idea of the advanced condition of some of these Indians, I have only to state that I found in several houses copies of weekly newspapers, subscribed for by the occupants. This is surely keeping abreast of the times” (Department of Indian Affairs [DIA], p. 108). The Indian Affairs report for Manitowaning in Ontario of 1886 listed newspaper subscriptions as an avenue for expanding readers’ worlds, for “hitherto the world outside their own reserve has been a sealed book to them. By the agency of a newspaper they will acquire broader views of life” (DIA, p. 78). Newspapers also created and reflected stereotypes about Indigenous peoples and their “progress” in nineteenth- and twentieth century American newspapers (Coward, 1999; Weston, 1996). In Canada, one overt way newspapers participated in stereotype formation was in their summaries of Indian Affairs reports. Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson (2011) catalogue depictions

in the Canadian press from 1869 to the present, claiming that other than tone little has changed. Indigenous parents also used newspapers and journalists to alert the public to treatment of their children in schools (Fournier & Crey, 2006, p. 42).

Kathleen Buddle-Crowe's (2001; 2002) research paints a history of Indigenous media. She corrects a misconception that Gail Guthrie Valaskakis (2005), too, considers: that "native people live in a prison of images not of their own making" (pp. 73-74). As Dion (2009) argues, "it was—and is—the violence of colonization that created conditions wherein Aboriginal people were deprived of the power to control the ways in which dominant society constructed and interpreted their images" (p. 20). Buddle-Crowe highlights how in the nineteenth century, "Individual Aboriginal mass mediators were actively at work orchestrating images of Indianness" through "agricultural exhibits and fairs; by selectively engaging mainstream presses and museums in projects of their own making; [and] by creating Native presses and authoring books" (p. 103). Buddle-Crowe's research uncovers the real barrier to Indigenous participation in nineteenth-century media was not that Indigenous peoples were incapable but that colonial rule blockaded them. Legislation such as the *Act to Encourage Gradual Civilization of the Indians* (1857) dissuaded Indigenous participation in the media (p. 107). This Act declared that any Indigenous man over 21 who was "able to speak, read and write either the english [sic] or the french [sic] language readily and well" and who had a basic education, good moral character, and no debt would "no longer be deemed an Indian" (p. 2): death by language. For Buddle-Crowe, "At this time, advertising one's literary abilities would surely have invited unwanted attention from government administrators" (p. 190) and meant the possibility of losing Indian status in the eyes of the state. Buddle-Crowe writes also of a

new section to the Indian Act in 1927 that prohibited Indigenous peoples from seeking any funds without government permission, including money for media development (p. 118). School newspapers, then, were created within this context.

Another reason for studying newspapers is the architects of some of the most devastating policies were in the media. Even at confederation, five of the signatories were journalists (Fetherling, 1990, p. 40). Egerton Ryerson, whose advice helped direct the future of boarding schools in Canada, was editor of the country's first religious newspaper, the *Christian Guardian*, and the *Journal of Education for Upper Canada* (Gidney, 2003). Nicholas Flood Davin, though from a different political background than Ryerson, also helped shaped the system in 1879 when he was commissioned by John A. Macdonald to travel to the U.S. and report on boarding schools. He, too, was a journalist for English and Irish newspapers, as well as the *Toronto Globe* and the *Toronto Mail* (Thompson, 1994). Davin also established the *Regina Leader*, a pro-Conservative and pro-CPR newspaper, for which he gained money from MacDonald to create by reminding him "what a wild young colt the whole North West is, and how soon it will take to plunging unless well bitted, snaffled and curbed." This quote conflates land theft, media, and Indigenous peoples in one sentence, along with a dehumanizing metaphor. Davin's newspapers quashed rumors of Indigenous resistance; he was therefore the only writer permitted at Riel's execution (Buddle-Crowe, 2001, p. 150).

Clifford Sifton, the Minister of the Interior and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs (1896-1905), was also a media man. Sifton owned the *Manitoba Free Press*, the *Morning Leader* in Regina, and the *Star Phoenix* in Saskatoon. Unlike some of his predecessors, Sifton is known for believing Indigenous peoples incapable of being

civilized, and he therefore considered schools a waste (J. R. Miller, 1996, pp. 134–135). Sifton pushed for reform as early as 1899, though for economic reasons (Milloy, 1999, p. 72). He was succeeded by Frank Oliver, who served in the same role from 1905-1911. Oliver cut his journalist teeth at the *Winnipeg Free Press* before becoming active in the Edmonton Settlers' Rights Movement. He started the first newspaper in what is now Alberta, the *Edmonton Bulletin*, and used it to successfully advocate for the removal of the Papaschase people so as to not interfere with settler acquisition of land (Donald, 2004).<sup>10</sup> The same was true of Pratt at the Carlisle School in Pennsylvania, who grew up “as a form-inker and a distributor of his paper” (2003, p. 19). Pratt’s newspapers were models for Canadian schools. These connections at first may seem surprising, but Fetherling (1990) explains that in nineteenth-century Canada, “Behind every successful politician was a newspaper doing his dirty work; behind every proprietor or editor, a politician, or a group of politicians, offering support” (p. 79). Journalists were often rewarded for their newspapers’ support with political posts (p. 93). Ottawa also awarded printing contracts to presses that favoured the party in power (p. 217).

Newspapers were also changing at this time. The 1880s and 1890s saw the first linotype machine invented, which resolved “the last great obstacle”: setting type quickly (Fetherling, 1990, p. 64). Photographs in newspapers were also introduced at this time (p. 66). As well, in 1893 the Associated Press signed a deal with Reuters to sell news exclusively to the Canadian Pacific Railway’s telegraph department (G. Allen, 2014, p. 18). This was significant for thinking of Canada as sovereign because the Associated

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<sup>10</sup> Oliver is also famous for establishing the first “nationally implemented Jim Crow law in Canada,” prohibiting African-American immigrants (Mathieu, 2010, p. 57). See Jaimy L. Miller (2011) for a brief history and the current context of the Papaschase Cree displacement. See Dwayne Donald (2004) for examples of resistance to Oliver as well as historical context.

Press treated Canada as an independent country, unlike Cuba and Mexico, which had to buy rights through individual newspapers (p. 19). A newspaper's purpose was also changing with the rise of "independent journalism." This term then meant the newspaper was not directly the organ of a political party, though the newspaper was still partisan through and through. As Fetherling puts it, "Independent journalism marked the rise of the editor as a full-fledged player in the political game, instead of a politicians' tool" (p. 96). By 1892, the Canadian newspaper industry had its own trade publication (p. 68). For Paul Rutherford (1982), Canadians in the 1890s considered the newspaper "with an almost mystical omnipotence" (p. 4), finding them "almost everywhere Canadians gathered—in taverns and stores, in mechanics' institutes and public libraries, in clubs and associations, on street corners and in railway stations" (p. 3). Indeed, by the end of the century there were more newspapers than families living in Canada (p. 5). Rutherford attributes this explosion in the late nineteenth century to three factors: the growth of big cities, changes in class and community, and increased literacy rates (p. 9). This frenzy meant changes within the church: the clergy "now discovered their erstwhile pre-eminence endangered, if not usurped, by the upstart intelligentsia of journalists" (p. 197).

Boarding school newspapers differed. Their circulation was nowhere near the major dailies of the time. In 1892, for instance, the *Globe* had a circulation of almost 27,000 (*McKim's Directory*); only a few thousand subscribed to Canadian boarding school newspapers. Advertising funded two thirds of dailies (Rutherford, 1982, p. 7); school newspapers were funded by the school (and therefore government) as well as donations and subscriptions. Dailies also operated under the threat of work stoppages (p. 95), which did not affect a boarding school's indentured work force. As well, big dailies



actively engaged in denigrating the U.S. (p. 189); as we shall see, Canadian school newspapers in fact praised America. Despite these differences, the larger context of newspapers in the late nineteenth century helps frame boarding school newspapers.

### **Dissertation Outline and Research Questions**

This dissertation focuses on five newspapers written in English<sup>11</sup> and published at four boarding schools: Shingwauk Industrial Home in Ontario (*Our Forest Children*, 1887-1890 and *The Canadian Indian*, 1890-1891); Battleford Industrial School in Saskatchewan (*The Guide*, 1891-1899); Regina Industrial School in Saskatchewan (*Progress*, 1894-1910?); and the Kitamaat Home in British Columbia (*Na-Na-Kwa*, 1898-1907).<sup>12</sup> More schools had printing programs and newspapers, but I focus on these five because they were about their schools (as opposed to just about the neighbouring town of the school). Three of these four schools were industrial, meaning in theory they accepted older students and taught a trade. I include Kitamaat Home's newspaper even though it was neither industrial nor government-funded because my scope included any late nineteenth-century Canadian school for Indigenous children—whether a day school or boarding school; church- or government-funded. In contrast, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) in 2006 only recognized claims made by former students of schools that 1) took children from their homes to educate them and 2) were operated in some way by the federal government. This left out 1484 institutions—convents, seminaries, asylums, prisons, and provincial schools. Ronald Niezen (2013)

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<sup>11</sup> Though I occasionally mention French within schools because of French-speaking Oblate missionaries, this project exclusively focuses on newspapers written in English; there are not to my knowledge Indian boarding school newspapers from the nineteenth century written in French.

<sup>12</sup> See Table 1 for a list of all five newspapers, including their frequency, dates, format, circulation, and prices. See Table 2 for a list of additional Canadian schools mentioned throughout this dissertation, with information on their location, denomination, and years in operation.

notes that for some, these distinctions split hairs when—no matter who was directly funding the institution—the philosophies and consequences were the same (p. 73).

Although I focus on these four schools, I make connections throughout to other schools that offered printing programs and schools that published newspapers, including those in the U.S. Although all four schools had principals, I focus most on the head of Shingwauk Home, Edward Francis Wilson. I do so more than other principals because he was at the helm of Shingwauk Home for the newspapers' entire span (unlike other schools, whose papers saw various shifts in power). As well, Shingwauk Home produced two newspapers (*Our Forest Children* and *The Canadian Indian*), so I therefore had more from which to draw.

I have broken this research into six chapters aside from the introduction and conclusion. After this introduction, chapter 2 outlines my methods and methodology, describing the archives I used, archival contexts, and my use of critical discourse analysis. Chapter 3 provides a material context for printing programs in late nineteenth-century boarding schools in Canada. Chapters 4-7 are organized around three broad themes: language (chapters 4 and 5), time (chapter 6), and place (chapter 7). The conclusion summarizes Indigenous resistance revealed by these newspapers, offering thoughts on how these newspapers can come to be understood today.

Language, time, and place may seem to reify particularly entrenched colonial binaries. Vine Deloria Jr. (2003) famously notes the concern of time vs. space as the key difference between Western Europeans and Indigenous peoples, respectively (p. 63). This dissertation also separates, by chapters, English from Indigenous languages. This is a particularly fraught binary: some boarding school teachers spoke Indigenous languages

and advocated for bilingual education; many parents wished and fought for their children to learn English and had their own purposes for doing so; and schools were not entirely devoid of Indigenous languages. Jeannette Armstrong (1998) combines all three concepts in one sentence: “I have heard elders explain that the language changed as we [Okanagan] moved and spread over the land through time” (p. 175). As we shall see, boarding schools created their own worlds of time and place, demarcating and patrolling the lines amongst oral and written, language and gibberish, advancement and backwardness, vanishing, futurity, colonial place, and Indigenous land. The division of chapters maintains these binaries, while my analysis seeks to destabilize them.

Language, time, and place may also appear as non-violent at schools infamous for violence. Just this year, 70 unmarked graves were uncovered at the former site of Brandon School in Manitoba (Quan, 2015). Boarding schools could be violent or even deadly places, where students contracted preventable illnesses and starved. Survivors recount how they were beaten, sexually assaulted, electrocuted, disabled by machinery, and forced to eat vomit. Language, time, and place could seem, as Trouillot calls it, to “sweeten the horror or banalize the uniqueness of a situation by focusing on details” (p. 97). But these categories reflect the *newspapers*’ seeming non-violence. As well, not all students had these experiences.

At the four schools on which I focus, all was not what their newspapers projected. During the same time period I am investigating, Regina School’s high death rate prompted parents to withhold their children and demand a meeting, following Elders who observed that “the worst element on the reserve is to be found among returned graduates who in a year or two, drift down sadly” (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 349; 350; 353). One

incident particularly contrasts with the picnics and spelling bees of the newspaper: after a student in 1903 disclosed suicidal ideations, her teacher produced a gun. Though it was unloaded, she pulled the trigger (Milloy, 1999, p. 155). At Battleford School in Saskatchewan, which also had a newspaper, two inspectors described it as having “quite a heavy death rate” (p. 85) and recorded cases of sexual abuse that the principal did not stop (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 337). And Rupert’s Land School in Manitoba, which also had a school newspaper, had confirmed cases of “thrashings” that alarmed parents and authorities (p. 155). Even Deputy Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs Hayter Reed observed “the depressed bearing of the pupils” (p. 68). Parents demanded an investigation after their young children still had bruises from beatings weeks before. The principal finally admitted in 1889 that “he fed the children rancid butter and crept into the dormitories at night to kiss little girls” (p. 57). Unsurprisingly, none of these incidents receive mention in the school newspapers, even though they are from the same period.

Clearly, the horrific abuse rampant at schools (which in these rare cases was reported) also occurred at schools publishing a shiny newspaper each month. What newspapers leave out (death, abuse, and perhaps more candid experiences of students, teachers, and parents) is not what my research seeks to uncover. That it is left out is negative evidence: schools appear to have known that sickness, death, parental grief, and abuse were unacceptable to report. Newspapers rarely mentioned student deaths—when they do, death receives a small mention incongruously nestled amongst happy and quotidian events. Here, even the newspaper’s formatting served the school’s objectives. Newspapers blamed death on inferior genetics and the unsanitary home conditions. Besides victim blaming, newspapers’ treatment of death highlights Byrd’s distinction

between Indigenous lives that are lamentable (a note of condolence in the paper) but not grievable (p. 38). What this research seeks to uncover is what *newspapers* saw as reality—this is a reality of sorts. Rather than seeking the “hidden meaning” behind newspapers, I seek to understand what newspapers, *on their surface*, tell us. What was in the open, even celebrated? What did schools hope a wider audience might see, whether or not it was true? How did students resist or complicate the school’s public face?

One way to think of these categories is as Trouillot describes: “Less visible than gunfire, class property, or political crusades” but just as powerful (p. xix). While newspapers sought to theorize and metaphorize language, time, and place, survivor testimony reveals that attacks on Indigenous languages were and are purposefully planned, violently enacted, and painfully endured. As Armstrong powerfully remarks, “The land constantly speaks. It is constantly communicating. Not to learn its language is to die” (p. 176). Time may seem airy-fairy, but when newspapers set up a past of Indigenous peoples and a settler colonial futurity, the connections to violence appear clearer. And though newspapers present settler acquisition of land as inevitable, newspapers demonstrate how acquisition began with theory. Finally, studying the violence of language, time, and place asks non-Indigenous Canadians to be bothered by this, too. Most will be moved hearing or reading testimony of survivors who suffered. But with suffering, none of the three myths have to bust apart. These myths are challenged, though, when considering evidence of attempted language destruction, the temporal trope of civilized vs. modern, and land theft. Throughout this dissertation, I ask: How do these newspapers contribute to our historical understandings of boarding schools, and more broadly settler colonialism? How are newspapers both testaments to and

examples of resistance to the linguicidal goals of the school? What were the purposes and audiences of these newspapers? How were time and place represented and constituted?

And how can we presently come to understand these documents in a post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission (but not post-truth and reconciliation) Canada today?

## CHAPTER 2: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

*Native Americans who attended boarding schools are  
living archives, storehouses of memory and experience*

(K. Tsianina Lomawaima, 1995, p. xii)

*How does documentation change genocide into grace?*

(Paula Gunn Allen, 1999, p. 137)

This project is archival. On one level, this statement is simple: I found these school newspapers in archives. But treating the archives I visited as mere repositories ignores the “archival turn”—a shift from understanding archives-as-things towards archives themselves as subjects of inquiry. How did items come to be in an archive? How does an archive shape its documents? Who has access to these archives? And how does a brick-and-mortar archive relate to Lomawaima’s (1995) point that survivors themselves are “living archives”? Ann Stoler (2009) views archival documents “not as the historical ballast to ethnography, but as a charged site of it,” advocating “for an emergent methodological shift: to move away from treating the archives as an *extractive* exercise to an ethnographic one” (p. 47). In this way, the archive is not stable, neutral, or natural but (like its documents) a subject that elicits questions as well.

If the archive is more than a repository, as something capable of influencing its documents, what is it? Jacques Derrida (1996) writes in *Archive Fever* that the archive both preserves memory, creates memory, and destroys memory (p. 17). For Verne Harris (2002), the archive is “a battleground for meaning and significance, a babel of stories, a place and a space of complex and ever-shifting powerplays” (p. 85). For Harris, archives are never a reflection of reality because when a document finally arrives in an archive, it has already passed through the hands that created it, the hands that managed it, the archivists who gathered it, and the researchers who read it (p. 65). Harris compares archives to but a sliver of a window into an event—archives only provide a sliver of social memory and a sliver of the original documentary record (p. 64). Trouillot (2012) insists that the “assembly work” of an archive is never passive. Instead, archives “convey authority and set the rules for credibility and interdependence; they help select the stories that matter” (p. 52). Any archive, then, is part of the researcher’s story.

Why treat archives as subjects in themselves? In Canada, we can think of Ian Mosby’s (2013) research, which exposed post-war food experiments on malnourished Indigenous children, including in boarding schools. We can also consider Daschuk’s (2013) work, which uncovered state-sponsored starvation on the prairies in the late nineteenth century. Or we can read the scholarship of John S. Long (2010), who found that the diary of treaty commissioner D. George MacMartin revealed he and other government representatives orally communicated different (better) conditions than were written in Treaty 9 and read by Indigenous signatories in James Bay in 1905. All three of these studies are shocking, with their damning proof of starvation experiments, genocide, and treaty fraud. And all three studies required archival documents, which imagined away



consent to experiments, ironed out the practical details of withholding food rations, and recorded a duplicitous government that said one thing and wrote another. These pieces of paper stand for these actions—they are “transparencies on which power relations were inscribed” (Stoler, 2009, p. 20). But the archives the paper came from matter, too. For Tony Ballantyne (2003), the archive can be thought of as a “a site saturated by power, a dense but uneven body of knowledge scarred by the cultural struggles and violence of the colonial past” (p. 102). The archives Mosby, Daschuk, and Long drew from (e.g., Library and Archives Canada, Hudson’s Bay Company Archives, and Queen’s University Archives) are “intricate technologies of rule in themselves” (Stoler, 2009, p. 20); yet these archival studies only vaguely mention their archives. How did archives shape this research? Who had access to these documents before these researchers? Why did these archives collect these documents? And why do these institutions hold the power to validate and confirm Indigenous oral histories, which seemingly cannot stand on their own?<sup>13</sup> This chapter begins to untangle the relationships between archives and Indigenous peoples as well as archives and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The concluding section explains my use of Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodology and my methods, illustrated by vignettes of my archival experiences.

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<sup>13</sup> Such tensions came to a head in British Columbia in 1991 with the *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*. In the case, Chief Justice Allan McEachern of the provincial Supreme Court decided the Gitksan and Wet’suwet’en peoples did not have title to their lands because they did not have written, archival evidence. See Adele Perry (2005) for the role of archives in the case; see Antonia Mills (2005) for a transcription of Johnny David’s oral evidence supporting title for 58,000 square kilometres of land. The decision was overturned in 1997, reversing McEachern’s privileging of the archive over Indigenous oral history.

## Indigenous Peoples and Archives

The relationship between archives and Indigenous peoples is fraught. As William T. Hagan (1978) noted decades ago, “To be an Indian is having non-Indians control the documents from which other non-Indians write their version of your history” (p. 171).<sup>14</sup> Hagan’s point resonates with Terrance’s (2011) concept of “Native feminist archival refusal” highlighted in the introduction, which pushes against archives for establishing “social hierarchies as inevitable and natural: some populations are to be investigated, scrutinized and objectified by those who are able to cogitate and analyze” (p. 625). Consider how this same point relates to the following, which prefaces Library and Archives Canada’s portal for accessing online archives of Indigenous peoples:

### Discover the Collection: Aboriginal Peoples

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) acknowledges that Aboriginal heritage represents a significant and vital part of the Canadian landscape. LAC is committed to its role in the acquisition and preservation of this heritage, as well as enabling the Canadian public to discover it. The Aboriginal Resources and Services Portal provides a window to vast and rich collections of resources created by or about Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

(“Discover the Collection: Aboriginal Peoples,” n.d.)

Though the preface goes on to explain that the database includes a directory of Indigenous artists, authors, and archive communities, the majority of the portal

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<sup>14</sup> Originally quoted by Amy Ziegler (2011, p. 171).

establishes a colonial tone worth unpacking. The preface frames archives about Indigenous peoples as something to explore, putting the user in a position of power. “Discover” is a particularly loaded term. Used by colonizers, the word historically framed land as free for the taking and erased those already there. Trouillot considers the word “an exercise in Eurocentric power,” where “the West is seen as the foundation of historicity of different cultures. Once discovered by Europeans, the Other finally enters the human world” (p. 114). In this preface, archives about Indigenous peoples act as a stand-in for land and the online archival user becomes a “discoverer.”

The preface goes on to state Indigenous peoples are only worthy of consideration because they contribute to “the Canadian landscape.” Indigenous peoples are important, but only so far as they helped create Canada. Such language recalls history textbooks that proclaimed (and still do) Indigenous peoples are “the first cornerstone upon which Canadian society rests” (1970, p. 24)—a precursor. But as Michael Marker (2011) states, “A history of Canada as a nation-state is a colonizing way of thinking about people, relationships, and land” (p. 110). The word “landscape”—different from land—further naturalizes colonialism (Canada is as naturally occurring as a landscape) and dehumanizes Indigenous peoples. Leslie Marmon Silko (1996) flags how “landscape” presumes the viewer surveying the territory is not part of the land (p. 27). The preface also dedicates the archive to Aboriginal *heritage*, not history. Such wording permits only celebratory interpretations, precluding possibilities of colonial resistance or even records that refuse to recognize the legitimacy of Canada. Furthermore, while acquisition and preservation are typical functions of an archive, acquiring and preserving Indigenous objects recall times (even today) in which Indigenous peoples were seen as dying out or

vanishing. Anthropologists acquired and preserved Indigenous materials because Indigenous peoples were thought to be fast disappearing and incapable of caring for their own history. The stated purpose of acquiring and preserving this “Aboriginal heritage” is solely for “the Canadian public to discover it.” Who is the Canadian public in this instance? Does it include Indigenous peoples? No purpose here exists for Indigenous peoples to use the archives to learn about family, seek justice, or revise historical records. As Ballantyne states, “The archive itself was the site where the transformative power of colonialism was enacted and contested” (p. 102). Library and Archives Canada’s (LAC) self-definition promotes the first possibility and forecloses the second.

Silencing not only originates from an archive’s self-description. For Trouillot, “silences enter the process of historical production” in four places: 1) fact creation, i.e., making the source; 2) fact assembly, i.e., making the archive; 3) fact retrieval, i.e., making the narrative; and 4) fact retrospection, i.e., making history (p. 26). Because of these four selections for Trouillot, archives at best rank and at worst exclude (p. 53), resulting in history that is “a particular bundle of silences” (p. 27). Such control is what Trouillot calls “archival power,” defined as “the power to define what is and what is not a serious object of research” (p. 99). Derrida calls this bundle of silences “archival violence” (p. 7) because documents are always unnaturally collected and preserved. But he does not refer to colonial archives documenting violence or denying access.

LAC’s portal symbolizes a troubling relationship between Indigenous peoples and archives, flying counter to definitions of archives by Indigenous peoples. Lorie Roy and Daniel Alonzo (2011) state that Indigenous understandings of archives can be more holistic than non-Indigenous understandings (p. 177). They cite several purposes of

Indigenous archives, the first being to preserve their own heritage, not someone else's. Their second purpose is to keep Indigenous languages alive. Archives for Roy and Alonzo also keep records of government decisions and "ensure preservation of documents telling the Aboriginal side of treaty and other negotiations" (p. 178). Clearly, this perspective contradicts the LAC's preface. For instance, non-Indigenous archives are typically governed by the concept of provenance: who created the archival record or to whom it originally belonged. However, provenance might "be at odds with indigenous thinking" (p. 180-181): the earlier context of clans or families, for instance, might be more significant in terms of categorizing an archival document than the name of the anthropologist who collected the item. For Livia Iacovino (2010), solely focusing on the creator of an archival record "oversimplifies the creation process" (p. 359), creating "further impediments for Indigenous communities to control who has ownership and associated rights over Indigenous knowledge." Iacovino advocates for a "participant model," extending ownership over records not to the creator but to the subject (p. 360). In this model, people mentioned in documents are record agents, not merely subjects. This shift "requires the recognition of *a reciprocal set of duties to the community and to others*" and opens space for participants to "engage in the creation, capture, systemization, preservation and access to records." In this way, "Every contributor, including the person who is the subject of the document, has legal and moral rights and responsibilities in relation to ownership, access and privacy" (p. 362).

David George-Shongo (2011) is the Seneca Nation Archivist and Tribal Archives Director and contributed to the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials. George-Shongo insists that archives are not exclusively a Western concept, as Indigenous

peoples “always had a trustworthy information system.” Yet the two forms of information systems do not always line up: “just because archival science is good medicine for them does not mean it is good medicine for us,” George-Shongo states. For him, non-Indigenous archives embrace the “kill the Indian, save the man” mentality of boarding schools. According to George-Shongo, Western archival concepts such as retention schedules (i.e., determining whether a record is permanent) are inappropriate when considering seven generations. He also determines levels of access from an Indigenous perspective: sacred files are archived as tobacco; open files are archived as one dish with one spoon; somewhat confidential files are equated with going into the bush; very confidential files are mountains; damaging files are tall trees. Protocol around the timing of tobacco-level records is adhered to: if a visitor to the archive wants to hear a morning song, they must come in the morning. Such understandings of archives are not adopted in the colonial archives of Canada, as the portal clearly demonstrates.

The relationship between archives and Indigenous peoples has come to a head with Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The Commission pulled from at least 88 church and over 30 government archives to fulfill its mandate (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012b, p. 13), with 100,000 boxes of material alone needed from LAC. But the Commission’s 2012 interim report signaled problems early on. In a section titled “Lack of Cooperation,” the report stated that the federal government only provided “a very limited portion of the relevant documents in its possession” and had “taken the position that it has no obligation to identify and provide relevant historical documents.” In addition, the TRC’s interim findings revealed that some church archivists had “sought to impose conditions” on records turned over to the

TRC. The report claimed that “it is unlikely that the document-collection process will be completed without a significant shift in attitude on the part of Canada and those parties who have been reluctant to cooperate” (p. 16). A significant shift never materialized, prompting legal action. In January 2013, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruled that LAC was indeed responsible for providing archival access (Canadian Press, 2013). Later that year, the TRC again faced barriers accessing files from the Ontario Provincial Police, which also necessitated a court case (Truth and Reconciliation of Canada, 2015, p. 27). Files eventually turned over were often redacted (MacCharles, 2014).

At one archive I visited, the archivist brought me an unusual file along with the school newspapers I had requested—a file I probably should not have seen: internal memos and letters about the TRC’s requests from non-governmental archives. Some documents expressed concern for the labour and expenses with which small archives would be burdened. Others revealed concerns about privacy. Another letter stated that “basically what I’m saying is that we don’t want any free-for-all ‘fishing expeditions’ in our archive. I know you won’t allow it, but we don’t want people hunting in our archive for whatever they can find. There must be a specific request for specific information.” The file also contained a letter from the TRC on its plans for a National Research Centre. Someone had annotated it by hand. One note said, “Some people have very unrealistic expectations”; another note asked, “*Whose* truth and reconciliation commission?” In this file, I was able to read some of the internal reactions that smaller archives had to the TRC—from pragmatic concerns to gatekeeping and outright denial.

More troubling has been the lack of access for survivors. According to a report from Algoma University, the federal government culled its own Indian Affairs archives at

least three times: in 1936 to create free space; in 1944 to recycle old papers necessitated by a WWII-related paper shortage; and in 1954, which saw the creation of “record destruction teams.” These destroyed files included attendance records, medical accounts, diaries, accident reports, and documents from inspectors and teachers. This destruction of material, which the government has vehemently denied, has had very real effects on survivors: as of March 2013, over 50,000 survivors received less than what they claimed in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) because of missing documents that could not verify the length of their time at boarding school (Barrera, 2013a, 2013b). Record destruction and the TRC also hit the news in 2014 when a court ordered that the testimony and evidence collected from the TRC should be destroyed 15 years after the Commission concludes unless survivors choose to have their statements maintained. The decision was controversial—some people heralded a decision that would protect the privacy of survivors who confidentially testified; others felt this was further destruction of history (Alamenciak, 2014). The TRC’s position was that “the loss of these documents would be a blow to Canada’s national memory of a significant historic injustice, contribute to the possibility that future generations would never know of the abuses in residential schools, and could contribute to the argument of those who would assert that this never happened” (Truth and Reconciliation of Canada, 2015, p. 29).

On another archival level, the TRC is creating a National Research Centre, which will serve as an archive for the Commission’s work. The Centre will include government documents, serving as a “safe space for unsafe ideas.” In a South African context, Harris writes that “there is poetic justice in records of the apartheid state, which documented so densely and so obscenely the state’s control over citizens’ lives, being used to unfold the



intricacies of oppression, expose the perpetrators of human rights violations, support the claims of the dispossessed to restitution, and prosecute” (p. 79). The University of Manitoba will house the physical Centre and will also host documents online. Its primary goal is to provide access to records for survivors and families. Only after this priority does the Centre’s website list goals such as providing material for educators, researchers, and the public. The collection includes thousands of hours of survivor statements; footage from all TRC events; millions of records from churches and federal departments; and art, poetry, and music created by survivors (“Our Mandate,” n.d.).

This new Centre will be an archive that partially drew from preexisting archives. In this scenario, how do these records import the legacies of their previous archival existence? The Centre calls to mind Derrida’s etymology of “archive,” referring to the notion of the “arkheion,” the house that was controlled by the “archons.” Such archons are, for Derrida, at once stewards over the documents of the arkheion, but they also in turn receive “hermeneutic right and competence”—the power to interpret. Though Carolyn Steedman (2002) argues that Derrida in fact does not actually write about archives, and Stoler mentions that the archive could never be sealed as tight as Derrida claims (p. 24), this concept has some bearing on the Centre. In traditional archives of boarding school history (like most other state archives), church and state are the archons and also the oppressors, masters of an arkheion of documents about the oppression they enacted. The TRC, through Derrida’s lens, could be seen as “rescuing” captive documents from the signifiers of oppression, wresting control and passing it to a new arkheion and new archons less directly affiliated with the initial oppression. Clearly, government and churches maintaining or “caring” for these materials does not make

sense given the concerns of access, preservation, and safety for survivors and families; time will tell if a university will serve this purpose. It certainly is not neutral. But in an unprecedented move, the University of Manitoba's president issued a formal apology on behalf of the institution, admitting it should have been asking questions and challenging the boarding school system; the apology also referenced the role in training teachers and clergy (*University of Manitoba Statement of Apology and Reconciliation to Indian Residential School Survivors*, 2011). Derrida's framing helps to see this new National Research Centre, effectively the TRC's accumulation of its old and new archival material, as neither neutral nor free from the power structures of the original archives.

The TRC early on hosted a conference on what to do with its archives titled "Sharing Truth: Creating a National Research Centre on Residential Schools" in March 2011 in Vancouver. Experts with experiences in archives from around the world—South Africa, Chile, East Timor, New Zealand—offered their experiences.<sup>15</sup> Survivors also offered their hopes and concerns. Charlene Belleau is a survivor and one of the members of the Assembly of First Nations who was part of negotiating the IRS Settlement. At the conference, she tied the trauma of boarding schools to the trauma of the archive:

Please don't relegate me to another number in an archive. My number when I went to residential school was 165 and it was all over the place and that's all they knew me by . . . I wasn't Charlene: I was a number. We need to be personalized in some place. Don't freeze my time and experience. (Belleau, 2011)

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<sup>15</sup> Videos of the conference can be found on Vimeo by searching "NRC Forum."

Eugene Arcand, also a survivor, had similar sentiments. He believes Indigenous peoples “have been studied to death. We have been archived to death.” His concern with the TRC’s archive is that “we don’t want people to become experts on the residential school era because of our misery” (Arcand, 2011). In Drew Hayden Taylor’s play *God and the Indian* (2013), the on-stage character of a former boarding school teacher points to the historical monograph *A National Crime* (1999) to cite how much he knows about reconciliation. He recommends the book to the character Johnny (a survivor), who notes the irony (p. 27). Though there was much hope at the conference for the potential of the new archives, survivors voiced very clear optimism, concern, and direction.

The TRC’s final report, issued in June 2015, mentions the word “archive” 704 times. Many of these instances are citations; but many are findings concerning the ongoing barriers to access. Two of the report’s 94 calls to action concern archives (numbers 69 and 70). These two calls ask LAC and the Canadian Association of Archivists to adopt the UN’s principles on Indigenous peoples and their rights to access to truth as well as to promote education on boarding schools (Truth and Reconciliation of Canada, 2015, pp. 332–333). To launch the release of the final report, Ottawa hosted a Reconciliation Walk, where 3000 people marched from Gatineau to Ottawa City Hall. Figure 1 shows marchers passing Library and Archives Canada.

### **Methodology and Methods**

Keeping these contexts in mind, I argue that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers one way to read these newspapers. Why consider them as discourse rather than as texts? As Siegfried Jäger and Florentine Maier (2009) describe, “a single text has minimal effects, which are hardly noticeable and almost impossible to prove. In contrast,

a discourse, with its recurring contents, symbols, and strategies, leads to the emergence and solidification of ‘knowledge’ and therefore has sustained effects” (p. 38). These newspapers were not single entities but part of a series, often running for many years. They also belong to a network of other newspapers across North America, as well as a larger discourse of colonialism, and help form an “imagined community,” as readers who are otherwise strangers all collectively read the same material. CDA interrogates how discourse shapes and is shaped by the social world around it (Dijk, 2008; Hodge & Kress, 1993; Van Leeuwen, 2008). For Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak (2007), CDA mediates “between text and institution, between communication and structure, and between discourse and society” (p. 9). And as Nikolas Coupland and Adam Jaworski (1999) put it, “Discourse is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order” (p. 3). A key tenet of CDA is that language is never neutral. For Weiss and Wodak, CDA centres on expressions of, competitions over, and challenges to power (p. 15). CDA helps in identifying how “discourse (re)produces social domination” in everyday practices, as well as “how dominated groups may discursively resist” (p. 7). As Jan Blommaert (2004) writes, CDA does not merely examine power within discursive entities but power’s effects, outcomes, and the conditions permitting its growth.

CDA investigates layers of context. Weiss and Wodak name these contexts: 1) the immediate text; 2) the intertextuality of texts, genres, and discourses; 3) the extralinguistic; and 4) broader sociopolitical and historical contexts (p. 22). In different and perhaps more well-known terms, Norman Fairclough (2010) provides three levels of discursive interpretation: micro (e.g., the newspapers’ words, symbols, and binaries); meso: (e.g., their material production, audience, and genre); and macro (e.g., the larger

historical context of colonialism). Importantly, Weiss and Wodak state that the smallest level, the micro, is not simply *within* the macro but in fact *constitutes* the macro and vice versa. These levels of interpretation are constantly moving in a variety of directions.

Jager and Maier (2009) offer a variety of questions that help tease out discursive layers:

1. Context

- a. Who is the author? What is her position and status?
- b. What was the occasion for the text's production?
- c. How is the text broken into sections?

2. Surface of the text

- a. What is the layout?
- b. What kinds of pictures or graphs accompany the text?
- c. What are the headings and subheadings?

3. Rhetorical means

- a. What logic underlies the composition of the article?
- b. What idioms, sayings, symbols, and clichés are used?
- c. What references are made (to other people, texts, etc.)?

4. Content and ideological statements

- a. What concept of humankind does the article presuppose and convey?
- b. What concept of society does the article presuppose and convey?
- c. What perspective regarding the future does the article give? (pp. 34-61)

These questions have provoked many of my thoughts on these newspapers.

I am using CDA rather than an Indigenous methodology. Much recent work examines Indigenous methodologies, such as Margaret Kovach (2009), Shawn Wilson (2008), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), and Norman K. Denizen, Yvonna S. Lincoln, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2008). Often, these methodologies are used in learning about and from Indigenous knowledges; in contrast, my focus in reading these newspapers is to learn about tactics of colonialism. While I do not use an Indigenous methodology, my use of CDA is informed by Indigenous scholars—survivors, artists, poets, novelists, and academics. The memoirs, literature, and testimony I reference are created by people who attended boarding schools in the twentieth century, long after the time period of the newspapers I studied. As the introduction indicated, memoirs and public testimony emerged after the 1980s from those who attended schools in the 1930s and later. Still, I cite texts outside of the nineteenth century on which I otherwise focus to highlight survivor voices that, within the medium of the newspaper, had to write differently than as adults publishing for themselves. What is more, as McKegney (2007) suggests, boarding school literature typically centres survivance, serving as an important counter-text to the newspapers. Two exceptions include the memoir of Luther Standing Bear, who attended Carlisle School in Pennsylvania beginning in 1879 and published a memoir in 1933, *Land of the Spotted Eagle*; and interviews conducted in 1972 of students who attended Battleford School in Saskatchewan in the 1880s and 1890s.

These newspapers have the potential to contain institution-imposed narratives *as well as* the possibility of a veiled poetry of resistance. How can we read both these narratives? Warrior (2005) argues for reading against the grain in his close readings of Native non-fiction, invoking Edward Said's (1994) theories. The idea is that English

literature has often been analysed aesthetically rather than for its propagation of ideas that directly supported British imperialism and colonialism. Said's work claims that imperialism operated not just through legal, political, and economic realms but through cultural formations, such as education, literature, and art. For this reason, Said reads texts contrapuntally—for surface-level narratives *and* those narratives that challenge the dominating discourse (p. 51). Said states that contrapuntal reading “must take account of both processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it, which can be done by extending our reading of the texts to include what was forcibly excluded” (pp. 66–67). What Said describes—the resistance latent within state-sanctioned narratives—could be seen within an Indigenous context as Vizenor's notion of survivance. An example—the following appeared in an Indian Affairs Annual Report from 1889:

Many Indians cannot be induced to send their children, who are still wandering about on the reserves. Indian children like to enjoy their liberty, and their parents have not sufficient authority over them to make them attend school . . . they object to the distance from the reserves, to their children, being obliged to work, and to not being allowed to use their own medicine on the children when sick . . . They say they would rather have their children work at home than at the school.

(DIA, p. 185)

Here a contrapuntal reading, against the grain, challenges the report's view of children merely “wandering about on the reserves,” aimless and in need of rescuing. Reading contrapuntally understands the parents not as lacking “sufficient authority” but rather

provides a site for resisting the colonial attempts to remove their children, indoctrinate them in schools, and prohibit them from using their own health care. Other parts of these newspapers require what Stoler describes as “reading *along* the grain.” Rather than searching for the “hidden” subliminal text, she instead makes a case for studying what was known and assumed. Mark Rifkin (2014) calls this “settler common sense” (p. xvi). Reading along the grain means studying carefully what these newspapers and their readers expected from schools and held as unquestioned assumptions. What *isn't* hidden here? What was taken for granted? Snelgrove, Dhamoon, and Cornassel (2014), though, importantly trouble this concept: “These kinds of claims seem to presume white settler subjectivity as the monolithic lens through which to examine settler colonialism and dispossession” (p. 9-10), they write. In this research, I read both against and along the grain with these concepts in mind.

Methods are particularly important yet often overlooked in archival research. Much of what I found I did not write about, feeling strongly that survivors and their families should have clear, first, and only access. A clear methods section also addresses Stoler’s advice: “to understand an archive, one needs to understand the institution that it served” (p. 25). Some questions I considered as I visited various archives: What other documents does this archive hold? Who funds this institution? What work has this archive done to connect with Indigenous communities? On whose traditional lands is this archive? Rather than treating the newspapers that I researched as simply preserved in neutral containers, I briefly discuss in this section how I consider several institutions I visited.



This research examines in-depth five newspapers from four late nineteenth-century Canadian boarding school newspapers: *Our Forest Children* and *The Canadian Indian* (both from Shingwauk Home in Ontario); *The Guide* (Battleford School in Saskatchewan); *Progress* (Regina School in Saskatchewan); and *Na-Na-Kwa* (Kitamaat Home in British Columbia). All four of these schools were boarding schools and all except Kitamaat Home were government-funded industrial schools. All four schools were Protestant. I also examine newspapers from the twentieth century and from American Indian boarding schools, as well as annual reports. As well, I research other schools that had printing programs but no newspapers and schools that had newspapers but were not directly about the school producing them.

I accessed school newspapers in several ways. One way was digitally: LAC has digitized the annual reports of Indian Affairs from 1864 – 1990. I also accessed some newspaper issues through Early Canadiana Online (ECO), a massive digitization project created by a coalition of Canadian universities and LAC. The goal of ECO is to make Canada's "early print heritage" available online. Collections include Hudson's Bay Records, early Canadian literature, as well as Canada's first periodicals. ECO's digitizations are incomplete, though they do provide some issues of *The Guide* (Battleford School in Saskatchewan), *Our Forest Children* (Shingwauk Home in Ontario), and *Na-Na-Kwa* (Kitamaat Home in British Columbia). ECO does provide all issues of the *Canadian Indian* (Shingwauk Home). Although they are digital, LAC and ECO are still archives: they serve an institution and selectively choose what to preserve and exhibit. Furthermore, barriers to access do not disappear because archival documents are online. In 2012, the federal government announced \$9.6 million in cuts to LAC in the

name of modernization. Ian Milligan (2012) call moves towards digitization a “smokescreen” for countless other barriers of access. My access to these annual reports is part of the smokescreen—while they are accessible, at what (or whose) expense? Additionally, LAC’s online search functionality is antiquated, often necessitating the same front-to-back reads that paper copies would require. ECO is a paid service. Without a subscription, these documents are not accessible. As well, ECO offers only some issues, not complete collections. These barriers are of course on top of having access to a computer, bandwidth, and skills. In addition to online archives, I also read newspapers through interlibrary-loaned microfilm reels from Saskatchewan Archives (*The Guide* from Battleford School and *Progress* from Regina School) and the Archives of Manitoba (*Elkhorn Advocate* from Washakada School and *Rupert Land Gleaner* from Rupert’s Land School). Like the digital archives I accessed, these reels include only some issues.

For more issues, I had to visit physical archives. Some are administered by government. BC Archives holds the complete run (i.e., all issues) of *Na-Na-Kwa* (Kitamaat School) as well as the papers of Principal Raley, who established the school and ran the newspaper. BC Archives also holds paper copies of *The Western Eagle* (Alberni School), *The Kuper School Totem* (Kuper Island School), *Ave Maria* (Lower Post School), *The Thunderbird* (Alert Bay School), and *The Memory Book* (Metlakatla School). The Archives of Manitoba also holds copies of *The Aurora* from Rupert’s Land School. The Provincial Archives of Alberta holds copies of *Oke Nape* (Cluny/Crowfoot School), *St. Michael’s Clarion*, *St. Anthony’s News*, *The Voice of St. Mary’s*, *Moccasin Telegram*, *Moccasin News*, and *Saskatchewan News*. Deschâtelets Archives, a Catholic missionary archive discussed further below, also holds copies of the *Moccasin Telegram*,

*Crowsfoot Arrow*, *Moccasin News*, and *St. Anthony's News*. Anglican General Synod Archives in Toronto holds *Peekiskwatan* (Gordon's School), various publications from Carcross School in the Yukon, and Alert Bay School in BC. The Engracia De Jesus Matias Archives at Algoma University has partnered with the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre and holds various files on Shingwauk School and its principal, Edward Francis Wilson. It also holds copies of *Our Forest Children*, as does the Newberry Library, an independent collection in Chicago. I also visited the archives of the Cumberland County Historical Society in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, which has the most complete collection of Carlisle School's newspapers. As well, I visited Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas for its archive of the newspaper *Indian Leader*. These institutions are a mix of government, religious, educational, and private archives. Though delving into each is beyond the scope of my study, they all in their own ways shape the documents they hold. Below I provide four vignettes of my many archival experiences over two years, inspired by Antoinette Burton's *Archive Stories* (2005), to illustrate such shaping.

### **Archive 1: Anglican General Synod Archives, Toronto**

The General Synod Archives was the first institution I visited. Each diocese has its own archive, and the General Synod Archives holds materials mostly from and shares a space with the Anglican Church of Canada's national office in downtown Toronto. The archive holds records of "enduring value" and "historical significance" to the Anglican church. Perhaps because the building is 350 metres from my home, or maybe because it coincidentally is the first level of my supervisor's condominium, this archive felt too close for comfort. I approached the archive skeptically. This was 2011, and I had begun

to hear that some archives were prohibiting access to survivors, family members, and researchers. As well, I felt nervous visiting an archive when the archivist may not be aware of my intentions. I caught myself adding “have a blessed Thanksgiving” to my correspondence, which I would never have otherwise written. I felt I had to pretend to align myself with the preferred reading of these newspapers in my initial email communication. And then my suspicions seemed to be confirmed: I received an email stating I should come sooner rather than later because the archive would be closed to outsiders for the rest of the year. Why was it closing? Who did it consider outsiders?

During my first visit, I waited for the archivist in the foyer, which was adorned with Anglican reading material, a cathedra on a dais, and the aura of God. When I entered the small archive, it was filled with seven people hovered over documents. I imagined they were studying theological history at the University of Toronto. The archivist explained that the reason for her urgent email was that the TRC was in fact behind the “major document and scanning project”—that it was the *TRC* that would prevent researchers’ access in the coming months: my temporary lack of access was in the name of greater access. As I returned several times, I encountered the same crew of researchers. I asked one researcher what he was studying, and he revealed the crew’s collective purpose: they were actually working for the TRC, contract workers charged with locating and scanning documents. I looked up the company responsible for scanning the TRC’s documents. They considered themselves “not typical historians and we are not trapped in the past. We are business-minded researchers.” This self-description treats the archive as a repository rather than an agent that actively *constitutes* its records. The description sets up a binary between “typical historians” who are “trapped in the past” and “business-

minded researchers”—they view their work as extractive, as if the records have little to do with the archives to which they belong. I thought about how this contract could have been awarded to Indigenous community members or youth interested in archival studies instead of this company. One of the researchers agreed to meet me for coffee so I could ask more questions; my email went unanswered. Shortly after, the archive was closed for seven months to accommodate their work. One of the last times I visited, there was a baptismal celebration in the lobby. As I emerged from the archives into the party, I was invited to eat cake. I quietly, uncomfortably, ate it in the corner.

## **Archive 2: Deschâtelets Archives, Ottawa**

I had been emailing with the archivist for the Deschâtelets Archives for months, trying to determine whether a visit to the archives of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Ottawa would be worthwhile. The archivist is a priest, and I addressed my emails accordingly. The collection is mostly focused on the Oblates (a Catholic group of missionaries) and their role in Canada. The physical archive was within the Édifice Deschâtelets overlooking the Rideau River. I approached the classical, 4-storey stone building via a grande allée lined by trees and thought of how similar the eerie space was to photographs of boarding schools. Édifice Deschâtelets (originally known as Scolasticat St. Joseph) was built in 1885 as a training ground for the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. At the time of my visit in 2013, the building continued to serve as a residence both for Oblates and students at Saint Paul University (a Catholic institution affiliated with the University of Ottawa). Édifice Deschâtelets began housing the archive in 1920. Though the Édifice Deschâtelets was massive, its archive was small, staffed by an elderly priest throughout the week I was there. He lived in the building along with

other Oblate fathers. After lunch he usually had a nap, and I was left alone amongst the documents—one letter was from 1308; a typewriter with Inuktitut syllabics sat in the basement. While the Father slept, if any of his elderly colleagues popped by I spoke to them in my limited French and explained where he was. As I worked, portraits of the original Oblates from the nineteenth century looked over my shoulder. The Father at one point brought me a black-and-white photograph from a boarding school in eastern BC. The children were lined up in front of the school with mountains in the back and teachers on the side. He had just received a request from the then newly forming and controversial Canadian Museum for Human Rights for a copy. The Father remarked that he understood why they wanted such a nice photograph for their new museum because of the smiling children, the mountains, and architecture, unaware of another way to read this photograph. Niezen (2013) notes a similar scene at a Truth and Reconciliation event, where church archivists in attendance appeared “unaware that any of the material presented in these displays comprised a particular position in a contest of history” (p. 134).

For lunches, the Father invited me to join him and other priests, all in robes. To get to the cafeteria, we walked through an unlit gymnasium and a series of connecting corridors past gilded Italian gates that protected a chapel with columns and a vaulted ceiling. I was the only woman and the only person under the age of 50 other than the cafeteria workers. The rest of the diners—about 30 of them—were other priests. Each day, I sat at a table with the Father and his colleagues. We ate lemon meringue pie while they asked about my research. Some made comments about how the TRC had unfairly burdened small, understaffed archives with the task of scanning. One year after my visit,

the Oblates had moved out of Édifice Deschâtelets to a new location in Richelieu, Quebec. The Oblates were forced to sell their 12 hectares of land, including where the archive was when I visited, to pay bills and respond to a dwindling membership. Plans have now begun to build 900 new condos called Greystone Village on the site.

### **Archive 3: Cumberland County Historical Society, Pennsylvania**

I visited Carlisle, Pennsylvania the night before the United States government shutdown of 2013. On September 30, the end of the fiscal year, Democrats and Republicans could not agree on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Because of this impasse, other than essential services (e.g., air traffic control, police, hospitals) over 800,000 workers—from national park rangers, to pentagon staff and veteran services—were not paid and therefore would not return to work. As I traveled to visit the archives of North America's most famous boarding school, I wrongly doubted the shutdown would affect my research trip.

Carlisle School was a flagship industrial school—the biggest and most famous. I spent the week at the Cumberland County Historical Society, which holds records for one of the oldest counties in Pennsylvania and the most complete record of Carlisle's eight newspapers. The government shutdown affected me in two ways. Down the street from the archives is Dickinson College, founded just before the American Revolution. The College was sometimes mentioned in Carlisle's papers, as it offered spots to select Carlisle graduates. Also, some of the College's teachers taught at Carlisle. Today, Dickinson has begun a major digitization project of Carlisle School documents held in federal archives. I walked down the street from the Historical Society to learn more. But when a professor there directed me to federal websites, the screens were blank.

The second effect of the shutdown happened at the site of the Carlisle School itself. Carlisle School began as an army barracks in 1757 and served as an important site during the Seven Years' War and the Civil War. But because the barracks was landlocked, it fell into disuse. In 1879 Richard Pratt, the school's founder, suggested the old barracks as the site for his school. The site's shift from a site of war to Indian education is symbolic, mirroring the shift in Indian policy during the latter half of the nineteenth century from military to educational interventions. Today, the former Carlisle School offers military education, returning to its original purpose. To enter the barracks and walk around the former Carlisle School, I had to drive through security.

"Turn off your car, get out, pass me the keys," an armed guard shouted.

"I'm not even getting paid for this, you know."

Clearly, his work guarding the U.S. Army War College had been deemed essential labour but he was furloughed and therefore unpaid. The guard of a second checkpoint, who searched my rental car, exhibited similar anger before admitting me onto the barracks. I walked around and saw the track of Jim Thorpe, the Olympic gold medalist largely hailed as the greatest athlete of the twentieth century. I also saw a remake of Carlisle's bandstand, a perch from where the school newspaper's editor claimed to panoptically see students' infractions. People in uniform walked around the base training, and I saw military families occupying the old residences of the renowned school.

I had a map the guard handed me as well as an historical map of the school. Between these two, I was able to locate the old printing services building. The youth mowing the lawn outside did not know what I was asking about, explaining that this building was a wedding hall, the Letort View Community Center. It was hard to believe



this building had once been where eight different newspapers were manufactured by Indigenous children, occasionally with their writing featured. The military college had papered over Carlisle School, as if it was just a blip. The archivist I worked with that week aims to undo these attempts. The Carlisle cemetery, which I saw upon entering the army base, has become “incorporated into a romanticized, sanitized, white version of events” and “became a site to commemorate Indian nobility and mourn tribal disappearance without confronting the problematic mission of the Carlisle Indian School” (Fear-Segal 247). But the archivist has been responsible for a Pennsylvania state sign that explicitly names the school’s purpose to “assimilate American Indians into mainstream culture.” She also leads tours to correct the papered-over version of the barracks as it stands today. Carlisle has been the site of a powwow, first beginning in 2000 with N. Scott Momaday as the keynote speaker. Families gathered to assert the history of this space that its current iteration attempts to erase (Fear-Segal, 2007, pp. 299–312).

#### **Archive 4: Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, Kansas**

The archives held at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas were like no other I visited. The University was once one of America’s largest American Indian boarding schools—Haskell Institute, opening its doors just five years after Carlisle School, offering a similar model of assimilation. Though on the same site and using the same stadium and buildings, Haskell Indian Nations University is now an institution offering degrees to Indigenous students from over 140 nations. Students are taught by Indigenous faculty, and programs and curriculum are Indigenous-centred. The University has a museum and cultural centre, which houses an archive. They have extensive holdings—records of their school, the buildings, menus, calendars, pageant and play

scripts, promotional brochures, student dissertations, American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame records, and thousands of Frank A. Rinehart's photographs. The archive also has photographs from its students—tens of thousands of images of students and faculty. The collection also has photographs from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other Indian schools, as well as historical films and the Haskell Oral History Library, with interviews of elders as well as artwork. Classes use the museum space. While I was working, I had the honour of hearing a lecture by Dr. Daniel Wildcat. At the time of my visit, the centre had an exhibit on the University's past as an assimilative boarding school.

The archive also holds a complete collection of Haskell's publications: the *Haskell Messenger* (a staff newsletter) and the *Indian Leader*, a school newspaper that began in 1887. Haskell had a major printing program. Like the other school newspapers I researched, the *Indian Leader* in the nineteenth century aimed to show readers just how assimilated students supposedly were. But also like other newspapers, students often pushed against this agenda. The newspaper still prints today, making it the oldest American Indian student newspaper still being published. But the newspaper is now directed by Indigenous writers, editors, and photographers. The newspaper's advisor, Professor Rhonda LeValdo is herself a journalist, with a weekly radio program featuring traditional and contemporary Indigenous music as well as interviews with Indigenous academics and musicians. She has served as the president of the Native American Journalists association and teaches the newest generation of Indigenous journalists.

Haskell was the only archive I visited controlled by the community.<sup>16</sup> Haskell also stands as a positive legacy of these school newspapers. I was invited to attend one journalism professor's classes during the week. The point cannot be overstated: here I was, researching school newspapers while witnessing the legacy—several generations of the *Indian Leader* in promoting Indigenous journalism. Unlike the TRC's proposed research centre that relocates archival materials from across Canada, Haskell's archive remains within the same institution that initially generated the records. I was invited to the newspaper's weekly meeting, where students pitched ideas. One student wanted to write an article about my research trip. I hesitated—positivist thoughts crossed my mind about researcher objectivity—but then ultimately sat down with him and worked through drafts together. So here it stands—this research on the nineteenth-century *Indian Leader* now self-reflexively exists within the contemporary *Indian Leader*.

...

These vignettes highlight the complicated interplay of dynamics that these archives represent, far beyond the role of repository. As Harris notes in a South African context, “the stranglehold enjoyed by whites over the archival profession needs to be broken. It matters, in terms of power relations, in terms of the construction of social memory in archives, that whites control archival institutions and dominate transformation discourse. It matters that only Western epistemes have been deployed in the re-imagining of South African archives” (p. 77). His observations bear on Canada's National Research Centre; time will reveal if things change for survivors and families.

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<sup>16</sup> I also visited Red Crow Community College of Kainai First Nation in Alberta (formally St. Mary's Residential School) and Blue Quills First Nations College in St. Paul's, Alberta (formally Blue Quills Residential School), though their archival holdings were duplications.

### CHAPTER 3: THE LABOUR OF PRINTING

*Prospectus: This little paper is our own. It holds our School news and is to come out once a week. When we get it we shall know all that is going on in and near the school. Our officers will use it to tell us news from afar. For this we have to thank the Government.*

*(The Guide, 1891 1.1:1)*

In an 1898 issue of a newspaper produced by the Battleford School in Saskatchewan, student and printer Louis Laronde expressed his delight at a visit to Winnipeg. The city amazed Louis, with “cars running without horses on steam, men and women flying around on bicycles, [and] news boys” (*The Guide* 7.1:1). During his trip (necessitated by an eye condition), Louis received a tour of the *Winnipeg Free Press*. Until this visit, Louis had “never believed that presses like that could print every page and make it ready for mailing” or “how they can set the type with the machines.” Louis enjoyed himself, concluding that nothing was “more interesting than the Free Press Office” (7.4:1). Like all nineteenth-century boarding school newspapers, certain narratives are favoured over others. Here, Louis fits into a larger arc of students seemingly bewildered by the city and technology. For non-Indigenous readers of Louis’ article, part of his visit to Winnipeg may have been “unexpected,” to borrow Philip J. Deloria’s (2004) concept—Louis is in a city, receiving medical treatment, and visiting the press of the oldest newspaper in Western Canada. What is more, in the rest of the article Louis compares this press to the one he knows from his school.

This chapter contextualizes printing trade programs at boarding schools. Unlike other trades such as farming or carpentry, printing exhibited for readers not only an engagement with modern machinery but also an ability to read and compose. Readers might even imagine a continuum between Louis-the-student and a future Louis-the-employee. Less-favoured narratives exist in this scene, too. Louis must visit Winnipeg for an unnamed eye condition. While we do not know whether it was caused directly by Louis' long hours working on the school's printing press, we do know that eye conditions (amongst many other illnesses) at schools like Louis' were rampant. In invoking a connection between Louis' trade at school and his future in the workforce, the scene also mutes the reality that systemic barriers usually prevented students, no matter how talented, from seeking employment that competed with white workers. We also hear little here from Louis other than lines framing his visit as lucky.

This view corresponds to the epigraph above from the first page of the first issue of Battleford School's newspaper, where its prospectus at once proclaims the newspaper as belonging to the students but also thanks to the government. But Brooks (2008) notes how Indigenous peoples have always "adopted and adapted foreign ideas and instruments" (p. xxxi). What we *do* see is a scene representative of printing in a nineteenth-century Canadian boarding school—the printers, their school's press, bigger Canadian publications, and narratives both highlighted and muted. This chapter outlines the materiality of nineteenth-century boarding school newspapers in Canada: the labour, expenses, circulation, purposes, and machinery of the school print shop. It then introduces the school newspapers produced in these print shops and how they displayed themselves to the world. The chapter then identifies the people of the papers—the

leaders, readers, students, and personae. The chapter concludes by outlining the barriers that Indigenous students faced finding employment as printers. These material conditions and people actively shaping (and shaped by) the newspaper help to contextualize later discussions on language, time, and place in school newspapers.

### **The Trade of Printing**

Nineteenth-century boarding schools offered many trades: sewing, cooking, baking, and laundry for girls; blacksmithing, carpentry, farming, and many other options for boys. Though far less common, schools also offered printing. The 1891 annual report from Rupert's Land School in Manitoba offers a window into how students advanced in the printing trade. At this school, students began on "plain newspaper composition from printed copy," and quickly moved on to manuscript. From there, students advanced to printing circulars and notices. Junior boys, physically unable to do press work, learned to wash the type and rollers (DIA, 1891, p. 156). These programs were small: in 1897, for instance, Wikwemikong School in Ontario trained only 2 boys as printers compared to 17 as farmers (Department of Indian Affairs [DIA], p. 269); Battleford School in 1892 trained 14 carpenters, 14 blacksmiths, 17 farmers, 8 shoemakers, but only 3 printers (p. 246). Print shops usually did not have their own dedicated building. At Wikwemikong School, the printing office and bakery existed together (DIA, 1897, p. 268). Kitamaat School printed out of the mission office, which was also a dispensary (*Na-Na-Kwa* 17.12). Rupert's Land School printed off-campus at a rectory across the street, and

Washakada Home in Manitoba printed in town sharing space with a butcher, hardware store, and an assembly hall (Elkhorn and District Historical Society, 1982, p. 7).<sup>17</sup>

Printing programs at Canadian schools were modest in comparison to those at American Indian boarding schools, which often had a purpose-built edifice and better equipment. Carlisle School in Pennsylvania had eight distinct newspapers, with circulation numbers far greater than Canadian schools. And American schools celebrated their printers elaborately. Haskell Institute in Kansas held an annual reception for its printers. At the party in 1911, printers dined on oyster soup, escalloped corn, and quince jelly while a teacher read aloud the first issue of the school's newspaper, passed out a poem called "the Haskell Printers," and read out printer-related maxims and jokes (*Indian Leader* 14.47:2). The Superintendent read a speech about famous people who began as printers,<sup>18</sup> and students raced each other as they set up type. Canadian printing programs were far more modest. Still, in this dissertation I argue that printing programs reveal something that other trades don't. As an article from Battleford School's newspaper suggested, "Go into the printing office and look at the proofs; and the one who has the most mistakes in his type, is as a rule, the boy who is the fullest of mistakes, and must be watched" (*The Guide* 5.8:2). I argue that though printing programs were small, they were a charged site of surveillance, language, oppression, and resistance.

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<sup>17</sup> I thank Gordon Goldsborough for this information.

<sup>18</sup> Although this particular speech praised non-Indigenous printers such as Benjamin Franklin, Indigenous printers were celebrated in school newspapers, too. One issue of Carlisle School's newspaper printed an article titled "The First Indian Printer" (10.1:6). School newspapers also praised Indigenous-led newspapers such as the *Cherokee Advocate*.

The goals of teaching any trade at boarding school were three-fold: 1) to demonstrate to outsiders the successes of boarding schools; 2) to offset costs; and 3) to teach employable skills (a goal loaded with rhetoric about self-sufficiency and assimilation). Bounty from trades helped the school's bottom line: the eggs, milk, and ham from student farmers went to an underfunded kitchen; student-created wares such as horse harnesses or broom handles would be sold in the community.<sup>19</sup> The same went for printed goods. Though boarding school print shops created internal documents necessary for the bureaucratic functioning of the school, much more was for profit. The Washakada Home advertised its ability to print notices, circulars, municipal lists, pamphlets, cards (for business, funerals, and weddings), memoranda, receipts, voters lists, tickets, booklets, lien notes, and Sunday School materials—"promptly executed" in "first-class style" for "fair prices" to merchants, farmers, and municipalities (DIA, 1895, p. 166). As one example of the sheer production of these printing departments, the following is the output of 1894 at Rupert's Land School in just 9 months:

- Magazines (124-paged quarto): 4,525 copies
- Magazines (12-paged octavo): 300 copies
- Pamphlets and circulars: 900 copies
- Envelopes: 35,000
- Receipt books: 17
- Prescriptions: 12,000
- Letter, bill, note, and memo heads: 71,000

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<sup>19</sup> See Miller's (1996) chapter, "Work and Play" for a detailed assessment of labour at nineteenth-century industrial schools in Canada.



- Subscription slips: 2000
- Religious Book (4000-paged octavo): 1000 copies
- Programme and wedding cards: 225
- Tabular returns: 600
- Vouchers: 500
- School rules: 175
- Writing pads, etc: 400 (DIA, p. 176)

Much of what students printed—without yet considering school newspapers—helped to establish the town and propel its growth through religious, legal, economic, and political channels. As Fahey and Horton (2012) ponder, “One wonders whether the same students also printed bonds by which parents signed their children over” (p. 23).

Students used hand-me-down equipment, typically a variety of foot-pedal letterpresses. When Battleford School closed in 1914, it bequeathed its printing press and accessories to a school in the Pas, Manitoba (Wasylow, 1972, p. 484). Regina School had an Edison mimeograph, though in its Annual Report of 1893 desired a “regular printing press” (DIA, 1893, p. 119), later receiving a donation (*Progress* 3.81:5). Rupert’s Land School used a challenge foot press (DIA, 1891, p. 156), while the Washakada Home used a small army newspaper press as well as a Gordon job press. The Kitamaat Home relied on a Golding and Company press (Fahey & Horton, 2012, p. 49) but received a Gordon press in 1900 by donation (*Na-Na-Kwa* 10.7).<sup>20</sup> Schools sometimes celebrated the lineage

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<sup>20</sup> The Gordon press has a printing bed on two legs hinged at the floor. A large, rotatable shaft supports the platen, while a crank hinges the bed back and forth. To ink, three rollers were used, moving from an ink disc above the bed and then down, powered by pumping a treadle (Williams, 1985).

of their press. Methodist missionary Thomas Crosby, who gave the Golding and Company press to the Kitamaat Home in 1894, boasted that it was the first press north of Nanaimo in British Columbia, although the claim may be dubious (Fahey & Horton, 2012, p. 47). Battleford School also bragged about the history of its press, claiming it as the first press west of Winnipeg and famous for printing the *Saskatchewan Herald*, which the school notes is the oldest paper in the North West Territories (*The Guide* 7.1:1). Other newspapers thanked readers for their generous donations of presses, paper, and type. Despite outmoded and inadequate supplies, schools often glorified their equipment.

That schools relied on secondhand letterpresses may at first sound similar to Canada's agricultural policies of the time. Sarah Carter (1990) has debunked the myth that Plains people had difficulty farming in the late nineteenth century because of an inherent inability, proving that the barrier was in fact government policy. Government would instruct Indigenous peoples using outmoded methods and technology to ensure they only farmed by hand for subsistence rather than with the machinery of the day to save the government money, mitigate competition with white economies, and promote self-sufficiency in a population the government considered lazy and dependent. But insisting that Indigenous peoples farm using rudimentary principles also accorded with the belief that they should not skip over the supposed stages of evolution—from savagery to barbarism to civilization (pp. 209-213; DIA, 1891, p. 193). Indigenous peoples should become like white people, but not too fast. But as Douglas Fetherling (1990) notes, big dailies in the late nineteenth century frequently upgraded and passed their old presses and type along (p. 35). Printing programs did not keep up with advances at the turn of the century, and they taught skills that were fast becoming obsolete. But unlike farming,

printing was rapidly advancing in the late nineteenth century, and cash-strapped schools could not be expected to have equipment that even cities were only beginning to access. Though the old equipment made not have been a direct way of barring Indigenous peoples from the media, Buddle-Crowe's research (2001; 2002) reveals that the state had legislation discouraging Indigenous involvement.

Most schools with a printing program produced a newspaper.<sup>21</sup> The five newspapers that are the subject of this dissertation are listed in Table 1, along with information on their dates, frequency, format, circulation, and prices. There are two nineteenth-century Canadian boarding school newspapers I did not write on: the newspapers of Washakada Home and Rupert's Land School in Manitoba. Unlike the five newspapers on which I focus, these two newspapers served as community newspapers, rarely mentioning schools. Washakada Home's newspaper was more concerned with debates over whether the government should fund denominational schools (i.e., the Manitoba Schools Question) than the school printing its pages. The newspaper produced at Washakada Home saw itself as a marker of "the progress of this dashing little town" of Elkhorn. The five on which I focus instead celebrated the schools they came from.

These five newspapers helped schools keep in touch with former students. The larger context was a great anxiety on the part of schools concerning students who returned home, away from the "civilizing" influence of the school. An 1898 issue of Battleford School's newspaper pleaded with the government to (ironically) establish a

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<sup>21</sup> Exceptions included Birtle and Wikwemikong Schools, which trained students in printing but did not produce a newspaper. Conversely, Shingwauk Home at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario had a school newspaper but no printing program. Instead, proofs of the newspaper were sent to a printer in Owen Sound, where they were printed and published each month. Despite not printing on-site, Shingwauk Home offered typewriter, cyclostyle stencil copying, photography, and telegraphy lessons, but perhaps only (as one newspaper article indicates) to children too sick for other trades (*Our Forest Children* 2.7:21). The principal of Shingwauk Home also offered a meagre printing program in 1876, but it seems to have only lasted one year.

colony for graduates so they could avoid being “contaminated by the evil influence of the reserve” (7.6:1).<sup>22</sup> School newspapers often updated readers on the narrowly defined successes of its former students: marriage, employment, and home ownership. Alumni updates provided non-Indigenous readers with examples of supposed assimilation, as well as the promise that both the students and the newspaper itself were spreading their assimilative power back to the reserve. Updates also demonstrated how former students, now adults, were applying what they learned at school (be it a trade, homemaking skills, English, or Christian understandings of family).

In a time when reading materials were scarce and expensive, a pragmatic reason for a school newspaper was the “exchange”—a swap with the newspaper of a church, community, or other school. Some schools had as many as 70 exchanges (DIA, 1897 p. 309). They were built on reciprocated praise, which sometimes could be a backhanded compliment. When the Crowstand School launched its newspaper, Regina School ran an article in its own publication welcoming the “new comer” and wishing it a “safe voyage on the sea of journalism.” The praise, though, includes the fact that Regina School’s has been “for some time the only paper in Canada edited and published in a Protestant Indian school [and] has been extremely lonesome” because so many other school newspapers have folded (*Progress* 18.4:4). Such praise also fell upon denominational affinities. (e.g., Crowstand and Regina Schools were both Presbyterian.) Praise was usually returned in a hallway of mirrors. For instance, both Battleford and Kitamaat Schools subscribed to *The Indian Advocate* from White Fish Lake, N.W.T. and made sure to praise it in their own pages. *The Indian Advocate*, in turn, praised the newspapers from Battleford and

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<sup>22</sup> The File Hills Colony in Saskatchewan was one such example, where many of Regina School’s former students went to farm (Bednasek, 2009; Poitras, 2001).

Kitamaat. These two schools then reprinted this praise in their own newspapers.

Exchanges also added to the content of a school's newspaper. Schools would regularly clip from other newspapers, sometimes crediting the original and sometimes not.

Occasionally such clippings covered news of the day, such as the B.C.-Alaska boundary dispute or elections. Far more clippings came from other school newspapers, establishing both a network and an echo chamber amongst Canadian and American schools.

By and large, schools used their newspapers as an avenue for showcasing assimilation. Shingwauk Home promised to deliver news on “the training in white men’s ways and the leading to the foot of the cross, of the ignorant and ill cared-for children of the forest” (*Our Forest Children* 3.1:45). Newspapers often framed their columns as answers to the “Indian problem,”<sup>23</sup> which Regina School’s newspaper defined:

The Indian problem is the world’s problem; that is it is but a part of the great problem that meets the dominant race wherever it meets the conquered race. What shall we, the British people, do with the races of India? What shall we do with the millions of Negros and Kaffres in our settlements in Africa? What shall the United States do with her millions of Negroes? What shall Canada do with her Indians? Are all but parts of one great question. When we have answered this question and solved the problems appended to it; then we may be permitted to lay

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<sup>23</sup> The real problem, many scholars argue, was that Indigenous peoples all over the world stood in the way of colonialism, and their survival delegitimized settlers’ claims to ownership. Framing Indigenous peoples, not the settlers, as the problem both exculpated settlers and assumed there was an inevitable solution. The use of the phrase by nineteenth-century school newspapers predates Duncan Campbell Scott, deputy superintendent of Indian Affairs, in 1920: “I want to get rid of the Indian problem . . . to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question” (qtd. in Milloy, 1999, p. 46). The “Indian problem” is a variation on the “Negro problem,” which W.E.B. Du Bois’ *The Souls of Black Folk* confronted by asking, “What does it feel like to be a problem?” See José Esteban Muñoz (2007) for discussion of the phrase in Du Bois; see Regan (2010) for her take not on the “Indian problem” or the “Negro problem,” but the *settler* problem (p. 230).

down “the whiteman’s burden.” (*Progress* 18.9:3)

Newspapers identified the “problem” for readers and established schools as the answer. Haskell Institute’s newspaper suggested the solution was that an Indigenous person’s “land should be treated as an estate given to him” (*Indian Leader* 5.22.1). Edward Francis Wilson, the principal of Shingwauk Home, suggested that readers interested in the “question” keep issues of the school’s newspapers “on file, [and] they will thus have a history of this movement from the beginning” (*Our Forest Children* 1.5:4). Sometimes, newspapers highlighted the government’s failings. Regina School, for instance, proclaimed that “those in the service are best qualified to indicate the strong and weak points in our Indian Policy” (*Progress* 3.72:6), not the government, and Shingwauk Home often criticized the government for denying funding to schools. Newspapers proved to be an effective way to promote schools as the answer. Printing, more than any other trade, proved students could now operate modern technology and read and write English, while the colonial content of the newspaper complemented this evidence. While the success of trades such as farming or harness-making may have been known throughout a school’s neighbouring community, newspapers reached audiences far and wide. Newspapers, then, considered themselves as the solution and the answer.

Another purpose was to fundraise. Newspapers did not hide schools’ desperation for funds, frequently pleading for subscriptions and donations. Such requests exemplify the severe underfunding of schools, which was even more acute in the late nineteenth century because the government introduced per capita funding. This new model did not consider the local needs of individual schools and forced institutions to over-recruit and

overcrowd. Shingwauk Home's newspaper went so far as to warn readers that donations through the Board of Foreign and Domestic would not reach the school, asking readers to donate to the principal directly (*Our Forest Children* 2.7:24). Kitamaat Home asked both for funds as well as specific items such as a stove or a wheelchair. Most schools also used their newspapers as a way to thank donors, usually listing a name and what or how much was donated, a printed acknowledgement that would likely prompt more donations.

Schools also sent newspapers as a reward for donations. Shingwauk Home, for instance, would send 20-30 copies of its newspaper as a reward for anyone (and this was often a Sunday school) who donated \$50 a year to the institution (*Our Forest Children* 2.8:27)—an amount that schools noted was the per capita shortfall after government funding. The school would also send a letter from a student, so that the donor could “have an Indian pupil allotted to their care, to think of, to correspond with, and to pray for” (3.11:130).

In one instance, a donor became irate that “P. was no longer our girl,” and that the money had gone to someone new (2.12:44). Washakada Home, too, advertised that if readers were to supply \$50, “contributors of this amount may be said practically to adopt a child” (*Elkhorn Advocate* 1.1.5). Though we are used to present-day international aid societies using the metaphor of adoption, the use in the context of boarding school history sheds light on contemporary scholars who highlight the continuity amongst boarding schools, the Sixties Scoop where Indigenous children were adopted out to white families, and the present-day statistics on the disproportionate number of Indigenous children in government “care” compared to the rest of the population.

Schools had to dance a careful dance: their newspapers could not be seen as a source of the school's financial strain. School newspapers made it clear that they were

financially self-sufficient and a contribution to the school's bottom line. Kitamaat Home stated its newspaper relieved the principal of "the burden of written correspondence" (*Na-Na-Kwa* 6.1) and was therefore not wasteful. Schools typically charged for subscriptions (see Table 1). Though Washakada Home charged \$1 per year (a common fee), it also accepted goods such as vegetables, wood, butter, and mittens (*Elkhorn Advocate* Jan. 4, 1893). Many schools supplied their newspaper free to Sunday Schools, though the principal of Shingwauk Home believed children should develop a work ethic by paying themselves (*Our Forest Children* 2.6:19). Most newspapers displayed a great anxiety over the newspaper's finances, going so far as to offer special deals for subscribers and to shame readers with overdue subscriptions. During the 1890s, non-school newspapers garnered two thirds of their income from advertising and only one third from subscriptions, whereas in earlier time periods major dailies in Canada depended far more on subscriptions to cover costs (Rutherford, 1982, p. 97).

One expense that was not a consideration before 1897 was postage: in Canada, a newspaper mailed from the place of publication to a regular subscriber did not require postage (Arfken & Pawluk, 2006, pp. 104–107). Other than Washakada Home and Rupert's Land School, whose newspapers were devoted to their communities rather than boarding schools, boarding school newspapers did not have advertisements other than for themselves. Later issues of Shingwauk Home's newspaper ended with one page advertising pianos, church bells, and "Indian" books by non-Indigenous authors (e.g., Helen Hunt Jackson's novel *Ramona*). But mostly these newspapers depended on subscribers. As Rutherford (1982) states, every newspaper in late nineteenth-century Canada had unpaid subscriptions; in fact, "publishers often carried dead-beats on the



books to keep up circulation” (p. 98-99). Still, school newspapers attempted to gather subscription money and sometimes resorted to guilt. Shingwauk Home feared its newspaper would “never bring back to us even one cent to pay for their cost of production and transmission” (*Our Forest Children* 3.3:7). Regina School’s newspaper described a reader whose entrance to heaven was denied because he owed two years’ of fees, considering him worse than a bank manager, insurance president, or politician. In the article, God reminds readers that “the paper was printed by Indian boys who never had very much money, and edited by members of the staff, who were developing gray hairs worrying over financial matters” (*Progress* 15.1:7).

Schools were smart to prove that newspapers were not a lavish expense. Clifford Sifton served as Minister of the Interior and Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs beginning in 1896. In 1897, Sifton commissioned a report from Martin Benson, a member of the education section of the department. Benson attributed the deficits of schools to the mismanagement of churches. He also believed that industrial schools were too “ambitious” (1470/12) and should teach only basic skills that accorded with “the needs of the country” such as farming, carpentry, and blacksmithing (1468/10-11). For Benson, teaching students to be shoemakers, tailors, and printers wasted time, wages, and material; in addition, these trades had no job openings (1468/11).

But Benson’s criticism was also about appearance. As Benson saw it in 1897, “The chief ambition of an Industrial school is to possess a Brass Band and a printing press,” which he saw as merely “for outward show and [to] help to advertise the school” (1468/11). Boarding school bands in both the U.S. and Canada instilled military-like discipline and showcased supposed assimilation through music, uniform, and line; but as

many scholars suggest, students circumvented the designs of the schools, using music as resistance (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 179; 282; Neylan & Meyer, 2006; Troutman, 2009; Warrior, 2005). Newspapers differed: printing programs were ostensibly preparing for employment. And as newspapers took great pains to explain, subscribers and exchanges offset costs. Benson's disapproval of showiness may have been for financial reasons and optics. It may also reveal the larger philosophy that Indigenous peoples were incapable of higher art forms and instead destined for only the simplest trades. Or, his distinction between basic and lavish may be code for sites (e.g., music and writing) in which students could more likely undermine the government's assimilative agendas.

Before a reader would have opened a school newspaper, they would have seen its title and its masthead. Shingwauk Home's newspaper was titled *Our Forest Children (and What We Want to do about Them)*. The pronoun "our" may seem familiar enough, appearing today in editorials across the country that praise, pity, or loathe "Canada's First Nations," or (said by a non-Indigenous person) "our Aboriginal people." In this title, the "forest children" *belong* to the reader, whom the newspaper largely assumed was non-Indigenous. The responsibility for transforming *them*, found in the newspaper's subtitle, lies with the reader too. So, both the perceived problem and solution are owned by the non-Indigenous reader. The second word of the newspaper's title is equally connotative. "Forest" suggests the wilds antithetical to the school's reforming mission, established as a space outside of civilization. Forest being aligned with Indigenous peoples would not have been uncommon to nineteenth-century readers, who would have encountered it in the title of the first book published by an Indigenous person in Canada, George Copway's *Recollections of a Forest Life* (1847) and Eliza Morrison's *A Little History of My Forest*

*Life: An Indian-White Autobiography* (1894). The newspaper figured itself as “this leaf from the Forest which has alighted at your door” (3.3:7), emerging from the same forest once home to the school’s Indigenous students.

Students were occasionally referred to as wood. One annual report from Wikwemikong School remarked that the teacher had great skill in driving “the heads of the little Indians, as the wedge into the log” (DIA, 1892, p. 55). The violent, dehumanizing analogy was also used in the U.S. by the principal of the Carlisle School, who compared students to “raw material in the forest” that needed “to be brought and put through the proper refining influences of our civilization mills of today” (qtd. in Pfister p. 40). Pratt, invoking Alexander Pope’s oft-cited eighteenth-century phrase, also believed that a twig (implying a child) was “easier to bend than the bough, but that, too, may be bent if enough force is applied” (Eastman, 2011, p. 93). Battleford School’s newspaper, too, believed that Indigenous peoples/trees either “bend or break”: older trees have more difficulty because they developed “the habits of a life time, and the customs and traditions of many generations.” Instead, it is the young trees and saplings that “can be put into whatever shape may be required” (4.8:4). Even when *Our Forest Children* described an Indigenous man cutting down wood instead of being wood, the newspaper referred to him as “the solitary chieftain, plying his axe in the birchwood forest” who “sadly bethinks him of the coming disaster of his race” (4.4:221).

Compare these wood analogies to the metaphor used by Marilyn Dumont (2007a) in her poem about a woman who “inhales through the roots of her spine” and “responds to light and air and clear water/like her mother before her,” while she shelters saplings from storms (pp. 20-21). This “coming disaster”—what the newspaper could consider the

incompatibility of Indigenous peoples and modernity—is always framed as an inevitability. In these analogies colonialism, genocide, assimilative education, and resource extraction all conflate in one violent knot. The final word of the newspaper's title, children, may appear innocuous: the students were indeed children. But the word extended to adults as well, who were seen as wards, infantilized by the government. The Davin Report (1879) tried to counter this widespread belief, clarifying that the *race*, not the people, was in its childhood (p. 10). Still, all three words of this title are loaded.

The metaphor of children-as-wood continues in the newspaper's masthead (see Figure 2). It includes the newspaper's complete title, in stylized wood with branches peeping behind it. A circle sits below, with a view of the boarding school in the back with a flag, as four men saw and axe wood amidst the clearing of the school. In the background of this circle are faint images of Indigenous people on a floor of ferns, and a banner with text no longer created out of wood but capitalized, sans serif type: *And What We Want to do about Them*. The declared transformational power of these schools frames most issues of *Our Forest Children* through its opening image: the text changes from gnarly, comical wood-text to print; idle, faint, images of Indigenous people lazily sitting on a fern-upholstered floor become men standing, working, and creating; bodies almost indistinguishable from wood become crisp figures in the foreground of a school, a flag, and tools. The image's focus on transformation from wooden forest people to men who create things with wood has an additional resonance with the paper on which *Our Forest Children* was printed. So the forest is the source of Indigenous people, timber, and the newspaper itself—raw materials requiring transformation.

Using an Indigenous language in the title of a school newspaper such as *Na-Na-Kwa* could be read initially as a nod of respect for the people it is about. Certainly, the title ushers in less derogatory and assimilative implications than *Our Forest Children*. No other nineteenth-century Canadian newspaper from a boarding school that I could find uses Indigenous words in its title, though some American (*Eadle Keatah Toh* at Carlisle) and later Canadian (*Chupka* from Cranbrook and *Oke Nape* from Cluny Crowfoot) newspapers do. Non-boarding school newspapers such as Kamloop's *Wawa* did as well. But I want to guard against interpreting Kitamaat Home's newspaper *Na-Na-Kwa* as any less concerned with transformation than other newspapers simply because its title is in the Tsimshian language. For one, the title *Na-Na-Kwa* appears each issue in a country-and-western font, exoticizing rather than respecting the language. Further, the translation of *Na-Na-Kwa* appears in the newspaper's subtitle, "Or, Dawn on the Northwest Coast," whose font is instead italicized. The English translation is also the name of an 8-part origins story of how Christianity "arrived" at Kitamaat, featured in the first eight issues of the newspaper.<sup>24</sup> The serialized story describes how Christianity's light had difficulty "penetrat[ing] the darkness of heathenism" (1.1), concluding as a conversion narrative. For one missionary in the story, "the idea occurred to him if a teacher could only be obtained, the savage Kitamaats might be thus influenced by the gospel" (3.1). So although the newspaper's title is in Tsimshian, its font and English translation underwrite possibilities of homage.

The masthead of Battleford School's newspaper *The Guide* forgoes the lavish twists of *Our Forest Children* or *Na-Na-Kwa*, adopting instead a font of seeming

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<sup>24</sup> Written by Elizabeth Emsley Long, a teacher at Kitamaat and frequent contributor to *Na-Na-Kwa*, the story was reprinted by the United Church of Canada in 1907 under the title *How the Light Came to Kitamaat*.

simplicity, with a period at the end of its title to boot. For the newspaper's first four volumes, beneath its title is the motto "The Same Road Leads to Virtue and Success," which later changes to "In all the ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Both mottos frame the word "guide"—less of a manual and more of a source of spiritual guidance. The title of Regina School's newspaper, *Progress*, perhaps requires the least amount of unpacking—or the most. The implications are clear: that both the newspaper and its content represent a progression of the school's students along the evolutionary lines other schools espoused. Nary a late nineteenth-century Indian Affairs report escapes using the word. In these contexts, "progress" stands in for children who can read and write English; who can work on machinery; who are well behaved.

### **Printing on Display**

"THE MECHANICAL WORK ON THIS PAPER IS DONE ENTIRELY BY INDIAN BOYS"—so stated most issues of Regina School's newspaper. Battleford School, too, proudly announced each issue that "All the mechanical work in connection with THE GUIDE is performed by our pupils." Washakada School's stamp simply stated that it was "published by the Washakada Indian Homes," but its occasional supplement devoted entirely to news on the school would read "THIS SUPPLEMENT IS THE WORK OF OUR INDIAN BOYS" (March 29, 1894). The newspaper of Rupert Land's School also announced in each issue that "the mechanical work of printing this Magazine is entirely done by the pupils." Every issue of the *Indian Helper* published by Carlisle School stated it was "PRINTED by Indian boys, but EDITED by The-Man-on-the-Band-stand who is NOT an Indian." Annual reports would reiterate that in terms of school

newspapers, “all the mechanical work, from setting the type to making up the forms, and correcting the proofs, [was] being done by the boys” (DIA, 1899 p. 362).

And it was true: one article in Kitamaat Home’s newspaper explained that “so useful are [the students] that without them Nanakwa could not exist” (17.6). Similarly, the labour for Regina School’s paper was more than token: during the summer, publication would lessen or cease altogether without the boys’ help (*Progress* 3.78:7-8). While not all newspapers or government reports featured such a line below the masthead, their articles would frequently discuss the labour of the children behind the newspaper. Why might it have been important for readers to know that students were responsible for the work? The newspaper itself stood as proof students were transforming from seemingly lazy, unskilled, and illiterate boys to those capable of working a machine and printing in English. Advertising that the students were the labour, whom readers would assume were unpaid, perhaps also quashed assumptions that the newspaper represented excess spending and reminded readers lapses in payment were on the backs of unpaid boys. In his analysis of school newspapers in the U.S., Warrior (2005) postulates what these authenticating stamps—which appeared on the front of many American Indian school newspapers as well—may have meant: 1) the printers sneakily wrote these phrases, “injecting a bit of Native agency into a document that otherwise spoke for the students and about them”; or 2) that the printers asked for permission to include the phrase, demanding their acknowledgement (p. 98). Warrior, though, considers neither of these scenarios probable. A more likely scenario he proposes is that an instructor constructed the phrase but “those students in the print shop who could read were probably happy to see themselves and their work highlighted in this small way.”

Despite newspapers attributing labour to a homogenous group of “OUR INDIAN BOYS” in its masthead stamps, individual printers frequently received attention. Though the two forces—homogenizing labour and yet highlighting specific people—appears in opposition, Joel Pfister (2004) argues that American Indian boarding schools sought to “individualize” students—a core construct of American identity. But before schools could attempt to instill in students the tenets of American individualism they first had to homogenize them all as “Indians”—this meant attempting to eradicate spiritual, linguistic, visual (e.g., hair and clothing) and other markers that differentiated the diverse nations represented at any given school. Schools like Carlisle “first *Indianized* its diverse students so that their *individualizing* could be sanctioned” (p. 20). Both of these forces were at work in Canadian school newspapers: a homogenous mass of “OUR INDIAN BOYS” responsible for labour, and yet regularly occurring profiles of individual printers.

Printers were individualized both for their skill in the trade but also because they were usually academically inclined. Printers were typically top of their class and the captains of the school. At Regina School, Jack Muchahoo and Fred Peters, who acted as chief printers, received specific attention in their school newspaper. John Kasto was also a celebrated printer, who moved on from Regina School the prestigious Hampton Institute in Virginia (DIA, 1902, p. 423), an early American Indian boarding school that also taught African-American students.<sup>25</sup> Though many students contracted measles, John’s case received attention (*Progress* 3.84:6). Washakada Home highlighted the work of Miles Cochrane, Angus Prince, and Fred Pratt (the school captain), who were described as “expert at the case,” “expert compositors,” (DIA, 1895, p. 166), and able to

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<sup>25</sup> For more on the Hampton Institute, see Donal F. Lindsey (1995).



“set up a job tastily” (1896, p. 362). At the beginning of 1896, two new printers named Samuel Pratt and James Flett joined the crew and quickly learning to “set type, run off the paper,” and show “great adaptability in the business” (p. 362). The school’s print shop also included a “deaf mute” named Dummy (Nap-ia-mo-kin-ma), a Blackfoot boy who printed for at least three years (1895, p. 166) until he went to Brandon Hospital for T.B. in his knee joint (1896, p. 362). Despite his derogatory nickname, annual reports describe him as “next to” the other printer boys in “expertness in type-setting and running the presses.” He is described as “a marvel, being a deaf mute,” and able to “read, write, [and] do sums.” He is described as “a fine, strong, intelligent lad of fine physique” (1895, p. 166). Printing was seen as an appropriate career for people who were deaf in the late nineteenth century. Prior to the industrial revolution, people who were deaf were often limited to farming or teaching at deaf schools; with increased industry and literacy rates, printing as an occupation in the U.S. “predominated for deaf men” (Haller, 1993). Like other printers, Nap-ia-mo-kin-ma was both homogenized and yet singled out.

At Battleford School, Gilbert Bear and Louis Laronde were in such a league—printers yet also academic all-stars, receiving individualized attention throughout the newspaper. So too at Rupert’s Land School, where Arthur Cochrane and Maurice Sanderson comprised what was considered the “management” of the shop (DIA, 1895, p. 11). Robert Stevenson received particular attention as one of the junior printers because “while playing with the press had his hand caught and hurt. It has progressed favorably and will, we hope, soon to be well” (*Rupert’s Land Gleaner* 1892, p. 32).<sup>26</sup> Accidents from children operating machinery intended for adults were frequent, and the print shop

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<sup>26</sup> For a first-hand description of injuries in schools because of operating machinery, see Isabelle Knockwood’s *Out of the Depths*.

was likely no exception, as Robert exemplifies. The fact that the newspaper mentions it (albeit nonchalantly, almost blaming the child for “playing”) reveals the gravity of the injury, for school newspapers were experts at burying the death, disease, and injuries that comprised these schools. Although printers were a minority of the rest of the school population, they were singled out for their skill and academic successes.

At the all-female Kitamaat Home, all printers were girls.<sup>27</sup> A student at Carlisle School wrote in her newspaper that she hoped “girls will learn to print. I don’t think printing is any harder than washing”; despite her observation, other than the Kitamaat Home only boys printed. Besides the girls, labour also came from female staff: the principal’s wife and two teachers (*Na-Na-Kwa* 15.2).<sup>28</sup> It is unclear whether printing was part of an academic course, as students were ranked against one another, or a standalone trade, as the principal called them his “assistants” (6.2). The girls may have been compensated for their labour, at least during holidays, as one teacher lists work on *Na-Na-Kwa* as a source of “profitable employment,” on par with other duties such as tending the school’s garden and creating pinafores (18.8).

Like other school newspapers, Kitamaat Home isolated and praised particularly adept printers. Its newspaper describes one printer named Minnie as “a bright child and capable” (14.11). The newspaper recognizes Flora as able to “do any part of the mechanical work, in fact is indispensable” and “Nancy is very useful and obliging” (13.1), later described as someone who “understands thoroughly the mechanical work of Nanakwa and is a good compositor” (17.11). The newspaper also makes special mention of Nancy when she becomes ill and is found unconscious (24.9). Such glosses reveal both

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<sup>27</sup> Though the Kitamaat Home taught both girls and boys, it only housed girls. Boys usually only attended school for half the year, working with their families for the rest.

<sup>28</sup> Carlisle’s printing program was run by a woman, Marianna Burgess. See Fear-Segal (2004).

the school's disregard for Indigenous life as well as the reverence for its printers. Besides typesetting, Kitamaat Home's printers also wrote for the newspaper occasionally. Nancy, Minnie, and Martha contributed "A Coast Ghost Story" collaboratively (15.9). In January 1902, the girls also contributed compositions on flowers (17.11). Their celebrated role as printers was a frame through which to read their essays. Though the plan was never realized, the newspaper promised "to give a short sketch of the two junior printers" (17.11). Like other printers, Kitamaat Home's female printers received individual praise.

Besides the printers, it could be argued school newspapers attempted to convert real children into characters. One issue of Kitamaat Home's newspaper offered a chart to readers with students' Anglo names, Indigenous names with a pronunciation guide, and ages—a sheet to be "used as a reference[,] for the children are often referred to in Nanakwa" (7.6). The chart acts as a legend, as if found at the front of a complicated novel. Regina School also treated real children as characters, most notably through the example of "Little Joe."<sup>29</sup> Little Joe, according to the school's newspaper, was "always saying smart things" (19.2:6). In one scene, the newspaper remarked that "it is very amusing to see baby Joe with No10 skates on skating around the kitchen yard" (18.2:5). The newspaper poked fun at the character of Joe for attempting to assert himself. In one scene, he takes issue with the matron on duty who wishes to control his money when he attends a fair. As the newspaper frames it, "This arrangement did not quite suit little Jo, and he announced to her as they were on their way to the grounds, 'I think I could take care of five cents my own self'" (18.9:6). In another, Little Joe allows two girls to go

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<sup>29</sup> Children were generally aged 7-16 at schools, though much younger children such as Joe were not infrequent. The newspaper described Joe as having "a chum about his own size" (18.3:7) as well, though it is unclear whether Joe was young or just small for his age.

ahead of him as they entered the school, remarking “ladies first” (19.2:6). One part of the violence these newspapers represent is how they transform real children into Victorian caricatures, which non-Indigenous readers consume while the children’s parents have little or no contact with their real children. As Pfister observes in the U.S., nineteenth-century Canadian newspapers also generalized students and simultaneously individualized them as characters.

Schools often displayed printing at fairs and in parades to prove “the children of the red man have mental and mechanical ability equal to any race” (*Progress* 18.13:1). Schools also exhibited students themselves at fairs and parades. As Sadiya Qureshi (2011) notes, the nineteenth century represented a change in scale of human display (p. 2). Students at Haskell Institute in Kansas, for instance, displayed their trades in a July 4 parade. Female students operated sewing machines atop a float adorned by the motto “work that is half done is always asking to be done again” and the biblical line “she seeketh wool and flax and worketh diligently with her hands.” Printers “lifted high the case, immense ‘stick,’ press roller, rolls of papers” and advertised their newspaper (*Indian Leader* 6.18:6). Carlisle School printers also paraded for the quadri-centennial of Columbus carrying printing equipment and papers (Pratt, 2003, p. 296).

Fairs were also venues where printing was on display. Indigenous peoples at fairs were not uncommon, particularly at the 1893 Chicago’s World Fair because of its celebration of Columbus’ “arrival” 400 years prior. Boarding schools across North America capitalized on the opportunity to showcase student “transformation” to the world by displaying them sitting at desks and operating machinery, including printing. In Canada, the Department of Indian Affairs rotated amongst 8 of its schools, sending

students to work in a mock schoolroom (P. Raibmon, 2000, p. 180). Students operated a press and created a pamphlet called *The Canadian Indian*. Another pamphlet titled *The Work of a Few Years among the Indians* featured the stamp, “entirely the work of young Indian lads and their instructor.” The 16-page booklet detailed everything from treaties to reserves and schooling. So while many trades were presented in 1893, printing made a particular splash. Robert A. Trennert (1987) explains how the American Indian boarding school displays at the Chicago World’s Fair in many ways backfired on its organizers, failing to satiate fairgoers who desired to see not boys writing English and operating machinery but instead “traditional” Indigenous peoples. Paige Raibmon (2000), too, provides an account of resistance by Kwakwaka’wakw people at the fair.

Gilbert Bear, who attended Battleford School in Saskatchewan, was one such student. Gilbert spent three months at the 1893 Chicago Fair operating a press for visitors. Annual reports stated that Gilbert “performed some very excellent work” (DIA, 1893, p. 121) and “conducted himself in a most becoming manner whilst there, and did a greater part of the mechanical work in connection with the printing of the *Canadian Indian*.” According to the report, “the change greatly improved the lad, in both appearance and manner” (p. 174). The *Battleford Herald* (qtd in *Manitoba Morning Press* March 23, 1894, p. 3) reported that Gilbert, who it made sure to mention was a “full blooded Cree Indian,” was “one of the lucky boys and saw Chicago last year during the fair,” gaining “a little knowledge of civilized life.” So while Gilbert was already an exceptional student, the fair changed him even more according to media.

Despite reports and articles explaining that Gilbert was “lucky” to be on display in Chicago, Gilbert’s own words offer a different perspective. An 1894 article in the

*Battleford Herald* quotes Gilbert, when asked if he liked the Fair, as replying “No; too hot and too many people.” The newspaper chocks Gilbert’s response up to him having “not much to say about this visit” (*Manitoba Morning Free Press*, 1894, Feb 28, p. 8). I read this quote as saying something significant: despite pressure to go along with the narrative of the newspaper, which frames Gilbert as “lucky,” he said “no.” It *would* have been hot, and there *were* many people at the World’s Fair—almost 28 million visitors.

Gilbert could have meant more, too, when the newspaper quoted him saying “no.” Did he oppose the colonial and assimilative goals of the fair? Was he paid for his 3 months? Did he oppose being put on display, viewed by fairgoers disappointed not to see a “real Indian”? Was he happy to meet with other students and printers? Proud to have his talents recognized? Did he have time to gripe with other students on display about barriers to employment? Was he able to network? Did Gilbert have occasion to sneak off and spend time with other Indigenous peoples at the fair or outside of it at the Buffalo Bill shows? One can only wonder. But an inquiring newspaper wanted Gilbert to say “I was lucky to have a further opportunity to be civilized at the fair. I was able to show the rest of the world how civilizing our school is in Saskatchewan”—and Gilbert said “no.”

Schools further displayed printers through photography. Many have theorized photography in boarding schools as propaganda (Malmsheimer, 1985; J. Miller, 2003; Racette, 2009; Warley, 2009). Susan Sontag’s *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003) is helpful in viewing these images. For her, photographs always frame and therefore exclude (p. 46). Sontag also insists that photographs objectify, that “they turn an event or a person into something that can be possessed” (p. 80). Finally, she asserts that viewing a photograph of someone’s pain cannot “repair our ignorance about the history and causes

of the suffering” but can only invite a viewer “to pay attention, to reflect, to learn, to examine the rationalizations for mass suffering offered by established powers. Who caused what the picture shows? Who is responsible? Is it excusable?” (p. 117).

Some newspapers reveal how students (or rather how teachers thought students) felt about school photographs. Regina School wrote in its newspaper that “there was a quite a bit of excitement at the School” because a photographer took a group shot, minus the older boys who were away threshing. The newspaper explained it was “a lot of work getting such a big crowd into position, but it was done, and we are all quite pleased with the result.” The newspaper also stated that “some of the girls, who were wearing extra fancy hair ribbons for the occasion, were wishing they could have the back of their heads taken as well as the front” (*Progress* 17.8:3). One student wrote that she was sad because in the photograph it looked like she had two heads and faces because she was chewing gum (4.6:1). One article from Carlisle School described how Pratt orchestrated a clear photograph of the entire school by telling the children to keep “motionless as if instead of a harmless camera they had been looking at Medusa’s head and had really turned to stone,” a stillness which the newspaper saw as demonstrating “the effect of generations of drill in that immobility of muscles upon which the Indian prides himself” (*Redman* 8.7:5). Here, the camera is far from “harmless” or objective. But these “behind-the-scenes” explanations within the newspapers continue to exclude and frame.

Sherry Farrell Racette (2009) categorizes boarding school photographs as images taken by children, visitors, or the school (p. 51). Photographs of printers fall into Racette’s third category. Pictures of children working at trades figure prominently in government reports, serving as the “visual embodiment of [the schools’] momentous

project” (Racette, 2009, p. 54). Carlisle School was the leader in boarding school photography and used them as incentives for newspaper subscriptions.<sup>30</sup> At Carlisle School, its school newspaper *Morning Star* advertised a standing offer: if readers were to supply three new subscribers, they would receive a 9” x 14” inch photograph of the whole school; for two new subscribers, before-and-after photographs of either Pueblo or Navajo students; and for one new subscriber, an 8” X 5” photograph of the newspaper’s printers. These images were posed, with printers in their school uniforms. Nothing about their poses, clothing, or the background of the portraits would otherwise indicate that they are printers. Though not as valuable as a shot of the whole school or a before-and-after image, the photograph of printers (rather than any other trade) was offered as reward. Why? Perhaps because these images achieved several goals. They display the before-and-after without the before—students in uniforms and short hair, the caption explaining that they now are printers and therefore able to read and write English as well as operate machinery. Readers may also have been keen on receiving these images because printers’ names appeared frequently in newspaper. Printers would have known this—they were the ones laying the type that advertised pictures of themselves.

Photographs of printers were not offered in Canadian newspapers as incentive, but still existed. One such photograph appeared in Battleford School’s annual report for 1896. Seven boys look straight at the camera, their teacher standing authoritatively in the middle with one of his hands on his hip and the other on a chair (see Figure 3). Three of these children appear too young for the dangerous work of a printer, even by the schools’ low standards. Everyone wears a suit, posed in a studio with a painted background—

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<sup>30</sup> Incentives were not unusual. As Rutherford (1982) explains, the *Montreal Witness* motivated new subscribers with skates, gold locket, magic lanterns, and chromos of Lady and Earl of Dufferin (p. 97).



columns, potted plants, and drapes as if they were in a European sitting room. Nothing in the photograph indicates these children are the school's printers save for the report's caption, but they do communicate the "momentous project" in their short hair and suits.

On the other hand, a photograph of Regina School's printers shows three boys operating a hand press in work clothes (see Figure 4) and hats. Two of the boys appear engaged with the press, though still posed; the third boy stares straight back at the camera, standing behind the press with an expression perhaps of indifference or defiance. Haskell Institute's newspaper, too, published an image of its printing office as students operated machinery (2.19.2). Brian Hochman (2014) remarks on the 1920s in situ photography taken of Indigenous peoples in *National Geographic*. He notes, despite attempts to display action, the stillness of these images, as if the photographs were meant "to resemble museum displays or life-group dioramas, arresting a moment in time either before or after some naturally ongoing course of action." For Hochman, such stasis was "both a function of evolutionary ideology and a product of mechanical necessity" (p. 168). Decades earlier, the photographs—both action and posed—of printers convey this similar freezing. Sontag's point that photographs manipulate resonates here, too.

Kitamaat School's newspaper also published a photograph of its students in 1902, praising in particular the three students (Martha, Minnie, and Nancy) who were printers (17.8). While some students smile, others appear upset. Yet the newspaper closes down for readers any negative interpretations: the article accompanying the photograph states that the girls are a "happy group" and some only appear "somewhat distressed by the sun shining in their eyes" (see Figure 5). The article states it hopes to destabilize stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as "stoical, immobile races, in whom there is no sense of humor."

But the article reinscribes other stereotypes, explaining that these girls are “longing for the freedom of the tribes” and are “true daughters of nature.”

The article attempts to further contain a significant example of resistance in this photograph. The girls wear blankets even though schools typically showcased uniforms, permitting blankets only in “before” shots. The article clarifies the girls are only wearing blankets because they “dearly love to play ‘old woman.’” In this form of play, the girls would wear shawls, “their bodies bent at precisely the same angle” with a handkerchief around their head as they pretended to gossip using “the favourite phrases of their grannies with perfect intonation” (17.8-9). In containing for readers the threat that the blankets may represent an unfinished process of assimilation, the article reveals far more.

This photograph evidences how students may have been remembering their grandparents, openly embodying memories of their clothing, posture, gossip, language, and intonation. Maybe the girls played what the paper called “old woman” (rather than “grandmother”) because they desired to be grandmothers one day (and by definition survive school). Maybe they weren’t playing. Perhaps they missed their grandparents. Or, they were just having fun. Maybe they wished to openly defy the school’s attempts to make them forget. Whatever the reason, the newspaper permits only the narrowest explanation, calling the play “laughable.” The accompanying article states that the girls regard cloth as “one of their most coveted treasures” but does not recognize the cloth as a tool that may have helped them embody memories of their grandmothers. Sontag’s words extend here: the photograph frames and therefore excludes; the accompanying text attempts to further negate Indigenous resistance.

## Leaders and Readers

Children were not the only people who worked on these newspapers: students had teachers, who varied from institution to institution. Sometimes a printing program depended on a professional, as was the case at Regina School with J.K. McInnis, the editor of the *Regina Standard* (*Progress* 3.77:7). Battleford School had the assistance of P.G. Laurie, who was the founder and editor of the *Saskatchewan Herald*. Laurie created the newspaper after walking 650 miles from Winnipeg next to an ox-cart carrying his printing press (Hildebrandt, 1994). He appears to have set up the printing program, leaving a boy in charge upon his departure (DIA, 1892, p. 245), though Laurie would praise Battleford School's printing shop efforts in his own newspaper for years to come (14.28). As Walter Wasylyow (1972) points out, in the *Saskatchewan Herald* Laurie wrote critically of the school, describing bored, routinized, and starved children (*Herald*, 5.19) as well as questioning to what extent the state had authority over Indigenous children compared to their parents (17.10). Laurie may have even acted as a watchdog, reporting on fires at the school and runaways (7.1). But Laurie also viewed Indigenous peoples as “an obstacle to white settlement” (Hildebrandt, 1994) and assured his readers the state was not starving Indigenous peoples on the plains, blaming famine on Indigenous peoples themselves (Carter, 1990, p. 72). Laurie also printed an anti-Riel proclamation, resulting in Riel putting a price on his head (Fetherling, 1990, pp. 47–48). These contexts complicate Laurie's motivations for helping the printers.

Most schools did not have the benefit of consulting established editors. The principal at Kitamaat Home reminded readers that he had “never seen inside a press room; therefore a degree of allowance should be made” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 2.1). Another article

admitted the newspaper was created “amid confusing interruptions at all hours of the day” (15.2) and at “odd moments, and very often when the missionary is weary at the close of the day” (6.1) and “in the midst of washing dishes, and all sorts of work” (8.4; 12.4). Sometimes, schools hired an instructor briefly until students got the hang of the trade. At Birtle School, the print shop was “without any permanent instructors” (DIA, 1897, p. 310), while students at Battleford School “proved equal to the task of all type-setting without further aid from an instructor” (DIA, 1895, p. 397). At Rupert’s Land School, students learned under a James Lawler and then a J.T. French (DIA, 1893, p. 126). This changed the following year, when both the blacksmith and printer instructors were dismissed and replaced with “trained pupils.” The annual report frames the instructors’ dismissals as symbolic of the students “getting used to their business” and “gaining more self-reliance” (DIA, 1895, p. 110). The students at Regina School had an instructor for four months and then the instructor was dismissed, replaced by “two of the boys who had no previous training in typesetting” but “were competent to take full charge of the work” (DIA, 1895, p. 176). Though letting a printing instructor go was likely more to do with the schools’ larger financial distress, newspapers would frame their lack of expert training as the transformation of the student.

Editors of a newspaper also varied. The second issue of Battleford School’s newspaper claimed its students were the editors (*The Guide* 1.2:1), and Rupert’s Land School stated that its newspaper was “edited by a committee of the pupils” (DIA, 1892, p. 245) who were called “sub-editors.” Washakada School in Manitoba also claimed its printers did “a little editing” (DIA, 1895, p.166). Students *did* contribute more for each newspaper than just manual labour. In addition to their writing, some newspapers point to

students' roles in gathering news from other newspapers (*Guide*, 1.2.1; DIA, 1895, p. 166). Battleford School had a way for students to submit ideas throughout the week into a "News Box" (1.2.1). But editorial control remained largely with the principal. Upon the death of D.C. Munro, the head teacher of Regina School, a graduate named Archie Thompson took his place as editor; however, Archie importantly does not receive the same moniker of his predecessor (14.7:6). Though newspapers attempted to distinguish the labour from the editorial control of the newspaper, it would be wrong to assume that students were merely cogs in the wheel. It is unclear how much students were behind the scenes suggesting ideas or writing. However, newspapers distinguished between the labour of the students and the editorial power of the school.

Students and teachers were not the only people involved with the papers, as each newspaper typically reached a few thousand paid readers (see Table 1 for self-reported circulation rates). Most readers lived throughout Canada, the United States, and England, and papers were sometimes listed in both Canadian and British currency. As early as 1899, Kitamaat School's newspaper boasted of a readership "in all parts of Canada," as well as "the British Isles and more remote parts of the Eastern Hemisphere" (*Na-Na-Kwa* 5.1). Shingwauk Home's newspaper also enjoyed a range of readers. Its summer issue from 1888 featured letters of praise from readers in Ontario, Nova Scotia, Bermuda, and Scotland; a member of the British Association, a superintendent of a boarding school in Nebraska; the editor of the magazine *Science* in New York; both a Baptist and a Presbyterian missionary; and members of the Indian Department in the North West Territories, the Geological Survey Department in Ottawa, the Bureau of Ethnology in Washington, and the Library of Parliament in Ottawa. Newspapers sometimes addressed

teachers, with advice on pedagogy and responsibility (4.10:2). Newspapers also directly reached out to other missionaries, both at home and “in the field.” Regina School’s newspaper saw itself as explaining for its readers in the east what missions were doing in the west (*Progress* 15.1:8). Battleford School’s newspaper regularly asked for contributions from clergy. Kitamaat’s newspaper also declared its desire to reach as wide an audience as possible “amongst those who contribute, and pray for the success of our Indian Work” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 3.1). Readers included members of the Women’s Methodist Society, members of the Epworth League (a Methodist youth club), and the principal’s friends (15.2)—in other words, the readership included active supporters of the school.

Though newspapers were not directly addressed to Indigenous readers beyond the students, it would be a mistake to assume the audience did not include them. Newspapers enjoyed an Indigenous readership beyond alumni, including Joseph Hawk from Saskatoon, described as “an intelligent Indian and an old subscriber” who recently paid the Regina School a visit (*Progress* 3.79.7). One issue of Carlisle’s newspaper, entitled “A Red Man Wants the *Red Man*” (the name of the publication), published a letter from an Indigenous man who subscribed for one year to learn “all about my people back there so that I will know how they are getting along” (4.5:8). The occasional reference in *Na-Na-Kwa* points to a Kitamaat readership (4.1; 4.4), but these instances are rare.

Newspapers generally disparaged parents, rarely addressing them. This does not mean parents weren’t reading the newspapers—just that the newspapers did not intend, promote, or anticipate them.<sup>31</sup> One exception includes Battleford School, which in 1892 began distributing copies to “each boy and girl in the school, and one for each of their

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<sup>31</sup> Parental readerships changed in the twentieth century, when newspapers were almost exclusively addressed to parents.

parents” (*The Guide* 1.10). Child states that in the U.S. school newspapers were a key part of convincing skeptical parents to send their children to school (p. 69). One Indigenous reader that Battleford School made sure to acknowledge was the famous John Ojijatekha Brant-Sero, a Mohawk celebrity, actor, interpreter, and lecturer (S. P. Petrone, 1998). Brant-Sero wrote the newspaper asking to become a subscriber and requesting back copies, ideally all issues, of the newspaper (*The Guide* 5.3:4). The school published Brant-Sero’s letter and below it ran an article on his life under the heading “A Cultured Indian,” impressing upon readers the importance of the request. Brant-Sero also wrote a letter to Shingwauk Home’s newspaper (3.11:140). We know not why Brant-Sero requested issues of these two newspapers, though the schools take the requests as praise. Did he order back issues because he approved of the schools? Was he keeping tabs on students? Communicating information back to parents and communities?

The major Indigenous audience of school newspapers was the students themselves. Articles spoke of how important the school newspaper was to students. At Haskell Institute, one boy who was sent home due to illness and later died was reported to have slept on his deathbed with three issues of his school newspaper underneath his pillow (3.5.4). Many articles presumed a mixed audience. One article from Battleford School states that its tips on health are for “all our readers, white or red” (*The Guide* 7.9:2). Much more generally are articles for Sunday school children, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Some articles are direct addresses to boys specifically (6.11:3), directing boys not to be “slinks” and instead to tell the truth (6.7:3). Regina School had a sporadically published “Young Person’s Column” aimed at both children in boarding schools as well as non-Indigenous Sunday schoolers (3.71:11). Shingwauk Home’s

newspaper began dedicating its first and last two pages to Sunday schoolers in early 1890, calling the pamphlet “Stray Leaf from the Forest” (3.11:129), as the pages could be read as part of the original publication or separately distributed.<sup>32</sup> The principal at Shingwauk Home had a strict understanding of how his newspaper would be taken up by Sunday schools: he suggested that one copy belong to the Sunday school’s superintendent and that a second copy be kept in the library, with copies bound after one year.

The special section featured a column authored by the persona of “Barbara Birchbark,” who would answer questions posed by Sunday schoolers. Barbara’s letters were meant to tell “all the ins and outs of a pupil’s life at the Indian Homes under Mr. Wilson’s control” (3.11:129). The character of “Barbara” acted as a fly on the wall, documenting the goings-on of the school for outsiders. Barbara would typically outline a seasonal occurrence at the school (such as Christmas celebrations or the beginning of summer holidays) and then provide a scene of an individual child who typically does something funny, such as the child who used a parasol to keep the moonlight off of her (4.5:1) or the child whom Barbara “could not help laughing at” because she thought the devil lurked under her table (4.3:194). Non-Indigenous Sunday schoolers were encouraged to pose questions to Barbara about Indigenous students’ lives at Shingwauk—do they play sports and do they mimic their teachers, for instance (4.3:194). In her first article, Barbara implies that boys at Shingwauk (who were only permitted to visit their sisters at the girls’ school on Christmas day) lied about having a sibling there (3.11:143). Barbara describes that students were “generally very home-sick and unhappy

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<sup>32</sup> Though “Stray Leaf” began as free for Sunday schools already donating money to Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes (3.11:129), several issues in Principal Wilson began charging \$1 per year for 10 copies. The extra dollar would both offset the printing costs as well as eliminate his management of the “free list,” which Wilson described as a task filled with “labor and anxiety” (3.13:175).



when they first arrive; they don't see any sense in their being taken away from their teepees and their own free prairie life. Probably they think the white people very unkind and unjust, and very meddling into the bargain" (3.12:158). Barbara goes on to describe how the children "really are very affectionate, these poor, wild, little boys and girls" (3.12:158). While much of the newspaper appears directed at a mixed audience of children, Barbara's column is directed at white students who are curious about the Home.

The persona of Barbara Birchbark finds its equivalent in Carlisle School's newspaper and its personae of "Mr. See-it-all" and "Mr. Man-on-the-Band-Stand" (M.O.T.B.S.). The personae were an alias for Mariana Burgess, Superintendent of printing at Carlisle for 15 years. M.O.T.B.S. would panoptically comment throughout issues on small infractions that Burgess spied, mostly to do with the children's appearance and behavior. M.O.T.B.S. even claimed the power to see inside children's homes after they left. For Fear-Segal (2007) M.O.T.B.S. "combined the characteristics of God, Uncle Sam, and grandfather with those of prison officer, spy, and dirty old man" (2007, p. 207). In his first appearance in Carlisle's *The Indian Helper* in 1885, M.O.T.B.S. proclaimed, "You can't see me but I can see you," directly addressing students at the school. Fear-Segal (2007) maintains that the persona "attempted to control, intimidate, and manipulate the children" through surveillance (p. 210).

Wilson was also struck by the symbol of the bandstand at Carlisle School and wrote about it in *Our Forest Children*:

I mention the band-stand first because the band-stand stands in the centre of the grounds . . . [It's] the headquarters of the editor of the little weekly paper called

the *Indian Helper*. The *Indian Helper* is edited by “the man on the band-stand.” And “the man on the band-stand” is supposed to be surveying from his elevated position everything that takes place at Carlisle, both indoors and out. (3.4:28)

Wilson places for his readers the bandstand at the centre of the entire campus, which was the perch of M.O.T.B.S. No schools I surveyed had an equivalent to M.O.T.B.S, which lasted for 15 years. The *Indian Leader* from Haskell Institute in Kansas, though, makes brief mention of the figure of Uncle John:

Uncle John sometimes takes a tiny notebook from his pocket and begins to write when the children are naughty and call each other names. Afterward he reads aloud to them what he has written. They do not like to hear it, although they know it is true, every word of it. “For somehow,” as Bess declares, it wouldn’t have been so dreadful if it hadn’t been written down.” Now, whenever Uncle John begins to write in his little book they run to him and say: “Please don’t write it down; we’ll not say nay more naughty words.” (1.4.3)

Though Uncle John was not frequent, he carries similar elements to M.O.T.B.S. Battleford School’s newspaper ran one article in a similar vein. Curiously, the newspaper’s all-watching persona is named “Weesarkachark”—a Cree trickster figure:

Weesarkachark says the loafers on the bridge ought to starve. They work so little that they do not deserve to eat. Weesarkachark sees many holes in boots that

might be mended. He does not like to see a lot of Half-breed boys playing baseball on Sunday on the hill. They would be better at Sunday school, like our boys and girls . . . Weesarkachark was at church with us last Sunday evening. He was sorry to hear the boys and girls so little. (*The Guide* 1.2.1)

Like M.O.T.B.S., Weesarkachark commands an all-seeing view: from the school's bridge, to a hill off-campus, to inside the church. Weesarkachark prints what he was able to see—mostly infractions related to religious sloth and laziness. But unlike M.O.T.B.S., whose presence lasted fifteen years, Weesarkachark only appeared once. As well, M.O.T.B.S.' persona is that of an old, white man—Weesarkachark takes its name from Cree traditions. Though Wilson never adopted a M.O.T.B.S.-like persona in his newspaper, he clearly was intrigued, visiting the bandstand at Carlisle and reporting on it.

Barbara Birchbark lasted only one year compared to the 15 of M.O.T.B.S. As well, Barbara does not overtly proclaim her panoptic control. This is not to say surveillance within the newspapers was non-existent, just that such statements were not issued through a persona. M.O.T.B.S. also adopted the persona of an older man; Barbara's persona was of a matronly teacher. Where similarities can be drawn is in how both columns reported to readers the goings-on of the school. As well, both columns asked readers to submit questions for personae to answer, locating both the authority to answer and the privilege to ask with non-Indigenous people.

In addition to the leaders and readers of newspapers, school newspapers themselves took on personae. As we have seen, a school newspaper would highlight that living, breathing students created it; at the same time, one of the newspapers' key

techniques (and the schools more largely) was to *dehumanize* students. In an added twist, newspapers would frequently *humanize* themselves, adopting a persona. When much of the colonial project was bold and bombast, school newspapers frequently represented themselves diminutively. The newspapers of Rupert's Land School, Battleford School, and Kitamaat Home all referred to themselves as a "little paper." Shingwauk Home's publication, too, called itself a "humble little" newspaper (3.1.1) and analogizes its early beginnings to "launching our frail craft—our Indian bark canoe" (3.3.7).<sup>33</sup> The first issue of Haskell Institute's newspaper explained that it debuted "modestly, even shyly" (1.1:2). Its second installment wished that "by the next issue its modesty will be so far over come that some of the many compliments may be printed" (1.2.2). But in its second year, the newspaper still referred to itself as "a timid, modest little two-year-old" (2.19.2). Kitamaat Home's newspaper called itself a "modest enterprise" (9.7) and "an amateur production" (24.3). Regina School, too, explained that it could never "compete with The London Times in editorials, with the great dailies in giving world's news" (15.1:8).

But in the same breathe, school newspapers would signal what set them apart: original content supplied by students as well as missionaries rather than "common place matter, culled carelessly from other papers" (*Our Forest Children* 3.3:7). Despite carefully setting themselves up as slapdash, school newspapers like *Progress* would distinguish themselves from most "local newspapers in the West," which merely derived their articles from "some central City office," resulting in a "ready made appearance and warmed-over flavor" (15.1:8). In addition to a persona both denying its quality and yet distinguishing itself from bigger news outlets, newspapers charted their own perceived

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<sup>33</sup> For an interrogation of the canoe within discourses of Canadian nationalism, see Misao Dean (2013).

success by drawing attention to how they grew, particularly by page count (e.g., from a 4- to a 16-page paper) and circulation rates. Part of this humbling may have been to assure readers the newspaper was not at the expense of other missionary duties. At Kitamaat Home, for instance, the principal assured readers the newspaper was not produced at the expense of “more important mission work” (3.1) or the “duties pertaining to Mission life” (24.3). But such a persona—at once humble and yet expanding—mirrors the tone of Canadian nineteenth-century colonialism more generally.

The persona of the newspaper also took more literal turns. At a celebration of Haskell Institute’s newspaper, the Superintendent’s wife Ruth Peairs donned a dress and a hat constructed from the school’s newspaper, coming to the party as the newspaper itself. Students would sometimes dress up also as a “printer’s devil.” The term means both a young printing assistant as well as an invisible scapegoat for printing errors. A contemporaneous literary guide offers one etymology of the term: a fifteenth-century printer named Aldo Manuzio, credited with developing italic type, the semicolon and the comma, had “employed a negro boy” and “this little black boy was believed to be an imp of Satan, and went by the name of the ‘printer’s devil’” (Cobham Brewer, 1896, p. 860). This racialized etymology comes to bear on the Haskell students who would dress up as printers’ devils. One came to the printer’s reception in a “suit of flaming red” and red face paint (2.4:2). At a fourth of July parade, another student also dressed as a printer’s devil “in bright red with horns and tail.” The school newspaper reported, “He attracted a great deal of attention and some excitement among small children, who did not wish to be on the same street as “the bad man” (6.18:6). Though these are different contexts, the teacher is permitted the dress of the newspaper while the children are the devil.

Inverse examples also exist in which the newspaper is personified and given human traits. Regina School's newspaper *Progress* provides one such example:

“Progress” sometimes grieves “If anything inanimate e'er grieves”—over some of the boys and girls . . . who do not seem to have courage enough to embark on the matrimonial sea . . . To all who are trembling on the brink we would say “Be courageous.” (15.6:4)

Inducing students to marry aligns with schools' larger anxieties about students returning to the reserve; adopting the voice of the newspaper perhaps made the advice sound almost omnipresent. Though *Progress* adopts the voice of the newspaper minimally, and most newspapers speak through the voice of the editor-principal, Kitamaat Home's newspaper *Na-Na-Kwa* consistently adopted the persona of a child. While other newspapers make passing reference to being in their “infancy” or “growing,” *Na-Na-Kwa* goes much further. The persona began, using the third person, in the fifth issue:

NANAKWA is no longer an infant of days, as this issue commences its second year. For a young baby it has seen much of the world . . . As this missionary letter is printed chiefly in the interest of the children's Home, we send it forth in the name of that Saviour who welcomed little children to his bosom. (5.1)

Here, the child/newspaper is a baby. Three groups of children get entangled in this passage: the newspaper-as-child, Indigenous children in the school, and the biblical

children Jesus was said to have welcomed as well as a possible allusion to the verse that to enter heaven requires becoming humble like a child (Matthew 18:4).

As the trope continues, the voice transforms from the third to the first person, as if to mimic the child/newspaper's ability to now speak for itself:

I am only two [:] . . . “one of our younger children” . . . My publisher has sometimes had to look sadly and almost reproachfully at me, because of a lack of careful arrangement and trimness in my appearance. The truth is, his supply of type has been so meager that it was impossible for me to appear before you in smart attire. But thanks to a donation of type just received, and acknowledged elsewhere, I hope to be more presentable. (9.7)

This passage reveals the newspaper's function of acknowledging donations, but in the voice of a child. The newspaper is compared to students (“one of our younger children”), and type is compared to clothing. Such donations increase the child/newspaper's “usefulness,” aligning with the importance schools placed on clothing. As Milloy (1999) writes, “European clothes were the outward manifestation of the transformation from the ‘savage’ to the ‘civilized’ state” (p. 124). After a delay, the persona returns:

I have not been “shut in” but unavoidably “laid aside” for awhile. Now my master is taking me up again and he says I still have a mission to accomplish and so I am going forth once more to visit every continent in this world. It is a far cry “to the ends of the earth” and I am very young to take such journeys, only 8

years old, but I have a lot of friends. My ocean passage and railway fare are paid. The Post Office Officials take care of me and arrange for my journey and see I reach my destination in safety . . . Though I am but a small child brought up in a very lone land and isolated hundreds of miles from my own kith and kin yet I will try and please you and when I see you, tell you what you want to know about my home, the missionary, his family and his friends. (29.2)

Beyond the use of the persona to excuse the newspaper's delay and advertise, the context of its production by boarding school children cannot be ignored. The persona explains the delay in the newspaper is not because the child/newspaper has been "shut in"—a regular occurrence with children because of sickness, punishment, and enforced estrangement from parents. Similarly, the child/newspaper claims to have grown up "in a very lone land and isolated hundreds of miles from my own kith and kin," not unlike the children of boarding schools. The "age" of the newspaper upon disclosing its isolation is 8—a common age for children to be forced to attend school.<sup>34</sup> So while Principal Raley may have wished for readers to connect the real children of the school with the newspaper itself through such a persona, I am arguing that perhaps this conflation flattens the differences between persona and reality. The persona of the child fits with the humbling and modest tone of newspapers that veils an expansionist, colonial motive underneath. *Na-Na-Kwa* invokes the realities of children dressed inappropriately (culturally and weather-wise) and separated from their families; however, while the children of boarding school were often denied their humanity, the newspaper's is freely granted.

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<sup>34</sup> By 1920, the *Indian Act* made attendance of 7-year-olds mandatory, though children much younger were frequently forced as well.



### **Barriers to Printing Jobs: The Case of Gilbert Bear**

In addition to demonstrating student progress and offsetting costs, schools also boasted that preparing the school newspaper prepared students for jobs. But as was the case for Gilbert Bear, the same student who worked at the Chicago fair for 3 months, these promises were seldom fulfilled. Carlisle School boasted that its program would prepare a student to become “an accurate copyist, a careful clerk and a general all-round business man” (qtd. in *Indian Leader* 6.30.4), seeing its program as a training ground:

They are all learners. To get the work done, is the smallest part of the duties of the advanced printers and instructors. To show how to work takes longer and requires more patience and tact than to do the work oneself. We are a school printing, learning how, from the beginning steps in type setting, and press work up through all the stages. (*Red Man and Helper* 6.30.4)

Student printers in the U.S. found work both on- and off-reservation. Daniel F. Littlefield and James W. Parins (1984) list many successful boarding school printers, including those who established “periodicals that were attempts at Indian unity and were voices for reform in Indian policy” (p. xvii-xviii). We can hear the perspective of one such printer named Coleman praising his training at Chilocco School in Oklahoma in the 1930s:

When I went to [college] I worked in the print shop. Well I felt I was just as good as the next guy. So many times the Indian people feel degraded when they go out and try to mix with the non-Indians, but to me, printing and Chilocco gave me a

crutch to adjust. (Lomawaima, 1995, p. 162)

Coleman's observations point to an even bigger benefit than employability—confidence.

In Canada print training also led to jobs, as was the case for several students from Birtle School in Manitoba and Regina School who found work for “good wages” at the *Regina Standard* (DIA, 1897, p. 310; 1909, p. 385; *Progress* 3.71:7; 3.78:7) and the *Saskatchewan Leader* (14.7:4). But systemic barriers blocked students wishing to transfer what they learned in school to the workforce. As Washakada School's report for 1897 explains, its two senior printers were “now quite sufficiently advanced to take positions in other offices and to earn their own living, and in fact are only waiting for suitable opportunities to do so” (DIA, p. 275). Why did they and Gilbert Bear have to wait?

For one, politicians such as Frank Oliver in 1897 believed the government was “educating these Indians to compete industrially with our own people, which seems to me a very undesirable use of public money” (qtd. in D. Hall, 2009, p. 190). It was not just Oliver who felt this way. The 1895 annual report for Rupert's Land School considered the blacksmith and print shop “handicapped in the way of earning much” because the tradespeople in the same town “complain that it interferes with their business” (DIA, p. 11). The school attempted to prevent direct competition by distinguishing its printing output from services offered by white townspeople (DIA p. 11), but inevitably the school could print “very little owing to much opposition from local tradesmen” (DIA, 1895, p. 366) who did not feel it fair to compete with “Government-fed people,” meaning the students. The threat appears double: such competition included not only a government institution but also one that attempted to lift the “buckskin curtain” (Cardinal, 2013)

between Indigenous and non-Indigenous workers. Whatever employment Rupert's Land School had organized for students, the school had to "cancel their engagements, as their men will not work beside an Indian any more than beside a Chinese" (DIA, 1895, p. 367)—a bold statement considering the heightened levels of anti-Asian sentiment at this time.<sup>35</sup> David Gouter (2011) explains that nineteenth-century Canadian trade unionists viewed neither Indigenous nor Black people as significant competition over jobs; this "safe distance" therefore resulted in fewer attacks on these two groups compared to Chinese labourers, whom white workers considered "unfair competition" (p. 44). For printing such "safe distance" appears not to exist. Washakada Home, however, stated in its 1895 annual report that both its shoemaker and printer shops were financially self-sustaining—its success was for the same reason as Rupert Land School's failure: for shoemaking and printing, "the town offer[ed] no competition" (DIA, 1895, p. 412).

Another context for the employment barriers of printers included the union. Printers' unions are the oldest in Canada (Forbes, 2012). Though unions were illegal until 1872, "the printing trades had special status based partly on prior existence" (Fetherling, 1990, p. 35). Printers were leaders in labour history: the Toronto Typographical Union went on strike in 1872, advocating for a 9-hour work day and legalized unions. As Rutherford (1982) notes, "The militancy of the printers meant the ever-present threat of a work stoppage" (p. 95). By the turn of the century, this power weakened with new technologies that eliminated a need for typesetters (Fetherling, 1990, p. 65). But both the union's power and later weakened position meant nothing for Indigenous printers.

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<sup>35</sup> For more on Chinese-Canadians and the prairies, see Lily Cho (2010) and Alison R. Marshall (2014).

Gilbert Bear, the Battleford School student who spent three months printing at the Chicago Fair, provides an example of these barriers to employment as a printer. Gilbert's name appeared often in his school's newspaper, highlighting his superior academic and athletic achievements. Before he went to Chicago, Gilbert had "sole charge" of the printing program at his school and seems to have been printing the school newspaper singlehandedly (DIA, 1893, p. 121). Gilbert was so adept at printing, the editor of the *Saskatchewan Herald* noted him as "the smartest boy he had ever seen in learning the art of type setting" (qtd in Wasylow, p. 129). After his 3-month stint in Chicago, Gilbert returned to Battleford School as an employee, heading the print shop he used to train in (DIA, 1894, p. 174; 1895, p. 282). Gilbert later gained a printing job in Ottawa (*The Guide* 4.4:1) after Prime Minister Mackenzie Bowell learned of his work ("After the rebellion," 2012). Eighteen years after Gilbert left school, annual reports still held Gilbert up as a success. The 1913 report stated that Gilbert made "the most progress, as he has quite a nice trading post, and makes a lot of money" (DIA, 1913, p. 130).

But the school newspaper avoided Gilbert's fate. Benson's internal 1897 report used the case of Gilbert to prove that printing programs were wasted government money. Benson relayed what Battleford School's newspaper relished to say as well: Gilbert was a "star pupil," had worked three months in Chicago, and later worked as foreman on the school's press. And, like everyone else, Benson also described Gilbert's job with the *Ottawa Citizen*. But Benson's report went further: for two years in Ottawa, Gilbert had been restricted to working nights and earning only \$3.50/week. Despite a 50-cent raise in his second year, Gilbert was unable to pay for his lodging or clothing. The annual report for 1898 lists that Battleford School still paid for much of Gilbert's living expenses: \$6

for board, \$25 for a suit and overcoat, and \$5 for a Young Men's Christian Association membership (DIA, 1898, p. 679). Benson contended that despite Gilbert's exceptional talents, he could not earn more because Gilbert was excluded from the union and was "merely a printer's devil." As Strong-Boag (2002) explains, in late nineteenth-century Canada "the benefits of industry and resource development were assigned as a matter of course to white and middle-class males" (p. 44).

During Gilbert's time working at the *Ottawa Citizen* (an ironic name given Gilbert's precarious citizenship according to Ottawa), he ran into trouble with the foreman regarding overtime and was fired. Though the foreman argued Gilbert could not take orders (a suspicious claim given Gilbert's previous life, success, and survival in a boarding school), Gilbert maintained he was being unfairly treated. Benson intervened twice, negotiating with the proprietor of the *Citizen* to accept Gilbert back. But Benson's report explains that "since the close of the [parliamentary] Session printers are plentiful"; Gilbert was able to return but only because Benson was able to pull some strings. Benson predicted that "trouble is likely to occur again as Gilbert is dissatisfied, hates the night work, and if the truth were told, would rather be back home on the Reserve and end his brilliant career of letters" (1474/19). Whether or not "brilliant career" was meant sarcastically, Benson's report paints a grim picture of Gilbert's life post-school.

Benson cited Gilbert's life in his report to expose the larger failure of boarding schools, and Gilbert's life is more than that. But the facts remain: Gilbert was the best student a boarding school could possibly produce in all realms—academics, athletics, and industry. He must have been equally personable to be sent as one of few student representatives to the World's Fair. Teachers, workers, and even the prime minister

recognized Gilbert as the cream of the crop. And yet such talents and hard work could not shatter what appears to be the larger white supremacy Gilbert faced in Ottawa, represented by the union and his foreman. He went all the way to Ottawa only to work nights and receive unpaid overtime as a lowly assistant, having his life paid for still by the school. Gilbert's life also reveals how curated school newspapers and annual reports were—Gilbert still received attention in their pages, but the systemic barriers he faced and ultimate failure of the boarding school system to prepare students for work never get mentioned. Even in Benson's internal report, Gilbert's story is only used to make his larger point that schools should just teach basic skills rather than printing, which prepares students to compete with white workers who will use whatever means necessary (e.g., legal, economic) to ensure such threats were quashed. It appears Benson's report does not highlight Gilbert's story to expose white supremacy, but to maintain it. Gilbert's inability to find work represents the larger story of settler colonialism—the ultimate goal being that Indigenous peoples vanish, not compete for jobs with white workers.

## **Conclusion**

Nineteenth-century school newspapers mostly folded for financial reasons. The newspaper at Rupert's Land School admitted that “from a business standpoint” the newspaper had “not been a success” (2.12.1). Sometimes, a newspaper ended only to morph into another iteration, as was the case with *Rupert's Land Gleaner*, whose focus on the community morphed into the *Aurora*, which instead focused on Rupert's Land School solely. In the last few issues of *Our Forest Children*, Wilson introduced readers to

his next newspaper venture, the *Canadian Indian*,<sup>36</sup> which was something of an anthropological study of Indigenous peoples in North America. Rather than financial considerations, the dramatic final issue of *Na-Na-Kwa* announced the removal of the editor and reverend of the school, the death of a teacher (and author of “Dawn on the Coast”), and a fire that burned the school down. Many of these newspapers lasted only a few years. Printing programs were not even the most significant trade taught at school, often employing just a handful of students. The trade of printing also failed the two principle reasons for teaching a trade: to offset costs of the school and provide future jobs to students—goals apparently thwarted by white workers who had the power to quickly eliminate perceived competition. Even the government, as Benson’s report demonstrates, disapproved of printing at schools because it—like a brass band—was only for show.

And yet printing programs and their newspapers reveal much about nineteenth-century industrial schools in Canada. This chapter has catalogued the materiality of printing programs (equipment, labour, and production) and school newspapers (their purposes and formatting). As well, it has documented how newspapers both homogenized as well as individualized printers, displaying them and their work in various ways. Sometimes such individuation worked against what the newspaper intended: at Kitamaat Home, an article and photograph about its female printers in fact revealed how students still remembered and embodied their relations. For Gilbert Bear, the newspapers were willing to individualize him but only in ways that excluded his resistance: his firm “no,” as quoted by local newspapers in his response to their question of whether he enjoyed the fair; his desire to leave Ottawa; his fight with the foreman. This chapter has also

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<sup>36</sup> Not to be confused with the pamphlet printed at the Chicago World’s Fair of the same name.

identified the personification of newspapers produced by a school that attempted to dehumanize its students. Amongst leaders and readers, Indigenous printers were leaders themselves, although the newspapers attempted to quash this fact and reduce them only to labour, which was further foreclosed by white tradespeople and unions. In spite of this history, students had success with printing at school and, as further chapters will discuss, shaped newspapers with colonial, assimilative agendas into a vehicle for resistance. This context helps to set up the remaining chapters, which identify the language, time, and place of school newspapers.



## CHAPTER 4: ENGLISH IN SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS

In his memoir, survivor Theodore Fontaine (2010) recalls a teacher's reaction to speaking his language at boarding school in the 1950s:

I was playing on the floor with several friends, reliving a picture show we'd seen at movie night and using small objects like stones and pieces of wood to act as the cowboys . . . I'd inadvertently said something in Ojibway . . . [The nun] yelled that she'd wash out my mouth with soap . . . I was shoved into a closet behind her chair . . . I don't remember how long I was in there, but it seemed like an eternity. I was desperate . . . I clenched my eyes to visualize my cousin Dee and me frolicking at Treaty Point . . . I sobbed for a while, to no avail. Eventually she let me out. Her first word was "Tiens! (Take that)!" followed by a warning not to speak my "savage" language. (p. 107)

Fontaine portrays the nun's brutality—yelling, washing his mouth, locking him in a closet, and denigrating his language—as well as Fontaine's mechanisms of survivance. It also reveals the school's policy on language: English mattered more than literacy, which Fontaine demonstrated by replaying the plot of a movie and his ability to speak and understand Ojibwemowin, English, and the French abbreviation for "tiens, ça t'apprendra!" meaning "There! That will teach you!" The scene further complicates the

supremacy of English as the Oblate nun, whose first language was probably French, reprimands Fontaine for not using English by committing the same infraction.<sup>37</sup>

Survivor memoirs and testimony recall bans on and denigration of Indigenous languages at boarding schools throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Punishments often included extreme corporal punishment (Milloy, 1999, p. 281), frequently at the physical site of language: the mouth and tongue (Archuleta, Child, & Lomawaima, 2004, p. 42; Ellis, 1996, p. 105; J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 200; Wolochatiuk, 2012). Some American schools demoted students' "rank" (Adams, 1995, p. 141) or charged fines (*Our Forest Children* 4.4:206). Shingwauk Home used the *jeton* system: students began the week with buttons, and lost one when they spoke an Indigenous word. Those who retained buttons competed for nuts (Milloy, 1999, p. 39). Survivor Isabelle Knockwood had her Mi'kmaw language referred to as "mumbo jumbo" (1992, p. 98).

Nineteenth-century schools saw the act of production of newspapers (and trades more generally) as a way to learn English. Shingwauk Home (referencing Carlisle School) advised every industrial shop to have a blackboard so students could learn to spell and pronounce names of tools (*Our Forest Children* 3.5:46). Carlisle School even offered courses in industrial English, household English, and farm writing (Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1915, p. 55). Amanda J. Cobb (2000), in her research on the Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females in Oklahoma, also identifies industrial English as a form of literacy promoted in domestic trades (pp. 14-15).

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<sup>37</sup> Niezen's (2013) interview with an Oblate priest reveals that for him, "There was even a sense of *French* being illicit and repressed" (p. 141) rather than Indigenous languages. Sellars, too, notes how at her boarding school in the 1960s students resented the nuns who enforced English yet spoke French (2013, p. 45).

Some schools saw printing as particularly instructive. Regina School believed, “The printing office is useful in connection with the class-room work, as the printer boys are found to make the greatest progress in spelling and English composition” (DIA, 1910, p. 452). The principal of Battleford School, Thomas Clarke, also saw the school newspaper as “an excellent educator” and “the means of inducing children to write, read and think in English. This is absolutely necessary in order to make ‘English’ the language of the institution” (qtd in Wasylow, 1972, p. 103). Haskell Institute in Kansas, too, shared its belief in printing as fundamental to English through the article “Printing Helps to Educate.” The article argued that printing students

improve much more rapidly in their language and spelling after they enter the printing class. It could not be otherwise. No trade furnishes a better opportunity for a boy to get a good general education than printing. In fact it can not be avoided for any advance made in the art educates the boy unconsciously, whether he will it or not. (*Indian Leader* 5.21.4)

These descriptions suggest some schools believed printers learned English by osmosis and printing programs benefited broader literacy goals. Schools could have claimed this to ensure funding for a trade attacked for its showiness; or, schools could have believed in earnest that printing offered a form of embodied literacy—that laying type, inking, rolling, and assembling a newspaper could transform students into English speakers. This chapter argues that school newspapers accorded with the larger premise of their schools:

English *only* rather than English *in addition* to Indigenous languages; but newspapers also reveal that students resisted, resignified, and repurposed English in their own ways.

### **Context for Newspapers: The Ideology of English *Only***

At most boarding schools, English reigned supreme. So important was English<sup>38</sup> that in 1895 Deputy Superintendent General Hayter Reed went so far as to say Indigenous people were “permanently disabled” without it (DIA, p. xxii-xxiii). The primacy of English had been codified in 1857 with the *Act to Encourage Gradual Civilization of the Indians*, which held that an Indigenous man<sup>39</sup> who could read and write either French or English was considered to have lost Indian status. Men unable to read or write but still able to speak were placed under a three-year probation period. The Act formalized language training as an important part of assimilation. What is of further importance is how this “enfranchisement” would be crystallized: notice in a newspaper.

Later in the nineteenth century, English in boarding schools continued to stand in opposition—not in addition—to Indigenous languages. Borrowing terminology from linguist Wallace Lambert, Ruth Spack (2002) notes how in American Indian boarding schools, language acquisition was subtractive (English only) instead of additive (English and Indigenous languages). One reason schools taught English was usually not made explicit in newspapers or annual reports: to sever ties amongst generations. When

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<sup>38</sup> English studies at the end of the nineteenth century in Canada conflated many distinctions we make today: English as an additional language (i.e., ESL), English literature, grammar, pronunciation, elocution, rhetoric, composition, literacy, and phonetics were all often grouped together as “English.” This remained true at most boarding schools, where the subject “English” meant many of these categories.

<sup>39</sup> It appears the same loss of status for women who learned English did not apply; however, under the *Indian Act* a woman lost status if she married a white man (and a white woman gained Indian status by marrying an Indigenous man). This gender discrimination was repealed in 1985 (Lawrence, 2003; Palmater, 2011).

students returned home after years of separation, they often could not speak with family. While schools restricted contact between children and their parents, English served as a long-term strategy for breaking family ties. Battleford School's newspaper provided an account of one of its students, who "would reply to his mother in English when she addressed him in Cree—although he was only six, and could talk Cree fluently" (*The Guide* 6.3:1). While schools and churches praised the importance of family and while principals discussed their own children in school newspapers, linguistic estrangement was celebrated as an achievement in school newspapers.

The underlying purpose of English existed mostly outside of schools' own stated justifications. According to Randy Fed, attempting to eradicate an Indigenous language "has always been a primary stage in a process of cultural genocide" (qtd. in Haig-Brown, 1988, p. 15). Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (2005), writing from a Kenyan context, notes how economic and political control stem from both denigrating one's culture while simultaneously elevating "the language of the colonizer" (p. 17). With the loss of a language goes a worldview and culture, resulting in "widespread social and psychological upheaval in Aboriginal communities" (Battiste & Barman, 1995, p. viii). Alistair Pennycook (2002), too, asserts that English and colonialism have a deep and long history, in which English was both a tool as well as a product of colonialism (p. 19). He catalogues colonial justifications for teaching English, which mirror those of boarding school: it is easier to govern with a common language; one, united community will form; colonizers were obligated to spread the gift of English; and a monolingual workforce would be better for capitalism (p. 20). Pratt (2003) reveals all of these reasons in one sentence: "the sooner all tribal relations are broken up, the sooner the Indian loses all his

Indian ways, even his language, the better it will be for him and for the government and the greater will be the economy to both” (p. 266).

Robert Phillipson (2013) defines the term “linguistic imperialism” as when “language dominance dovetails with economic, political and other types of dominance” yet “legitimizes and naturalizes such exploitation” (p. 2). He deconstructs terms such as language “spread” or “death” for their “seemingly agentless process, as though it is not people and particular interests” that are responsible (p. 28). Phillipson’s observations are analogous to Chrisjohn and Young’s (2006): what students suffered in boarding schools—denigration of language, culture, and spirituality—is labeled as loss, not theft (p. 20). Andrea Bear Nicholas (2011), drawing on the theories of Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, frequently works with the concept of “linguicide”—killing a language but not necessarily the speaker (p. 5). And as Battiste (2011) argues, “When a certain literacy is forced upon youths outside that culture, it becomes cultural and cognitive assimilation” (p. 165).

Elizabeth Stuckey’s *The Violence of Literacy* (1991), invoking the work of Henry Giroux, identifies how in the U.S. “current approaches to literacy corroborate other social practices that prevent freedom and limit opportunity” (p. vii). Catherine Prendergast (2003) further highlights how various court cases in the U.S. have demarcated literacy as “white property.” While Stuckey, Giroux, and Prendergast rightly observe literacy is often denuded of race, class, ideology, and history, they and others neglect the history of literacy on the land from which they write. As Laura E. Donaldson (1998) notes, “English alphabetic writing has become so thoroughly naturalized that its function as a colonial technology has remained obscure” (p. 47). School newspapers participated in the narrative of English innocently spreading: in 1897, Battleford School’s newspaper

featured an article called “The Growth of the English Language.” The article never draws attention to the colonial contexts of the countries sampled—South Africa, India, Canada, and the U.S. Instead, the article praises English as like no other language for its “rapid progress” and ability to “absorb” speakers (*The Guide* 6.4:2). Newspapers and their schools depicted the “spread” of English uncomplicated by colonialism. So when Regina School calls English “the language of the country” (1893, p. 98), how did this happen?

One way was through English-only policies at schools. Canada did not have a national policy of language instruction in its nineteenth-century boarding schools. Instead individual schools developed their own policies, resulting in “a patchwork of differing approaches shifting decade by decade, principal by principal” (Milloy, 1999, p. 185). This approach differed from the U.S., which as early as 1880 saw the direct tying of government funding to schools teaching English (Spack, 2002, p. 91). By 1887, commissioner John D.C. Atkins forbade Indigenous languages at government-funded schools. A Canadian report from 1897 lamented this lack in Canada, praising the U.S. and its “Syllabus of Language work” (1471/18). Though Canada never had a national approach, its nineteenth-century boarding schools were surprisingly unified: most instituted English-only policies, which did not actually mean English-only: both Latin and French were taught as well. Instead, English-only meant no Indigenous languages.

Though this dissertation consults published student perspectives from the twentieth century (fiction, poetry, and memoir) to contextualize nineteenth-century newspapers, Walter Wasylow’s (1972) research includes rare interview transcripts from students who attended Battleford School in the 1890s. While perspectives varied, the one

constant is dissatisfaction with the English-only rule.<sup>40</sup> Peter Wuttunee, who began school in 1898, stated, “If there had been no restrictions as far as language is concerned—allowed us to talk our own language and so on, we could learned [sic] English just as quickly without losing that language” (p. 479). He took as an example the white children of teachers, who attended the school too and learned Cree—sometimes “better than Indians.” Wuttunee believed the English-only rule “was one of the worst things they can do. It’s a blessed thing when you can talk two languages” (p. 463).

It was not just Battleford School that promoted an English-only policy: government reports reveal schools across Canada proclaimed their enforcement of English and denigration of Indigenous languages, which were often reduced to the singular (“the Indian language”) or to a dialect rather than diverse, distinct, numerous, fully formed languages. Schools emphasized the English-only rule extended even to playtime, requiring “teachers and other employees to extend the English lessons beyond the walls of the class-rooms and [industrial] shops into the play ground and work fields” (1892, p. 202). Some schools enforced English most of the time but allowed certain off-periods, such as Sunday (DIA, 1896, p. 386) or after supper (1898, p. 332). Kitamaat Home at first enforced English only during meals and sewing lessons (*Na-Na-Kwa* 2.3), but changed to English entirely after finding students “seldom spoke except to say their sentences and answer questions” (6.4). The rule was often impossible because most students who entered school did not know English and teachers did not usually know

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<sup>40</sup> Niezen’s (2013) reading of the National Film Board’s *PowWow at Duck Lake* (1967) may shed further light on this consistency in Wasylow’s interview, which focuses on language rather than other abuses: in a scene from the documentary, former students confront a priest. They do not mention abuse other than that connected to language. Perhaps, then, language denigration was the earliest harm that could be heard at this time (though not in this case: the priest laughs at the group and leaves the scene). The 14-minute film (available online) is well worth watching, combatting the belief that resistance to residential schooling is a recent phenomenon. The film shows Indigenous academics, politicians, and youth condemning the system 45 years ago. Of course, parents and children fought from the beginning.



students' languages (1892, p. 298; 1898, p. 433; 1893, p. 153; 1889, p. 144). Edward Metatawabin's memoir (2014) from school in the 1950s provides a first-day account:

“Thisissdalastofdem,” said Sister Wesley to the white man. He pointed to us.

“Kipkawayettverywonn.” I looked at her, panicked, wondering what she had said.

The other boys had been murmuring to each other, but they too froze. (p. 36)

On his first day, English words are just sounds. Some schools relaxed the English-only rule in response to such realities; others did not.

Schools had various stances on mixing English and non-English speakers. At Battleford School, isolation was punishment. Its newspaper announced, “The school is divided into ENGLISH SPEAKERS and Indian speakers. Indian speakers eat by themselves and are treated differently” while “English speakers in the School have a Literary and Musical Society now” (*The Guide* 1.1.1). Carlisle School formalized such mingling: each dormitory room had 3-4 children, who all spoke a different language, which helped “in the rapid acquirement of English” but also in breaking up “tribal clannishness” (Eastman, 2011, p. 206). Schools also depended on staff. At Birtle School in Manitoba all staff assisted “in suppressing the use of the Indian language amongst the pupils” (DIA, 1897, p. 285), and at Qu'Appelle School in Saskatchewan teachers were expected to “mingle with the children and to converse with them” (1892, p. 203). Battleford School used student monitors to police language (DIA, 1889, p.142; 1898, p. 316). At Regina School, “Nine of the most trustworthy pupils were appointed monitors.” At evening roll call, monitors reported students speaking “any Indian words, except when

addressed directly to their friends who are on a visit to the school” (1893, p. 118).

Schools were quick to point out success in English, which meant proving what it had replaced. Battleford School boasted, “The English language is the only one spoken both amongst Cree and Stony pupils. Days together pass at the school without hearing a word of Indian spoken” (DIA, 1892, p. 244). The school maintained many students “never make use of the Cree at all now, although it is their mother tongue” (1898, p. 316).

Schools praised English as a *lingua franca*—a common language capable of bridging linguistic divides. Shingwauk Home’s newspaper quoted the American Commissioner of Indian Affairs: “No community of feeling can be established among different peoples unless they are brought to speak the same language” (*Our Forest Children* 2.1:3-4). Regina School similarly observed, “The substitution of the common English language for the multitudinous tribal dialects is establishing among them a bond of unity” (*Progress* 3.83:3). Battleford School believed that because it taught both Cree and Assiniboine speakers, English was “the natural, in fact the only medium of communication” (DIA, 1887, p. 102). One of Carlisle School’s newspapers elaborated:

Here before me are twenty or thirty different tribes of Indians represented, each having a separate language. To compare theirs with the use of English is something like a boy living in a house with one small window. He can see out of the window, but he sees very little of the great outside world; whereas, if he lived in a large house with large windows he could see much more of the world. The boy who speaks only an Indian language, is like the person living in the small house, but the boy who can speak the English language is like the one who lives

in the large house. (*Morning Star* 5.9:5)

School newspapers claimed English as an innocuous solution for the supposed problem of diversely lingual Indigenous peoples. But as Phillipson (2013) notes, English is not a true bridge because it “serves the interest of some much better than others” (p. 28). The *lingua franca* narrative of school newspapers denied the possibility that Indigenous nations had their own solutions to perceived communication barriers. When Carlisle School first opened, for instance, Pratt observed the Cheyenne and Kiowa students were learning Sioux, prompting him to institute strict English-only policies (Eastman, 2011, p. 206). If Pratt desired a true *lingua franca*, he would have learned Sioux, too.

It could be argued schools elided the violence of English revealed by survivors’ testimony. Instead, schools described English language learning as natural and painless. Schools claimed students were “giving up their own dialect to adopt the English language” (DIA, 1892, p. 296) and that students seemed “to have entirely forgotten the Indian language” (1894, p. 149). Battleford School described its students learning English as part of “a natural sequence” (1887, p. 102). Other schools claimed, “The Indian language is a thing of the past: English is the order of the day” (1894, p. 186). One school made it clear, “No rewards or punishments have been necessary to encourage the English language and abolish the Cree” (1899, 334) and students “seem to prefer English now” (1897, p. 301). Reports stated that schools refrained from “severity” (DIA, 1889, p. 144), “sheer force” (1896, p. 386), and “the fear of the teacher.” Instead, schools claimed only to have “induced” English (1897, p. 293) with “mere persuasion.” Schools framed English as something students voluntarily, naturally adopted and preferred, while they

forgot or “gave up” Indigenous languages.

Though these claims contradict survivor accounts from later boarding school history, they line up perfectly with definitions of settler colonialism. As Veracini (2010a) defines it, “Settler projects are inevitably premised on the traumatic, that is, *violent*, replacement and/or displacement of indigenous Others”; however, “settler colonialism also needs to disavow any foundational violence” (p. 75), creating a “fantasy of communities devoid of disturbances or dislocations” (p. 77). As Audra Simpson (2014) contends, “These nation-states have the gall, the mendacity, and the hyperbolic influence to call and then imagine themselves as something other than dispossessing, occupying, and judicially dubious” (p. 112). The same can be said in terms of how English was taught in nineteenth-century boarding schools—according to their own sources, English language acquisition just “happened,” without any violence required.

The totalizing fantasy of an English-only school was never so complete, and schools had explanations at the ready. Schools blamed too many new students arriving at once (DIA, 1896, p. 433) and even students themselves, who were thought to be “rather dull, slow in discarding their native tongue, and show but little interest in the improvement of the mind” (1895, p. 55). Other schools blamed the slow progress of English on proximity to the reserve (1896, p. 303; 1895, p. 388).<sup>41</sup> Schools, which were notoriously gender segregated, sometimes chalked up language “deficiencies” to gender. As Miller (1996) states, “Notions of gender were so embedded in the attitudes of the

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<sup>41</sup> Prime Minister John A. Macdonald believed proximity to reserves was one of *the* barriers to assimilation. He told the House of Commons in 1883 that “when the school is on the reserve, the child lives with his parents who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write, his habits and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012a, p. 6).

official and missionaries as to be taken for granted” (p. 217), and English was no less so. Battleford School kept statistics on who spoke English based on gender (*The Guide* 1.2.2). Many reports listed boys as faster at acquiring English than girls (1892, p. 203), who were thought to “not show so much willingness to comply with the rule prohibiting the use of the Indian language” (1895, p. 445) and “take no pride in being able to speak English” (1894, p. 186). Girls, according to a teacher at Kitamaat Home, could write English better, but in “work requiring reason and thought power the boys are noticeably more apt.” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 12.4). Some of this perceived gap might be attributed to a lack of access to reading material: at Mohawk Institute in Ontario, only the boys’ reading room was supplied with the daily newspaper (DIA, 1905, p. 282). What could be students’ resistance to disavowing their language was often explained away by inability.

Even when schools dubiously reported all students spoke English, they criticized *how*. One way of understanding this phenomenon is through Aileen Moreton-Robinson’s (2015) concept of “possessive logics”—rationalizing “an excessive desire to invest in reproducing and reaffirming the nation-state’s ownership, control, and domination” (p. xii). Perhaps when schools emphasized the successes yet limits of students’ acquisition of English, they were displaying such logic: that schools, not students, ultimately possessed English. Reports pointed out students’ pronunciation was “defective” (DIA, 1892, p. 296) and “not yet perfect” (1894, p. 190; 1898, p. 339). Schools would frequently accuse students of not being able to “speak out and read distinctly” (1897, p. 266; 1898, p. 316) and had a problem with “low speaking” (*The Guide* 5.7:3). In a review of the school’s summer concert, Battleford School’s newspaper admitted, “It would be so much nicer if each [student] would try to read or recite much slower and more distinctly” (*The Guide*

4.2:1). Shingwauk Home's newspaper called it "broken English" (*Our Forest Children* 2.4:34). Sources attributed such inability to pronounce English "properly" to students' shame. The inspector's report for Brandon School in Manitoba observed the following:

The only fault I found was the whispering style of reading and in answering questions. Pupils who, when outside, had lungs that could make themselves heard miles off; would only whisper when in school . . . They could write letters and from dictation very well, and seemed to understand the English, but would not speak it freely. (DIA, 1899, p. 441)

Reports for St. Joseph's and Qu'Appelle Schools, too, accused children of being ashamed to speak English (1889, p. 144; 1897, p. 303; 1897, p. 303) or too shy (*Na-Na-Kwa* 3.5; 1889, p. 74; *Our Forest Children* 2.12:42; DIA, 1891, p. 73; 1899, p. 90). In reviewing a school concert, Battleford School's newspaper concluded, "Some of the children felt a little nervous, this is quite natural, and one of the reasons for encouraging these entertainments is to get every one to overcome this feeling" (*The Guide* 4.2:1). Spack (2002) notes a similar tendency in American schools, which criticized students for being bashful, shy, and having "excessive reserve" (p. 64). One teacher at Carlisle School found students "won't talk! In school with white, English-speaking children, the teacher sometimes found them diffident or somewhat slow" (Eastman, 2011, p. 227). Not only did schools regulate what students read and write, but also how they spoke.

Students certainly could have been nervous or shy, particularly given the crowds in front of which they often had to speak or sing, not to mention their often

unsympathetic teachers. And these reports reveal more. For one, they suggest schools expected a certain kind of speaker, steeped in the rhetoric and style of British school children, perhaps bringing to mind the refrain, “Speak up, child!” As well, labeling students ashamed or nervous denies their possible fear of or resistance to English. Furthermore, these claims reinforce the concept of “pure English.” The school at Wikwemikong praised students for “speaking remarkably pure English and singing in a pleasing English accent” (DIA, 1889, p. 74). Yet Sterzuk’s research (2011) disrupts the idea of “pure English.” She takes aim at how Englishes (she avoids the terms “dialect” and “non-standard English”) are spoken by contemporary Indigenous students in Saskatchewan, and how white teachers view these language varieties as deficient and in need of correction. So English—in the nineteenth century and now—is not only *what* was spoken but *how*. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2002) discuss the concept of “interlanguage”—the complex linguistic system of a language learner. Considering an interlanguage as deviant is, “in imperial terms,” akin to “the center, the metropolitan source of standard language, stand[ing] as the focus of order, while the periphery, which utilizes the variants, the ‘edges’ of language, remains a tissue of disorder” (p. 87).

Such critiques of students’ speech, blamed on slowness, nerves, and diffidence, accords with Frantz Fanon’s “colonial situation.” As interpreted by Eric Cheyfitz (1997), in Fanon’s conception the “native speaker must speak like a native or, more precisely, like the master’s conception of how a native speaks” (p. 126), and “the master typically refuses the native’s mastery by not recognizing it.” Visitors to Alert Bay School expressed “surprise that the children can converse in the English language” (DIA, 1897, p. 319). Regina School’s newspaper, too, explained, “Visitors to school frequently ask

concerning the pupils: ‘Do they speak English?’” (*Progress* 13.3:5). Fanon highlighted how the master exhibits surprise and “condescending praise, that a native has achieved this mastery” (Cheyfitz, 1997, p. 126). Students likely did speak English differently from their teachers: they were mostly new to the language. They also were likely nervous and shy given the public arenas in which they had to speak. They also may have been resisting speaking English, exhibited by silence and “low speaking,” by screaming in the schoolyard but refusing to speak to teachers. They may have been making English their own. But according to Fanon, even if none of this were true the teachers and officials would likely still be unable to recognize mastery on the part of students.

Schools further decried students who merely memorized English, blaming their inability to “know” the language on intellect. One internal report criticized “the slow progress in English made by the pupils, who although [sic] able to repeat sentences in English off their book, do not understand what they read” (1444/34). Kootenay School thought its students’ writing “tolerably good” because “some are gifted with memory” and were therefore able to “easily commit any piece or lesson to memory or write from beginning to end anything related to them”; but, the report concluded, students’ “intellect cannot favourably compare with their memory” (DIA, 1894, p. 194). Peigan School, too, found that “writing, being purely mechanical, seems to be easily learnt,” but reading and English were not (1895, p. 388). Indian agent W.M. Laing-Meason, too, wrote that in terms of writing, students had “a natural gift of imitation in this respect, far more developed than in white children” (1892, p. 248-249). The report further explained students’ copybooks were clean and free of blots, but that “their ignorance of the English language” kept them from understanding it. Kitamaat Home, too, reported the children’s



“especial talent is imitating” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 12.4). For schools, it was not enough for students to print English and read it—they had to understand it, too. However, schools often attributed students’ supposed lack to a biologically determined ability of imitation, not intellect. Like speaking, schools regulated and questioned whether students actually “knew” English. These ideologies behind boarding school language instruction help to frame what school newspapers reported when it came to English.

### **English Language Pedagogies, Tools, and Technologies**

School newspapers frequently shared with readers how English was being taught at schools. Spack (2002) explains that English instruction in American schools typically “meant teaching grammar, and teaching grammar typically meant following a procedure of definition, example, and application” (p. 59). Shingwauk Home, for instance, published student exams on the difference between the possessive plural and the possessive singular. One exam published in an annual report asked students to parse a sentence. In this exercise, the answer required students to atomize the word “boys” into a common noun, masculine gender, plural number, third person, possessive (DIA, 1887, p. 27). Here, real boys were expected to reduce a word seemingly reflecting them into grammatical parts of speech. In addition to grammar, school newspapers emphasized schools’ condemnation of simple memorization of English. As Regina School put it, “Parrot like repeating must be closely guarded against” (*The Guide* 5.7:3). One article from Battleford School’s newspaper had this to say regarding literacy:

Drill and review would be [advised] watch words. [One expert] preferred the “Look and Say” method . . . Sluggish minds and a famine of ideas were the cause

of much of the poor letter-writing . . . Use newspapers. Refer frequently to the library that should be in every school. Have everything reproduced in writing. Pressing necessities in the teacher were: An encouraging tone of voice, simple language and frequent and patient reviewing. (5.7:3).

In this take on how to teach English, the article explains that sight reading—“look and say”—with constant review was best. But more than rote learning, students must be informed by bigger ideas from newspapers and the library.

Some schools adopted what perhaps could be described as a pedagogy of humiliation. School newspapers often regaled readers with students’ mistakes. Some reported how the “dialect” of students and their grammar were “laughable” (*Our Forest Children* 4.6:242) and would “afford much amusement in [students’] attempts to speak” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 9.4). One former student wrote how he had failed twice to deliver a speech, and now as he attempted to write for the newspaper he felt “as though I were on the platform in the school room. and you all laughing at me” (*Progress* 14.4:6). Another student, though, wrote in his school newspaper that “if anyone laughs at you while you are reading, don’t care much, but just try to do the best you can” (*The Guide* 4.9:1).

School newspapers also reported reading materials used during school and leisure. The most common was the Bible, though other “good literature” was available too. Many of the books found in libraries were donated to schools. At Regina School, a teacher from Poole, Ontario would “accumulate from week to week bundles of reading matter and then forward them to the school” (*Progress* 3.70:7). Readers of Battleford School’s newspaper also donated bookmarks, books (*The Guide* 4.9:1), Bibles, and newspapers (4.6:2). But

what appears more frequently read were not books but newspapers. Besides other school newspapers, students read the periodicals *Boy's Own* and *Girl's Own*, which at Mohawk Institute were the students' favourite (*Our Forest Children* 2.13:13). These publications were heavily colonial (Dunae, 1980), with articles named "The Red Man's Revenge" (1879), "Adventures of a Boston Boy Among Savages" (1880), and "Perched Up Behind a None-too-clean Indian" (1892). One article (1880) attributes the decline of buffalo to Indigenous greed. Often, reading material not only didn't reflect Indigenous students' experiences, it also required their identification with white narrators to make any sense. To have an "Adventure with the Apaches" (1894) assumes you are not Apache; to have "My First Sight of Wild Indians" (1879) implies the anticipated reader is non-Indian. Importantly, we do not know how students were interpreting these texts.

Newspapers also reported how schools conducted literary societies as a way to teach English. Schools conceived of the societies as an entertaining way for students to "express their ideas" and for teachers to see "in what direction their efforts should be exerted" (*The Guide* 4.9:1). The clubs of Regina and Battleford Schools met every Friday night. About 30 boys and girls would gather to read essays on different subjects—law and school, drinking, sleeping (1.1:1), and the police (*Progress* 3.73:7). Regina School incorporated music and students' own stories (3.70:7). Newspapers also promoted school debate clubs. Regina School hosted debates on whether "Indians were happier before the coming of the white man." Importantly, students were "affirmative, but not unanimous" (*Progress* 3.74:7). The most formalized debate club was the Onward and Upward Club at Shingwauk Home. As Sharon Wall (2003) describes it, "political socialization, initiation into the democratic process and religious instruction were combined and represented in

an entertaining atmosphere” (p. 12). The Club had its own constitution and positions, such as chairman and secretary (“some Indian boy that writes a nice, clear hand”), all filled by students except the president, who was the principal (*Our Forest Children* 4.2:177-178). Meetings also included a “curator,” who would “prepare the room.” The Club’s committees crafted the weekly programme and chose “handiwork” that members would create during the meeting (e.g., carving picture frames, netting, and woolwork). The school would later sell these items. Each grade had its own membership card with responsibilities. It appears girls were allowed to participate given that the certificate of full membership addressed “our brother (or sister).” The Club would occasionally throw socials for the public, and revenue would towards special purchases such as instruments.

One of the Onward and Upward Club’s main endeavors was to encourage English. Students were expected to “make acquaintance with useful literature” (DIA, 1888, p. 124). The Club also served to help students “learn the art of elocution,” “carry on a debate,” and “encourage self-reliance in speaking publicly in English.” Other officers’ roles included a correspondent, who would write and read letters from other branches of the club (i.e., Carlisle School). Another role included that of news reporter, who would bring forward “readings, speeches, dialogues, debate, general discussion.” Then, the appointed “critic” would “criticise the Speeches, songs, etc. at the close of each meeting.” At the end, the critic was “called upon for his criticism of the evening’s performance” (*Our Forest Children* 4.2:178).

Barbara Birchbark’s column described a meeting for readers of the newspaper. One night, a boy read the Charles Mackay poem “There’s a Good Time Coming”:

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming. We may not live to see the day, but Earth shall glisten in the ray of the good time coming. Cannonballs may aid the truth, but thought's a weapon stronger: We'll win our battle with its aid—wait a little longer. (1892, p. 303)

One student began the poem, but could not finish. Instead another boy, with the “most melancholy disposition possible” and who “always looked unhappy, no matter what was going on,” joined in to ease tensions. From Birchbark’s perspective, the first student

got on swimmingly for some time, then he faltered, got red blurted out “There’s a good time coming, boys,” and stopped short. But the melancholy boy was equal to the occasion, and amid the profound silence, remarked in his usual doleful tone, “He tell lie, that fellow.” (4.2:178)

In this Club, designed for students to practice English, one student could not continue, perhaps choked by the poem’s promise that a better future awaited. It appears Birchbark can only narrate this scene as his failure—he falters, reddens, stops. She frames the “melancholy” boy, though, as successful because he punctured the “profound silence.” But he did more than fill the room with English: he called the poem a lie, perhaps offering others a chance to contemplate the poem in relation to themselves. The newspaper chooses not to correct his grammar—“he tell lie”—perhaps to undermine his boldness just as Birchbark writes him off as miserable. Regardless, his message remains despite the newspapers’ larger focus on exhibiting the Club’s civilizing purposes.

Students had their own reactions to and reasons for learning English.

Newspapers also reported various technologies schools used to teach English. At Shingwauk Home, students practiced English by operating a telegraph. Up to six boys learned the telegraph as one of many trades at the school (*Our Forest Children* 3.2:6). Telegraph posts and wire connected the school's hospital, the principal's office, and his bedroom, and students printed the messages on carbon paper. Students had frequent exchanges through the telegraph with one another and practiced both sending as well as receiving (4.3:195), learning how to send telegrams "in proper form" (3.2:6) and how "to manipulate the key" (3.1:48). The school newspaper featured one example of a telegraphic exchange between the principal and the school captain, Albert Sahguj:

The instrument is on a shelf just at my back, and I twist round on my screw-chair and respond . . . "I, I, I am here in my office waiting to hear what you have to say." The telegram delivers itself—From Albert Sahguj, Captain's room, to MR. Wilson. "Please, is there to be inspection to-day?" I repeat the question to shew that I understand it—which is the best way for amateurs. Sahguj says "O.K. sig. A.S., 7"—which means all right, followed by his signature and the number of words in the sentence. Finding it to be all right, I respond [,] "O.K., sig. E.F.W." Then I give him my answer "No, not to day; all keep at work." After "O.K.," again on both sides, and signature, I say "G.N." (good night), and Sahguj responds "G.N." That means, I am leaving the key;—"we always say 'good night' on the telegraph—whatever time it may be. (3.3:6)

Though perhaps these descriptions of telegraph lessons represented for readers yet another trade being taught, they also exemplified new literacy skills. In the newspaper, Wilson details how he taught students—“amateurs”—to communicate over the telegraph using new phrases, signatures, and Morse code. Like the production of newspapers, the telegraph perhaps served as another way to learn English through technology.

Another technology school newspapers discussed was the magic lantern, a seventeenth-century Dutch invention that was an early iteration of the slide projector and could project paintings and photographs (Barber, 1989, p. 73). At boarding schools, magic lantern shows appeared to be a treat (*The Guide* 6.5:1; *Na-Na-Kwa* 30.2), and seemed significant enough for students that they wrote about it in school newspapers:

Last Thursday we had Magic Lantern, we saw Elephants and Mr. Heron has gone to File Hills to give a Magic Lantern. And all of us little girls have short hairs.  
(*Progress* 17.9:7)

Here, the magic lantern was as worthy of mention as the girls’ haircut. As countless survivor testimonies reveal, schools were fanatical about cutting children’s hair so they looked British and supposedly clean (J. R. Miller, 1996, pp. 194–198), resulting in traumatic experiences for students whose hair had great significance. Sarah Soonias, who was five when she began at Battleford School in 1900, recalls in an interview the first punishment for speaking Cree was a strapping; but “when girls were very bad and persisted in speaking Cree, they had their hair cut short as a punishment” (Wasylow, 1972, p. 454). Haircuts in this case were a graver punishment than even getting strapped.

The magic lantern shows at Regina and Battleford Schools appear to be of two categories: English and Others. In the English shows, students watched scenes from the Bible (*Progress* 4.8:1; 3.71:7), the royal family (*The Guide* 4.8:1), and English architecture, of tales such as Cinderella and Dick Whittington, and “numerous views of natural phenomena [and] cities” (DIA, 1892, p. 243). In the shows of Others, students saw scenes of elephants (*Progress* 17.9:7) and the “customs of foreign lands” (DIA, 1892, p. 243). Students also watched “scenes of Indian sundances” (*The Guide* 4.8:1). The Sun Dance was banned under the *Indian Act* from 1884-1951 (Pettipas, 1994), and this particular show was from 1897. I do not read the magic lantern show of the Sun Dance as evidence of an inclusive curriculum or a challenge to legal sanctions. Projecting images of the Sun Dance and discussing it in the school newspaper reiterated who had the power to discuss and showcase Sun Dances—not Indigenous peoples, who were prosecuted for doing so, but boarding schools who one might see as rubbing students’ noses in this detachment. Furthermore, the shows disrespectfully exhibited a ceremony alongside scenes of entertainment such as Cinderella and elephants. As well, the Sun Dance was established through the magic lantern as foreign, like an elephant, instead of intimate and familiar, which it may have been for Indigenous students on the prairies.

School newspapers also showcased classroom work in English. One recurring writing sample in newspapers was the home letter. Many former students recount how letters were written as a class exercise and never made it home, were redacted, and were forged (Hare, 2009, p. 255; Lomawaima, 1995, p. 24; Pokiak-Fenton & Jordan-Fenton, 2010, p. 60; 64; Sellars, 2013, p. 68). Child (1999) examines archival letters between parent and child at the Flandreau School in South Dakota. In Child’s study, officials



censored incoming and outgoing mail (p. 39) and cut off communication even when children were sick or dying (p. 67). Her research reveals, though, that parents were relentless, continuing to write letters threatening to report abuses to authorities (p. 42). For Child, these letters “speak for the deepest of bonds, able to survive separation and efforts to undermine American Indian families. This essential communication kept young people from feeling abandoned and sustained children and parents alike” (p. 100).

But school newspapers usually framed home letters as evidence of literacy skills rather than as a connection between parent and child. When home letters appeared in newspapers, they typically appeared with prefaces such as the following:

- This letter was written by a little boy who has only been a short time in the Home, and could not speak a word of English when he came. (*Our Forest Children* 4.4:209)
- Following is a specimen letter from a Kitamaat boy, who, until two or three years ago, spoke only Kitamaat. (*Na-Na-Kwa* 30.13).

These prefaces may have directed readers to consider the letter not as content but as evidence of progress in English, no matter how emotional, private, or touching. Carlisle School reported, “In the 217 original home letters written by our students this month, some of which were good length, only 116 words in all were misspelled, showing that 101 of them were perfect in orthography” (*Morning Star* 4.10:3). In an extreme example, Kitamaat Home published a letter from a former student asking Principal Raley for help:

Please sent, me milson (medicine) for me Because I am got sick all time and my wife got sick to an my In law mother to get sick every time, my heald sick and my heart sick and all my skin out side you sent me all sam Blood drink milson and all sam like my wife milson all sam you give him in Kitamaat that time he was sick like Black milson, and milson for that outside skin. (*Na-Na-Kwa* 4.2)

The letter appears desperate. The writer as well as his wife and mother-in-law are all hurting in the heart, head, and skin. He asks Raley for medicine, a request Raley admits was “not uncommon.” Other issues of *Na-Na-Kwa* present desperate situations, but they typically summarize the problem rather than sharing personal communication and directly ask readers for something specific, such as money for a wheelchair or a new woodstove. Raley prefaces the letter: “Considering the fact that the young man who wrote the request had but little advantage in the way of school, it is very good.” In this example, it appears as though Raley published the letter not to advocate for help, not to demonstrate the damage of colonial policies, but simply as evidence of English usage for readers. Though it could have been published to seek donations, the letter deviates from other attempts that directed readers how exactly to help. As well, other appeals to readers typically do not comment on the person’s capacity to write English.

School newspapers published many examples of classroom work, including answers to grammar examinations. But I see the publication of these letters as a particular violation. These letters are addressed not to the newspaper, the principal, or to fellow students, but to parents—who were not able to see their children and whose attempts to

communicate with their children frequently were met with censorship and sanction; who may not have received these newspapers; who may not have been able to read English. Though writing a letter to parents is a typical exercise in elementary school and summer camp, it is perhaps particularly cruel given the enforced separation between parent and child. Why are these letters addressed to parents when survivor testimony throughout boarding school history highlights a lack of communication? When the intended audience of these newspapers was not exclusively parents? Perhaps publishing these letters suggested to readers across Canada that children were hardly suffering and were not completely estranged from their families. I doubt this: surrounding content within the newspapers reinforced that contact with parents prevented progress. Maybe the letters were addressed to parents as motivation to write more than they would to any other recipient. Or perhaps the parental addressee offered further proof of the letter's veracity, because students were likely to write more truthfully about life at school.

Many letters praised the school. One to an uncle called Shingwauk Home “a very good place” (*Our Forest Children* 3.10:120). Letters highlighted academic success (2.9:20), band performances (4.4:210), and Christianity. One published letter declared “we are all happy, and enjoying ourselves.” Buddle-Crowe (2001) suggests such uniformity could be attributed to students' limited vocabulary, but more likely to censorship (p. 89). Students could have also been sincere, as Child's (2014b, pp. 274–275) work urges us not to dismiss. Other letters, though, deviated from the script. Students mentioned that school is “almost like home” (*Our Forest Children* 3.7:75)—but not quite. Other students wrote, “When the school commenced it was hard for me to learn at first. While learning my lessons the thoughts would come to me of the good times that

I had. I am all right now” (2.9:20). Another student stated she rarely got to see her brother (3.7:75), alluding to gender segregation and separation of families. One published letter asked a parent to send apples and money (3.7:75), perhaps because of schools’ notorious lack of food. Another student asked a parent to “please will you send me one dollar to spend in the winter, and sometimes I am quite lonesome . . . If you send me some money I will take my picture send you” (3.7:76). Other students write about their thoughts of their parents and their hopes for seeing them again (3.10:120). One student wrote:

Dear father: I am writing to you to let you know that I am quite well. I was very sorry to hear that Mary had a sour leg. I hope she is getting better. I can read Indian letter just as well as English letter, so you can write to me in Indian if you like . . . Everything is going on well in the Shingwauk Except P— is in the jail yet—Shingwauk jail, and I am the jailer. I will not tell you what he done as you know all about it. I must now close my letter, I am, your dear son (3.10:120).

In this letter, the student tells both his parents and the newspaper’s readers that he has some communication from back home (he learns of Mary’s bad leg and assumes that his parents already know the news about P). He also refers to the school’s jail. In an earlier issue, another student also referenced “one boy in jail” (3.7:75); an additional letter detailed how two boys ran away, were caught 80 miles away, and the trial was soon to begin. The student explains, “Judges and jury are by the boys; no white people to be present” (4.4:210). In these instances, students allude to punishment at Shingwauk as

well student resistance (running away). The student boldly announces he can still read and write his Indigenous language and if his parents prefer, he will write them that way.

It is difficult to determine whether these published letters reached parents. Carlisle School wanted to quash “the impression that all letters written by our pupils are carefully examined before they are allowed to go in the mail. This is not the case. All are free to write wherever they please and as often as they please.” Instead, it maintained, the only letters examined were “those written at the close of each month as a school exercise” (*Morning Star* 5.7:7). Survivor testimony confirms letters were indeed censored, but perhaps letters published in the newspapers were never meant to reach parents. Regardless, these letters written to parents were made public, for everyone to read. They appear to have been fodder for the newspaper, perhaps evidence of English rather than a genuine concern for parent-child contact. In a school newspaper much later, in 1955, one student openly questioned the censorship of home letters, asking in the newspaper “why does the Father Principal read the letters sent out or received by the children?” (*Moccasin Telegram* 13.2). The principal defended the practice, answering that it was “to check the content, and in so doing, avoid trouble that may arise from certain letters to certain persons.” The principal compares himself to “a vigilant father” who “should check his children’s relations”—he either missed or was sickly aware of the irony: his admitted censorship in fact disrupted communication between children and their relations. It appears that perhaps by the mid-twentieth century, censorship of home letters could be openly questioned by students but also admitted and defended by the school; in the late nineteenth-century, school newspapers instead denied any censorship and directed readers to focus on published letters as examples of English.

In addition to letters, schools newspapers exhibited student compositions. These essays, too, were prefaced—compositions were stated to be “without any alteration” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 16.11; 17.7), were “first attempts” and “very crude” (1.3), reprinted “just as they are handed in” (26.3). As was the case with letters, newspapers directed readers to consider compositions as evidence of “the difficulties which have to be surmounted by the native children in the study of English” (1.3). Many student compositions chosen to be published in the newspaper mirrored larger goals also expressed by government reports. One composition compared the lives of two boys—one “wild and reckless” who later becomes a gambler; the other an “obedient” boy who attends boarding school and grows up to own a clean home—an example of those who “try to do right and take advantage of the Government’s kindness” (*The Guide* 6.9:1). Another composition explains Indigenous children have inherited from “the old Indians” a tendency to be cruel towards animals. According to the composition, Indigenous children “like to see the things being hurt” and are “fond of doing it” (3.4:30-31). In contrast, the newspaper stated, “Not many white boys are cruel.”

But other student compositions resist the colonial narratives of the school newspaper. One composition from Kitamaat Home described how Indigenous elders—the “Old People”—were lazy and only attended church for the singing. However, students also wrote, “The old people are very funny they always make us laugh when they go up the home and they want to tell a story to the girls” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 22.4). Perhaps the humour and storytelling of the children’s elders *had* to be framed as evidencing their laziness, just as the students could not call them family or grandparents but “the old people.” Shingwauk Home’s newspaper published compositions on the “pleasures and

hardships of life at the Shingwauk.” Students wrote of pleasures such as playing, hunting, games, skating, and Christmas celebrations (1.12:3). Some students wrote about the hardships of misbehaving children and the shame of one fellow student going to jail (1.12:4); one student even claimed he “cannot tell anything about hardships I don’t think there is any hardships at all” (1.12:3). Another student, though, declared, “The hardship of our life at the Shingwauk, is on account of sickness. One of our fellow pupils had a fever, and several others had another kind of sickness.” Though the rest of the composition explains the biggest hardship is for Wilson in running the school, it exposes the illnesses rampant at school that newspapers so rarely acknowledged.

Other compositions from Kitamaat Home can be viewed as less about school life and more concerned with creative imaginings. These stories offered readers scenes of shapeshifting and metamorphosis. They often concluded with the lesson that things are not always as they seem, developed through tales of animals and humans alike. Students wrote short stories about bears that ate too much seaweed and a family who picked berries and encountered wolves. They composed essays on a king’s daughter who was offered a brooch and a hand in marriage, but later discovered the brooch was a crab claw and the suitor a bear. Students created stories about a man who was actually a serpent and a woman who was really a bear (26.3-4), as well as a “coast ghost story” (15.9). It is unclear whether children retold stories they heard from family or based them on their own experiences. Students may have also been inspired by reading materials from school. Regardless of how students came upon their ideas, these compositions depart from the rest of *Na-Na-Kwa* and its reports on colonial development and Christian missionaries. Though school newspapers prefaced compositions as examples of progress in grammar

and spelling, these writings could also be viewed as perhaps puncturing the newspaper's more predictable storylines of assimilation in imaginative ways.

### **English *And***

This final section focuses on how students in school newspapers distinguished between learning English *and*—English in addition to Indigenous languages—and English *only*, which was typically the agenda of school and government. Buddle-Crowe (2001) disparages the myth that literacy and media were “imposed on hapless Indian communities by the state” (p. 1), replicated by the title of the monograph *Bringing Indians to the Book* (Furtwangler, 2005). Brooks (2008) observes how colonialism meant Indigenous peoples adapted their literacy practices: “Birchbark messages became letters and petitions, wampum records became treaties, and journey pictographs became written ‘journals’” (p. 13). Brooks also writes how Indigenous peoples soon learned writing could “enact their dispossession” but could also “reverse that destructive course” (p. 236). She further argues treaties and the petitions, typically thought of as European rhetorical modes, were in fact informed by Indigenous literary practices as well (pp. 224; 229). As Jan Hare (2009) writes, “Aboriginal people were very aware of the changing word, and Western literacy was seen to offer a gateway, indeed *the* gateway, to the newcomer's world” (p. 244). In this way, “For Aboriginal parents it was not a matter of either/or, but of both” (p. 248). In *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit* (1996), Leslie Marmon Silko also documents how “Pueblo people realized the power of written words and books to secure legitimate title to tribal land. No wonder the older folks used to tell us kids to study: learn to read and to write for your own protection” (p. 160). In these examples, Indigenous peoples were not opposed to English and saw it as a tool. But



schools dimmed this distinction, even as late as the 1970s: one article from the Halifax *Herald-Chronicle* quoted a mother who appreciated learning English at boarding school but did not want her children to lose Mi'kmaw; however the headline and the rest of the article interpret her perspective as English *only*, not English *and* (M. C. Anderson & Robertson, 2011, p. 169); nineteenth-century school newspapers did the same.

School newspapers reported that students were developing a love of English. Battleford School claimed its students exhibited a “strong desire” to learn (1892, p. 244). Regina School’s newspaper reported how students read books until they became “somewhat dilapidated in appearance” (*Progress* 3.72:5). One student wrote,

There are different ways of reading. In order to get some good out of what you are reading, you must read slowly, and get everything that you can squeeze out of each word, verse, or paragraph, into your head, before it runs away. Do not pass a verse just because it looks simple but study it carefully and you might get what you are looking for, or get something better than it. (17.11:6)

Another issue asked readers for donations, revealing students’ love of books:

We frequently think of the stacks of dusty magazines that accumulate in thousands of homes in the east—aye and west too. There are awakened and hungry minds to feed as well as mouths to fill and bodies to clothe. Intelligence is the solid and rational foundation for christian [sic] character. With the ability to

use it good reading matter may do very effective missionary work. Now that the schools have qualified so many Indian children to understand and appreciate good wholesome reading it is in the power of thousands to nobly help on the work. If people saw Indian pupils at night perusing and enjoying their books and papers they would be both pleased and surprised. They are surely getting ready for citizenship. (*Progress* 3.70:8)

The school newspaper claims the right kind of texts are capable of awakening and feeding the mind, laying a foundation for good character, increasing the efficacy of missionaries, and creating citizens. But it also exhibits the image of students voraciously reading. Though the literature supplied at boarding schools promoted a colonial agenda and reports claimed that the “love of reading” led to citizenship and good Christian character, Brendan Edwards’ (2005) work reminds us, “The imported Western reality of books and libraries were not strictly imposed, but rather negotiated, conceptualized, and adapted to Aboriginal systems of spoken and written communication as a creative blend of old and new” (p. xii). With reports of students who love reading, spending nights in the library and wearing down books until “dilapidated,” students were not necessarily reading for the reasons the school had in mind.

Students also wrote how learning English could benefit them and their communities. In 1892 the Oblate priest Father LeJeune wrote that Indigenous peoples learned English “too soon for their own good” and should not be taught English but should “learn it how they may, and as late as possible” (qtd. in Haig-Brown, 1988, p. 35). LeJeune implied English led to contact with white people who would cause harm. But in

a Carlisle School student's letter to his father, published in the school newspaper, the student cites English as both a great language and a method of protecting land rights. He tells his father: "Suppose any white man goes to your place and tries to drive you away, could you stay if you don't understand him or unless you can talk as well as he can?" (*Morning Star* 5.7:8). Unlike LeJeune, some children's perspectives in school newspapers suggested the answer to avoiding white manipulation was to *learn* English.

Students' compositions in newspapers further cited English as helpful in learning about the rest of the world and gaining employment (*Progress* 17.11:5-6). One composition declared that when students learn to read, "They can read letters sent to them by their friends; never mind how far they may be." Students also explained that reading helped pass the time and if someone was "sad he can read some interesting story that will make him forget his troubles" (17.11:6). Another student stated she liked "to learn the Alphabet so as when I go home and when some of my friends is sick and come to ask me to read to them out of the bible I can so" (*Our Forest Children* 1.10.13). In these compositions, reading was less about the civilizing projects the school proclaimed in annual reports but instead a means of employment, for keeping in contact with those far away, and providing spiritual comfort. One of the topics of Battleford School's literary society meeting was "English Speaking" (*The Guide* 1.1:2). One student's speech urged his peers to try "not to speak Indian any more":

It is for our own good, not for the good of the Principals, Masters, and the Government. Some of us can talk good English. We must try to make the Indian speakers talk English. We must teach them to help the Inspector, the Principal,

and our masters. It is a good thing for us to speak English because if we were to meet an Englishman somewhere and he asked us something in English we would not know what he said or what he meant, but if we learn to speak English we can speak to any Englishman that comes across us . . . So, boys and girls, the best thing for us to do is to speak English all the time, not to speak one word of Cree, and I want you all to remember that. (1.2:2)

The student promotes English *instead of* Indigenous languages, but he had no space to say otherwise: not at the school, in the literary society, or in the newspaper. As well, he focuses on *speaking*, never on unlearning Cree. He pleads for his peers to learn English like him not, as government reports and schools insisted, to banish “heathen” tongues in the name of civilization. Instead, he promotes English to ensure his peers will always know what an Englishman is asking them—perhaps grave questions they may face as adults on the law, child removal, treaties, employment, or land claims. The student insists learning English is not for “Principals, Masters, and the Government” but the good of the children themselves. Finally, he reveals that there remained “Indian speakers” at the school, contradicting school reports that claimed everyone had long forgotten.

At another literary club meeting, Battleford School students recited essays on the importance of reading. Again, their responses differ from government mandates. One student wrote, “Our friends find it difficult to talk to white people and when we go among them they will expect us to help them; if we don’t learn well now, this will be hard for us; and will cause them trouble” (*The Guide* 4.9:1). Another student explained, “We must learn all we can about reading while we stay in the school, so that when we

leave here we can still read good books, and so go on learning things as long as we live.” Another student wrote, “We who can read can learn much if we try.” One student declared that without knowing how to write, “We could not send our thoughts and wishes to our friends who live far away from us,” possibly meaning her family. Still another student stated, “We cannot talk to people who are far away, but we can write to them, say what we want to, ask them questions, or tell them anything we wish, just as easily as I can talk to you now.” These reasons included to avoid “trouble” with white people and to help non-English speaking Indigenous people to avoid it, too; to learn for life; and to communicate across distances. Such reasons depart from those typically cited by school and government—to progress away from heathenism.

Pratt seemed aware of the distinction between English *only* and English *and*, appealing to it when attempting to convince a former student to send his children:

Cannot you see it is far, far better for you to have your children educated and trained as our children are so that they can speak the English language, write letters, and do the things which bring to the white man such prosperity, and each of them be able to stand for their rights as the white man stands for his? Cannot you see that [your children] will be of great value to you if after a few years they come back from school with the ability to read and write letters for you, interpret for you, and help look after your business affairs in Washington? (2003, p. 223)

Pratt’s justifications for English contradict what he wrote elsewhere, and the particular parent Pratt was attempting to persuade, Spotted Tail, could see through Pratt, who had

just fired his son-in-law from his job as school interpreter. Spotted Tail in turn threatened to pull out not only his own but all Sioux children in attendance (p. 238). In this powerful example, Spotted Tail encouraged English in addition, not only. He forcefully resisted on behalf of his family and community against Pratt's designs, seeing through his duplicity.

Compare these sentiments—that Indigenous peoples could use English on their own terms, not at the expense of Indigenous languages—to a speech by Oneida student Dennison Wheelock at Carlisle School. He wrote the award-winning speech in 1887, answering the school's prompt, "Is it right for the Government to stop the teaching of the Indian languages in Reservation Schools?"<sup>42</sup> Wheelock, the school's prized pupil (and a printer), flatly declared, "The Indian language is one that few persons who wish to live as human beings can use." The speech was circulated in both Carlisle School's newspaper as well as *Shingwauk Home's* (1.10:8). Warrior (2005) reads the speech contrapuntally, as both evidence of how "Pratt's ideology had succeeded, though not totally" (p. 123). Warrior contextualizes the essay with Wheelock's later commitments to the Oneida Nation, further noting how this essay came in 1887, at "the apex of Pratt's educational ideology" (p. 125). Finally, Warrior relates Wheelock's essay to his other endeavors such as music in which he had more freedom. Warrior imagines "the printer boys at Carlisle seeing the printed praises of Wheelock's exploits and resenting him and the administrators who extolled him with every turn of the drum of their printing press. But all of these students, from those sneaking a smoke behind the print shop to those trying desperately to please their teachers, are part and parcel of Native educational legacy."

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<sup>42</sup> As the next chapter discusses, Indigenous languages could be taught at government boarding schools in the U.S. up until 1881; in 1887, they were banned as well from mission (religious) schools. The essay prompt was likely informed by the many debates on the place of Indigenous languages in boarding schools at this time.

Like Wheelock, students in Canadian boarding school newspapers also praised English to the exclusion of Indigenous languages occasionally. One student wrote in an 1897 issue of Battleford School's newspaper she hoped new students would quickly learn English (*The Guide* 5.8:1); another student explained, "It is better for us to talk English all the time. We come to this School to talk English like white people. Not to talk Indian"; after this student's quote, the newspaper observes she "seems to be thoughtful" (1.1:1). On the following page, the same student wrote she was "indeed very much pleased to hear the girls talking English when playing. Very little Indian is spoken now by anyone" (1.2:2). Regina School reprinted the account of an alumna who complained that when students returned home, they did not speak English: "Sometimes our mother's tongue goes back into its place. We don't think in English. Thinking in English makes us talk English the better. I have followed it and it has worked well" (*Progress* 3.72:3). One of Carlisle School's newspapers features a man who asks a student to say "rock" in his Indigenous language; the boy refuses three times, admonishing the man by stating, "I am always talk English" (*Morning Star* 3.12:2). These instances operated as part of the school's larger system of pitting students against one another, particularly when it came to language. They also highlight Warrior's point that a simple binary framing the English language or praises of it as a mark of being colonized is dangerously simplistic. As Fanon states, interpreted by Cheyfitz (1997), in the revolutionary (as opposed to the colonial) situation, "The native speaker masters the master's language not to become white, not to assume the position of the eloquent orator, but to explode, or expose, that position. The native speaker, then, doesn't so much master the master's language as take possession of it, or, more precisely take up his rightful place in it" (p. 126). This "explosion" is more

obvious in articles by students on the benefits of English *and*, but is possible to recognize also in moments seemingly praising English *only*.

Lyons' (2010) scholarship is helpful in ironing out the distinction further. He understands the x-mark—an Indigenous signature on a treaty—as a symbol for Native assent. Though Lyons acknowledges treaties involved coercion and misunderstanding, more generally x-marks symbolize people who “understood what was at stake” and debated the implications, carefully considering a choice “to modernize and nationalize” (p. 127). The x-mark for Lyons signifies “more than just embracing new or foreign ideas as your own; it means consciously connecting those ideas to certain values, interests, and political objectives, and making the best call you can under conditions not of your making” (p. 70). Lyons cites authors such as Craig Womack, Jace Weaver, and Simon Ortiz, who claim English as an “Indian language.” For Lyons, claiming English as an Indian language helps “to ‘unbrainwash’ people in Native communities who may feel a little less Native for having their languages taken away” (p. 158), although it runs the risk of undermining the work of heritage language activists and nationalists (pp. 159-160). Elsewhere, Lyons (2009) offers the image of a fence between English and Indigenous languages rather than the post-colonial concept of hybridity—“not to keep things out, but to keep important things in” (p. 79). The fence follows Lyons' understanding of Ojibway Elders, who advocate for separation between things that are “irreconcilable” (p. 102) and could “demonstrate a propensity for producing conflict” (p. 99). Though school newspapers printed statements by students ostensibly advocating English-only beliefs, students may have established their own fences between languages. In this way, perhaps their defense against linguicide in fact meant learning English.



Justice (2006) makes similar points. He notes how since the seventeenth century, English has become “indigenized when Cherokees and other Indians have taken firm control of their own linguistic economy” (pp. 12-13). Justice asserts that Cherokee literature in English “is thus more than just a concession to the linguistic violence of an oppressive invader culture; instead, it—like the Cherokee language itself—is a powerful reflection of self-determination and agency by people who are deeply invested in the historical, genealogical, geographic, and cosmological significance of all that it is to be Cherokee.” Consider the thoughts in a mother’s letter, printed in the school newspaper:

It came to my mind that our boy how he get along from this time. Are good health or not, and tell him we are well and I will try to send some apple for him. And I will to tell you what I want for to learn—to learn reading all about. If you bring him to be wise, might be useful for good interpreter or to work the minister. If you bring that way I shall be glad. (*Our Forest Children* 2.9:16-17)

This mother desires her son “to learn reading all about” so he may be useful as a minister or interpreter—English in addition. As Harjo and Bird (1997) submit, many Indigenous peoples have named English theirs (pp. 24). For them, focusing on Indigenous languages as lost reinforces “that we are dying, that our cultures are dying” (p. 25). For Harjo and Bird, not acknowledging English perpetuates the myth of vanishing. Whether students qualified their endorsement of English in newspapers as English *and* or appear at first to promote English *only*, the framing of Lyons, Justice, and Harjo and Bird creates space for understanding these instances as far more complicated. That these instances appeared in

school newspapers with such a controlled English-only narrative, though, suggests that schools did not or could not understand this difference. For school newspapers, it appears they assumed any praise of English on the part of students meant English *only*, rather than the more complicated possibility of English *and*.

## Conclusion

The chapter began with Theodore Fontaine (2010) being reprimanded for speaking Ojibwemowin. But in other scenes, English also represents another world for him:

I'd watch my brothers read Dell and Marvel comic books and been intrigued by their intense focus on the bubbles above characters' heads. Sometimes they'd paraphrase the story in Ojibway for me, as all I could say and understand in English then was "hello," "good day, eh?," "yes, please" and "no, please" . . . My brothers' translations were very exciting and brought a whole new world to my little "Indian" life. They instilled in me a strong desire to read. . . Mom would say, in Ojibway, "When you go to school, you will be able to read comics." In my mind, this would be the greatest benefit of my schooling. (pp. 24-25)

Neither Fontaine nor his family opposes learning the "whole new world" of English. Johnston's (1989) memoir of Spanish School in Ontario also recounts his teacher Brother O'Keefe, who would synopsis *Treasure Island* and *The Illustrated London News*, leaving students "spellbound" (p. 39). O'Keefe's narrations positively affected Johnston, who went on to become a writer and Ojibway language leader. Government reports and

school newspapers reveal subscriptions to 70 newspapers, libraries of “dilapidated” books, and students who loved to read. Students wrote and spoke about their own reasons for learning English, including building (not destroying) relations, learning about the world, and outsmarting white manipulation.

But these uses of English and the attendant methods of survival and resistance do not excuse the bans on Indigenous languages or the official policies, practices, and pedagogies promoted in late nineteenth-century boarding schools. This includes perhaps the two most devastating: that ostensible communication between parent and child was offered up for the consumption of non-Indigenous readers; and that schools framed English learning as a voluntary, natural preference when the larger picture demonstrates the calculated and violent ways schools enforced English at the expense of Indigenous languages. This history offers at least three lessons: it 1) bolsters an obligation on the part of the state for supporting Indigenous language resurgence today, framing such support not as charity but as justice for historical wrongdoings; 2) denaturalizes the naturalness of the English language on this continent (i.e., English just happened); and 3) historicizes Indigenous peoples’ resistance to as well as engagement with English. School newspapers operated as a way to disseminate to readers the techniques and progress of English in nineteenth-century boarding schools, yet also reveal how students and parents even then were challenging the binary between English and Indigenous languages.

## CHAPTER 5: INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS

*as if violating God the Father and standard English*

*is like talking back(wards)*

*as if speaking the devil's language is*

*talking back*

*back(words)*

*back to your mother's sound, your mother's tongue, your mother's language*

*back to that clearing in the bush*

*in the tall black spruce*

*near the sound of horses and wind*

*where you sat on her knee in a canvas tent*

*and she fed you bannock and tea*

*and syllables*

*that echo in your mind now, now*

*that you can't make the sound*

*of that voice that rocks you and sings you to sleep*

*in the devil's language. (Dumont, 1996, pp. 54–55)*

In the “The Devil’s Language,” poet Marilyn Dumont juxtaposes Cree with the “lily white words” of English, challenging the denigration of Indigenous languages and the supposed superiority of English. Dumont’s poem converts Cree from a violation, an

anachronism, and a marker of the devil into a language of the land and her mother. The devil in her poem is not the homey images of bannock, tea, and lullabies but the linguistic estrangement from her mother, that the speaker “can’t make the sound of that voice” as an adult. Though from a Kenyan context, Thiong’o (2005) similarly states such linguistic disharmony stems from two simultaneous prongs: the elevation of English and denigration of an Indigenous language (p. 17). The previous chapter outlined the former tactic; this chapter investigates the latter within school newspapers. This chapter argues schools and their newspapers, despite their English-only agendas, featured Indigenous languages in instances that were both sanctioned and unsanctioned.

Most school newspapers denigrate Indigenous languages at some point, espousing the ideology that Indigenous languages represented a lower evolutionary stage and therefore were incapable of expressing all that European languages could communicate. Some school newspapers confirmed these beliefs in articles about how Indigenous languages lacked concepts such as gratitude (*The Guide* 4.5.1; *Progress* 3.71:7); others stated Ojibway lacked a rich vocabulary compared to English (*Our Forest Children* 1.12:2-3). One newspaper even associated an Alaskan language with the sound of chirping birds (*Progress* 3.83:1).

Such denigration flies in the face of how Indigenous scholars centre language. For Okanagan author Jeannette Armstrong (1998), “speaking is a sacred act” (p. 183). Isabelle Young (2005) writes that languages are gifts from the Great Spirit (p. 29). For Betasamosake Simpson (2011b), “Our languages house our teachings and bring the practice of those teachings to life in our daily existence” (p. 49). And for Battiste (2000), Indigenous languages “are the basic media for the transmission and survival of

Aboriginal consciousness, cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values” (p. 199). For Cornassel and Alfred (2011), Indigenous peoples can regenerate themselves “in a conceptual universe formed through Indigenous languages” (p. 144). Such perspectives are in no way unanimous. Still, many cite Indigenous languages as key to survival and resurgence. The inverse, then, is true too: Justice (2006) writes of how “Eurowestern assimilation policies have always targeted Indian stories, words, languages, and voices. A people who know their own stories are strong” (p. 46).

Based on the previous chapter, one might assume schools and their newspapers were devoid of Indigenous languages. But often it appears they permitted Indigenous languages, often lauding them. This chapter examines first the unsanctioned and then sanctioned presence of Indigenous languages in schools and their newspapers. Despite the techniques, policies, and pedagogies that—often violently—attempted to stamp out Indigenous languages, and despite the experiences of survivors and artists such as Dumont who testify to the lifelong consequences of such attempts, this chapter identifies both how students defied the rules but also the limited, prescribed, and controlled instances in which schools and their newspapers allowed Indigenous languages, arguing the schools had ulterior motives to control language while students resisted them.

### **Resistance: Unsanctioned Language**

In the 1960s, a school newspaper from Gordon’s School in Saskatchewan reported the night watchman wondered why “the girls who talk in their sleep, always speak Cree” (*Peekiskwatan*). Students continued to speak Indigenous languages in nineteenth-century schools too, whether unconsciously or otherwise. Isabelle Knockwood (1992), who attended Shubenacadie School in Nova Scotia, recalls learning one day that

Latin was dead because no one spoke it any longer:

“Aha,” I thought, “if we are not allowed to speak Mi’kmaw, it will die. So I’m juggling three languages here. I think in Mi’kmaw, talk and learn in English, and pray in Latin.” (p. 54)

Knockwood staves off the death of Mi’kmaw by continuing to think in it. The same phenomenon occurs in fiction: Richard Wagamese’s (2012) novel *Indian Horse* (2012) describes a ten-year-old character who dies after being punished for speaking Ojibway, prompting the other children to be careful:

So the kids whispered to each other. They learned to speak without moving their lips, an odd ventriloquism that allowed them to keep their talk alive. They’d bend their heads close together as they mopped the halls or mucked out the barn stalls and speak Ojibway. I learned that ventriloquism eventually. (p. 48)

In this scene, students develop techniques for both avoiding the same fate as their peer and also for preserving language. Samuel Ross, who attended Prince Albert All Saints School in Saskatchewan in the 1940s and 50s, explained that before students would speak Cree, they “had to look around first” (*Samuel Ross*, n.d.). Mary Battaja, who attended Chooutla Indian Residential School in the Yukon in the 1950s, also recalls furtively maintaining her language, Northern Tutchone, by sneaking into the bush to meet with brothers who were otherwise separated from her (*Mary Battaja*, n.d.). Survivor Mabel

Harry-Fontaine found sites both outside as well as within the walls of Fort Alexander Residential School in the 1950s:

I used to speak my language anyway, with the other girls. I even know the places outside, when we were playing outside, where the Nun was far away. I still spoke my language. I remember under the stairs, the stairway, you know the stairs where there's a space. I remember speaking my language there every chance I got. And in the washroom. . . . They took away a lot from me but they could not take that away. [Speaking Ojibway] Still yet today I speak my language and somehow I get a satisfaction out of that, that they couldn't take it away from me because they tried. Gawd, did they ever try. Every day. And I had to fight that.

Mabel makes clear school attempted to take her language and she “had to fight that”—her maintenance of language was a fight (*Mabel Harry-Fontaine*, n.d.).

Predictably, school newspapers were not candid about strategies of language preservation in the same way as survivor memoir, literature, and testimony. This absence may exemplify how school newspapers carefully created an English-only fantasy for readers, but may also attest to the success of students' secrecy: perhaps newspapers did not report that students still knew Indigenous languages because schools were unaware. One exception includes Regina School's newspaper, in which the laundress witnessed how one child “chatters away in Indian but he knows enough English to ask for a cookie” (*Progress* 16.9:6), implying children used English strategically. Government reports, if read contrapuntally, were more forthcoming in how students continued to speak their



language, though they framed such resistance as failure. An Indian agent in Manitoba observed, “It is Cree, first, last, and always except a little parrot English in the classroom, Cree is the language of the country” (DIA, 1904, p. 110). This is a problem for the agent, but the sentence can be read two ways: as proof of the school’s or students’ failure but also that Indigenous people were not easily submitting to the suppression of their languages. Other reports highlighted how students would speak English in front of teachers and employers but speak Indigenous languages during playtime or at home (1892, p. 249; 1905, p. 2; 1896, p. 428; 1886, p. 141; 1899, p. 441). Reports framed children, who could be read as resisting the linguicidal goals of their institution, as instead “obstinate” and “diffident” (1890, p. 162; 1886, p. 141; 1889, p. 74). While reports framed such defiance as a problem, when coupled with survivor testimony and fiction they further evidence strategies students used to resist language denigration.

### **School-Sanctioned Indigenous Languages**

Before discussing the sanctioned inclusion of Indigenous languages in school newspapers, I offer a brief history of bilingual Indian boarding schools in Canada. The earliest boarding schools began bilingual. In the seventeenth century, European schools for Indigenous children emphasized conversion to Christianity first and assimilation (linguistic and otherwise) second (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 451). Some missionaries believed the ideas communicated, not the language of instruction, mattered most. Some of this was strategic: Anglicans, Oblates, and Methodists saw how their knowledge of an Indigenous language made recruitment, retention, teaching, and Christianizing easier (pp. 199-204). But in the 1850s, government began insisting schools teach in English. This directive contradicted the philosophy of many churches, which had a long history of learning and

publishing religious materials in Indigenous languages. Kitamaat Home's newspaper demonstrated how the school continued this philosophy at the turn of the century, where kindergarten was taught "in the native language[,] substituting English equivalents." The teacher claimed bilingual instruction was "of mutual benefit." As she wrote, the students

never let opportunity pass of correcting my jumbled Kitamaat, repeating it after me with a merry laugh to show how me how much better they know it than I. It is only those attempting to learn this language that can understand how difficult it is. In fact they have a peculiar k' and h' sounds that I despair of my tongue and throat ever uttering properly, if it were not evident that Mr. Raley has done so, I would deem it impossible for English tongues (*Na-Na-Kwa* 12.4)

This teacher learned Kitamaat alongside her students, perhaps humbling herself in the shared challenge of learning. But the larger frame of the newspaper suggests the Tsimshian language may have been viewed as merely a means to a Christian, English-speaking end. Niezen (2013) recounts how during his research at the Archives Deschâtelets, the librarian showed him a collection of bilingual dictionaries created by Oblate missionaries as if to say "why would the priests have gone through all this effort if their goal was to destroy these languages?" (p. 134); I had the same experience. The seemingly rhetorical question can be contextualized by the advice of an Anglican missionary in 1875:

*First, Surveillance.* – This I conceive to be the proper starting point for commencing a right policy in Indian affairs; for without surveillance no satisfactory relationship can ever exist between the Government and the Indians . . . regard only the natural division of languages, of which I suppose there are some ten or twelve in the Province; each language being spoken, judging roughly by about four to five thousand persons. To each of these languages, I would recommend the Government to appoint a Superintendent, or more properly speaking a Sub-Agent who should also be a Justice of the Peace. This Sub-Agent should of course reside among his Indians and . . . it should be his aim, as soon as possible, to learn the language of his Indians. (DIA, 1875, p. lx).

In Duncan’s proposal, Indigenous languages serve two purposes: as a more streamlined way to categorize First Nations and as a way that authorities could endear themselves to their respective groups so as to ultimately surveil communities. The possessive pronoun of “his Indians” reappears, too. Though bilingual schools existed before the nineteenth century and the philosophy carried in to later schools, some motivations for retaining Indigenous languages could be viewed as colonial. Settlers may have also learned Indigenous languages for perhaps more altruistic or neighbourly reasons. But as Haig-Brown and Nock (2006) argue in *With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada*, such meaningful interventions did not alter the ultimate colonizing project; however, such moments as the teacher learning Tsimshian for “mutual benefit” with her kindergarten class may have provided moments of respite.

The Santee School in Nebraska, founded in 1870, helps to contextualize Indigenous languages in the newspapers of otherwise English-only schools. In 1868, the Superintendent of Indian Schools in the U.S. advocated bilingual language policies based on Friedrich Froebel's techniques, suggesting one language helped to learn another (Spack, 2002, p. 26). But as per the commissioner of Indian Affairs Hiram Price, in 1881 English became mandatory in government-funded schools (p. 24); by 1887, the rule extended to missions, much to the alarm of bilingual schools across the country (p. 33).<sup>43</sup> The policy hit particularly hard at Santee School, which had translated the Bible, dictionaries, grammars, and schoolbooks and created a bilingual school newspaper *Iapi Oyae/The Word Carrier* (Fear-Segal, 2007, pp. 85–86).<sup>44</sup> Santee School's dedication to the Dakota language even in the face of government cuts was not, as Spack (2002) and Fear-Segal (2007) argue, out of respect for the language but “to penetrate and inscribe new parameters on the Dakota people in an unremitting campaign to establish their own version of an ‘imagined community’ of Christian Dakota” (p. 89-90).

It could have been different. Luther Standing Bear (1978), who studied at Carlisle School when it opened in 1879, promoted bilingualism when he later became a teacher:

My pupils read first in English, then I asked them to read the same words in their own tongue to prove that they knew what they were reading about. They read the

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<sup>43</sup> New Zealand made English mandatory in all schools earlier—1867 (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006, p. 54).

<sup>44</sup> Several bilingual non-school newspapers existed in the nineteenth century. In the U.S., the *Cherokee Phoenix* was a newspaper arguing for sovereignty (Littlefield & Parins, 1984, p. xii). Canada had the *Kamloops Wawa*, published from 1891 to 1904 (P. Petrone, 1990). Prior to *Our Forest Children*, Principal Wilson also published a bilingual newspaper, *Pipe of Peace*, from 1878-1879 (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 7). Thomas Hurlburt in Sarnia, Ontario also published *Petaubun* beginning in 1862 (Buddle-Crowe, 2001, p. 61).

translations as well as they did English. Then I asked if the other [non-bilingual] classes would translate, but this they could not do. They had been merely drilled parrot-like to read some words out of a book. I leave it to the judgment of my intelligent readers which way was the better. (pp. 241-242)

Standing Bear developed this pedagogy after recalling how Carlisle's English-only rule had made him depressed and homesick. His students seemed to appreciate his techniques:

The children were so delighted with the system that they learned very fast. It gave me a great deal of pleasure too, for I knew that I was not making it disagreeable for them. I still think of those days with satisfaction and pride. (p. 242)<sup>45</sup>

This example may represent the spirit of what parents had expected from English training—a trauma-free environment in which both languages were freely expressed; where English was taught in addition to—not at the expense of—Indigenous languages. A report from 1864 documents how an Indigenous teacher of a day school in Cape Croker, Ontario taught English. He first had the children read in English. He would then translate the meaning for them and ask questions about the text in both languages, resulting in students who could “understand and speak a good many words in English.” Importantly, parents expressed “their entire satisfaction with the progress the children had made” (DIA, 1864, p. 26). Whether as a means to an assimilative end or for the reasons

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<sup>45</sup> For a detailed description of Standing Bear and English, see Spack (2002, pp. 101–107).

advocated by Indigenous teachers and parents, the larger history of boarding schools in North America reveals bilingual pedagogies.

*Language, syllabics, signmaking, and stories in school newspapers*

Schools in the late nineteenth-century may not have been bilingual as they were in the past, but many of their newspapers permitted isolated instances of Indigenous languages. For example one 1895 issue from Battleford School described how the Premier of the Dominion, Sir McKenzie Bowell, visited. Long before ascending to the role of Canada's fifth prime minister, Bowell began as an assistant at the *Belleville Intelligencer*, a publication he later owned (Waite, 1998). He also both helped to found and served as president of the Canadian Press Association. During his visit to Battleford School as a politician, Bowell surprised students by “setting up and distributing some type, and displaying a thorough knowledge of all the details of a printing office” (*The Guide* 4.3:1). Though the students exhibited surprise, politicians often began their careers as journalists. As a gift to acknowledge his visit, the print shop boys presented Bowell with copies they had created of Canada's national anthem—in Cree.<sup>46</sup> The boys then printed this encounter in their school newspaper (4.3:1).

In this scene, much remains to be unpacked. Bowell began a political career in a newly confederated Canada as a newspaperman. Producing and then owning a newspaper, which espoused the conservative and colonial values of the mid-nineteenth century, acted as a launch pad for a political career, where his policies continued the

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<sup>46</sup> The newspaper does not specify which national anthem, as the phrase in 1895 could have meant “The Maple Leaf Forever” or “God Save the Queen”; however, it printed a version of “God Save the Queen” in Cree two issues later. Though the newspaper does print “The Maple Leaf,” it is not for another two years and is only in English (*The Guide* 6.1:3).

colonization of Canada. Bowell's interactions with the print boys of the Battleford School operate on two levels: he is both a fellow newsie as well as a political leader visiting industrial schools, making a grand tour and inspecting their progress in attempting to assimilate Indigenous children. Bowell could have simply received any document—even a copy of the school newspaper, for its effect would have been the same as long as it was printed by the boys' own hands, symbolizing their ability to write English and operate a machine. However, the students handed him the national anthem in Cree. This gift could be read several ways. The most obvious is perhaps a challenge to Bowell's policies and the school—the students still are able to speak, write, and understand Cree. But Bowell's visit is staged, condoned by the school and written in its newspaper for a larger audience. Perhaps students' knowledge of Cree is permissible because it bolsters national endeavors as an anthem. But if nationalism were all the gift was supposed to communicate, printing in English would make more sense. Possibly, then, the seeming *trace* of the students' Indigeneity mattered. Retaining Cree—on the schools' terms—might have signified that what the school considered the remnants of a language were now only good for assimilative purposes: the national anthem, gratitude for a politician, and proof of industrial competency via the printing press.

Besides Bowell's visit, school newspapers also reported other instances in which the school permitted Indigenous languages. Jacob Bear visited Regina School and “addressed the children in Cree; he has an earnest impressive way of speaking and all seemed to follow him with the greatest attention” (*Progress* 18.2:5). He also led a sermon in Cree. The newspaper described him “as a great orator among a people who pride themselves on their powers of speech making. He has the orator's power, but he has

more; he is on fire, and his words fall like blazing torches in the minds of the Indians. Many of the Indians said, after hearing him, Sunday morning ‘That is the best Cree sermon I ever heard’” (18.3:1). The students also had visits from a chief in Mistawasis, who addressed them in Cree and who the students “listened to with the very closest attention by all” (18.10:2). The newspaper also reprinted an article about an Indigenous man named Thomas Walker. The article states, “To hear him pray is like a benediction as in his own tongue he calls down God’s blessing upon a lost world. To hear him speak to the people is grand. His language flowing readily and his thoughts wide and liberal” (3.84:2). It appears that perhaps in these isolated examples, students and visitors could speak Indigenous languages at the school and this practice was accepted enough to publish in the newspaper. Such exceptions perhaps demonstrate schools temporarily overrode English-only policies if speaking an Indigenous language promoted Christianity or facilitated a visit from a prominent person like a chief or prime minister.

Some schools provided reading materials in Indigenous languages. Upon Queen Victoria’s death, Kitamaat Home’s newspaper proclaimed in Tsimshian “Owmuskunnoxs Mudseilth,” meaning “the Greatest Chiefess” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 14.1). An 1895 issue of Battleford School’s newspaper featured “God Save the Queen” in Cree with English characters (*The Guide* 4.5:2). Far more of what newspapers translated was religious: Kitamaat Home translated the Lord’s Prayer into Kitamaat (*Na-Na-Kwa* 1.3; 5.6) and Haida (6.2), Psalm 23 (3.7), and the Ten Commandments (11.3). Battleford School translated the Lord’s Prayer and Grace into Cree (*The Guide* 7.12:4). What schools included in Indigenous languages was often related to either church or state.



Some school newspapers also discussed and printed Indigenous languages in syllabics, which are alphabets that better represent Indigenous languages than the Roman alphabet. Missionaries have been representing Indigenous languages using special orthographies as an evangelizing tool since the 1600s (Hochman, 2014, p. 14),<sup>47</sup> so their use in boarding schools run by missionaries is not altogether surprising. The principal of Kitamaat Home used the same press to both print the school newspaper as well as publish work “in connection with the Kitamaat language” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 1.1), meaning his missionary translation work (Fahey & Horton, 2012, p. 49). Annual reports that mention the use of syllabics consider the alphabet a substitute for communities without a school or a skilled teacher (DIA, 1881, p. 102; 1897, p. 75; 78; 1905, p. 203; 1906, p. 237).

When school newspapers mentioned syllabics it was typically to revere the purported creator of the orthography, the Wesleyan reverend James Evans. He has been credited with inventing Ojibway and Cree syllabics while operating a mission in Manitoba in the mid-nineteenth century. One article published in Battleford School’s newspaper explained how in 1895, students were now able to receive the gift of English at boarding school; however, Evans and his syllabics were worth remembering. According to the article, Evans was “privileged to confer the boon of a written language on the Cree nation” (*The Guide* 4.1:2). The article continues: “This country was not known as anything but the abode of wild beasts and savage Indians,” but thanks to syllabics a great change occurred:

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<sup>47</sup> In the series *Prayer Language*, artist Kent Monkman explores the tangled histories of syllabics, representation, religion, colonialism, language, and sexuality (Francis, 2011, pp. 148–155; R. W. Hill, 2002). See Kent Monkman: <http://www.kentmonkman.com/>

Was it possible to teach an Indian to read? It certainly was no easy matter. We all know how long it takes to teach most children to read even English. The spelling is the great difficulty, especially with the long words. But what are long English words compared with Cree words? Take the simple sentence, “God is love”—in Cree “Muneto sakihiwawiniwew.” What hope was there that an untutored Indian, with opportunities of receiving instruction few and far between, could ever learn to spell out words of eight, ten or twelve syllables? Some method other than the English must be devised.

This article never considers the Roman alphabet as deficient. Instead, the text indicates the problem remains with incapable students and too-long Cree words. An Indian Affairs inspector in Manitoba, too, perpetuated the trope. He declared that Indigenous peoples owed “a debt of gratitude to the Rev. Mr. Evans for his invention of syllabic characters” (DIA, 1899, p. 100). The origin story of the syllabics almost mythologizes Evans, who first used melted lead from old tea boxes, ink from sturgeon oil and soot, and a repurposed jack-press originally used for bundling furs (B. F. R. Edwards, 2005, p. 51).

This article in the Battleford School newspaper attempts to foreclose at least three contexts. For one, Grenoble and Whaley (2006) cite many dangers of syllabic writing, where “traditional wordplay may disappear. The role of stories, and accordingly of the elders or other authority figures who tell them, can be transformed, which has attendant effects on social hierarchies. The connection between speech and spirituality can be loosened” (p. 119). Also, Evans was accused of sexually abusing Indigenous women in

1846 while in Manitoba.<sup>48</sup> The mythologizing of Evans also excludes Indigenous claims of collaboration and even sole invention—that Evans took credit for something in fact created by Indigenous peoples themselves (Francis, 2011, p. 149). Evans collaborated with the Ojibway missionaries Peter Jones and Henry Bird Steinhauer (B. F. R. Edwards, 2005, p. 51). Cree oral history goes further, claiming syllabics as in fact from the Creator, who bestowed the symbols to two Elders—Mistanaskowew (Badger Bull) and Machiminahtik (Hunting Rod) (p. 68).

Haskell Institute’s newspaper also printed an article on the Cherokee syllabary,<sup>49</sup> which was invented by a man named Sequoyah in the early 1800s. The Cherokee Nation released the first issue of its bilingual newspaper the *Cherokee Phoenix* in 1828, which required a special press to print Sequoyah’s letters. Unlike the reverence paid to Evans, Haskell’s newspaper compares Sequoyah to Psalmanazar, an eighteenth-century imposter who created a fake alphabet (*Indian Leader* 3.4:3). The newspaper describes Sequoyah’s invention as wholly inspired by white alphabets and that his barriers to creating the alphabet included “the old Cherokee tradition [that] constantly dinned into his ears.” For the school newspaper, Sequoyah invented the syllabary *in spite of* being Cherokee, not because. The newspaper also subtly dismisses syllabaries because they are allegedly easy to learn and inefficiently contain too many characters, unlike the Roman alphabet.

Margaret Bender (2002) understands the Cherokee syllabary as both challenging and

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<sup>48</sup> For more on Evans and syllabics, see Roger Burford-Mason (1996). For more on Evans and his trial over the abuse, see Raymond Morris Shirritt-Beaumont (2001) and Gerald M. Hutchinson (1977). His guilt remains unclear, as many Indigenous community members supported Evans, and his accusers later admitted that another missionary, who later went on to take credit for the syllabics after Evans’ death named William Mason, was in fact the perpetrator (Francis, 2011, pp. 190–191). Whatever the case, the history of syllabics is embroiled in the history of Hudson’s Bay, the law, and sexual abuse—far more complicated than the school newspaper makes it out to be.

<sup>49</sup> The term “syllabics” is typically used in Canada to indicate that similar sounds use the same symbol; the term “syllabary,” which describes Cherokee and is used more in the United States, usually denotes different characters for different sounds, no matter how similar.

reinforcing nineteenth-century ideologies concerning written text and Indigenous peoples (p. 24). Justice (2006) views the syllabary as a powerful tool used to resist and then rebuild after the Trail of Tears between 1836 and 1839, in which thousands of people died after their forced relocation to Oklahoma (p. 6). Hochman (2014) argues that the syllabary both “fascinated and outraged white writers and policy makers. The unlettered savage, it seemed, had suddenly commandeered civilization’s most important communications technology” (p. 17). Hochman considers such a “conceptual sleight of hand” as underscoring “just how desperately American anthropologists needed to fit living and changing cultures into a static, hierarchical worldview” (p. 18). In these two articles, schools deployed tactics for discussing but also containing Indigenous languages.

School newspapers also occasionally featured articles on Indigenous signmaking, such as stories recorded on trees and rocks (*Progress* 3.71:3) as well as pictograms (*Our Forest Children* 4.6:241). As Hare (2009) argues, expanded definitions of Indigenous meaning-making are “a direct challenge to the narrow and privileged meaning-making system that has been reserved for the name of literacy” (p. 261). School newspapers were largely uninterested in this expanded understanding; however, they sometimes featured articles on Indigenous sign languages. Though the previous chapter identified how schools falsely conceived of English as a *lingua franca*, these sign languages served as an equal bridge across a variety of mutually unintelligible Indigenous languages (Davis, 2010, p. 1). Though there were many sign languages used by Indigenous peoples across North America, the Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL) is perhaps the most well documented and widely used, spanning over 4 million square kilometres (pp. 6-9). That schools published articles about Indigenous sign languages is unsurprising given the

interest in them during the mid- to late nineteenth century. Proto-anthropologists in the 1860s considered sign languages “living fossils of mankind’s collective past” (Hochman, 2014, p. 42). They believed PISL may have predated spoken language and was therefore a key to understanding evolution and how humans differed from animals. These beliefs were so strong that some educators in the 1860s and 1870s suppressed American Sign Language because of its supposed connections to “savagery” (p. 43).

When schools wrote about PISL, they did so either to praise preservation efforts by white philologists or to offer readers signs to try for themselves. Haskell Institute’s newspaper claimed Indigenous peoples did not have historians (“no moccasined Macaulay nor copper-colored Gibbon”), necessitating the efforts of an H. L. Scott of the Smithsonian to preserve PISL before it died out (*Indian Leader* 6.9:1). The newspaper regarded Scott as “probably the best living authority on the sign language.” Battleford School’s newspaper, too, praised Scott’s preservation efforts, citing his 23 years of study (in 1899) as putting him “in a position to speak authoritatively on the subject” (*Guide* 7.8:2). Such articles appear to both wrest authority of an Indigenous language away from Indigenous peoples and participate in the myth of the “vanishing Indian.” School newspapers also discussed PISL as what could be considered entertainment for readers. *Our Forest Children*, for instance, listed directions for over fifty words (2.13:17-18)—from “Sioux” and “white man” to “sunrise” and “sunset”; from “I am cold” and “he is fibbing” to “I hate you” and “I am ashamed” (see Figure 6). Students would have also read about sign language in *The Boys’ Own Paper*, to which many boarding schools subscribed. The newspaper compared Indigenous sign languages to the gestures of Italian

pantomime and Cistercian monks, but also to monkeys, crickets, and the “insane” (“The Sign Language of the American Indians,” 1890, p. 492).

Compare this to how Standing Bear (1978) considered sign languages in 1933. Signing represented an expanded—not lesser—form of communication, a “beautiful and expressive use of the hands.” He further alludes to the encroachment of anthropologists:

Books have been put on the market purporting to teach the hand language, but it is as impossible to learn it in this manner as to learn stage acting from photographs, or piano playing by watching someone play. Most hand-language books are useless. (pp. 81-82)

Standing Bear’s views contrast with how newspapers appropriated PISL. His perspective also counters an article in Shingwauk Home’s newspaper, which described how a staff member escorted a Blackfoot student, Daniel, from Washakada Home in Manitoba to his family. The boy chanced upon a Cree woman, with whom he conversed by sign:

The Cree asked Daniel what he had done with his hair, as a year ago he had long ringlets and wore a blanket; but now wears his hair short and has a good suit of English clothes. He informed the Cree that he was now a Christian and produced his Testament out of his pocket and told him he was going to his home on the reserve; but next spring was coming back on the staff of the new Industrial Schools at this place. All this took place by hand signs, which I am told are understood by all Indian tribes. (*The Canadian Indian* 1.4:108).

The staff member would not have been able to confirm this is indeed what they said in its entirety. Standing Bear recalled how he and other students used sign language to defy the English-only rule at Carlisle School. For him, “Those of us who knew the sign language made use of it, but imagine what it meant to those who had to remain silent” (p. 242).

While school newspapers place Indigenous sign languages under what could be considered the purview of anthropologists and framed PISL as amusement amidst a larger belief that they were a “savage” form of communication, Standing Bear reveals how such depictions were wrong; students who knew how to sign, in contrast, used it to communicate at school under the noses of administrators.

School newspapers also permitted Indigenous languages through story. Children printed stories in Kitamaat Home’s newspaper told to them by a chief. Stories include one about the first beaver (*Na-Na-Kwa* 20.8), which was “related by Chief Jessea” and “reported to Nanakwa by Martha Brown,” a student and printer. Another printer, Minnie Amos, was also credited with “interpreting” the story of the beaver and the porcupine (18.3). Another story, “The Blind Chief Hantlekwelass” was “related by Chief Moses McMillan” and “translated” by the principal, Raley (22.11). Chief Jessea is also credited as the one who “related” a story about Whenath’s bear hunt (11.3). The story “Abuks Tlalumkwaks,” too, is credited to Chief Jessea as well as to the missionary who translated it (6.3). Other stories are presented as authored by a chief, such as “The story of Wahuksgomalayou” (3.3). The author of “The Story about the death of Chone” (25.5) is credited to Kin-da-shon’s wife and “Frog’s Revenge” is credited to Chief Jessea as well (29.6-7). Sophie McCall (2011) challenges the notion that “told-narratives were

synonymous with literary colonization,” arguing they serve as a meeting place. Her research avoids the binary between Indigenous storytellers and non-Indigenous writers and editors: “Two or more mediators produce these composite texts, and their negotiations [are] shaped by contested relations of power” (pp. 41-42). These newspaper examples are between Indigenous storytellers (chiefs) and Indigenous writers and printers (the children) while Raley served as non-Indigenous intermediary, complicating McCall’s points. Another layer is how Indigenous languages are sustained within English: Dumont (2007b) describes this as how “in a few borrowed sounds of English/the nerve of Cree remains/in mouths that have tasted a foreign alphabet too long” (p. 1).

Students and chiefs may have shared these stories with the newspaper for their own reasons, and considering them as “literary colonization” is too simple. It is not clear what role Indigenous readers, printers, and writers had in insisting that these appear in the newspapers or how they felt upon reading them. At the same time, school newspapers would frame such stories as entertainment. Some publications called Indigenous stories superstitions (*The Guide*, 5.7:4), legends (*Progress* 3.80:4; 8.13:3), and curious traditions (3.5:41), considered by the newspapers as “fascinating” (5.10), and as “charming children’s stories” (*Indian Leader* 15.30:3). Fear-Segal (2007) notes a similar trend at Hampton Institute in Virginia. Its newspaper’s stories were “safely classified as folklore,” which is the only way the school “tolerated discussion of native traditions” (p. 113). As Dian Million (2011) explains, “Story has always been practical, strategic, and restorative” (p. 35). For Betasamosake Simpson (2011b), “Elders tell us that everything we need to know is encoded in the structure, content, and context of these stories” (p. 33). For her, storytelling is also “a tool to vision other existences outside of the current ones” (p. 40).



The inclusion of Indigenous storytelling within school newspapers may have been told and written within the same frame that McCall, Million, and Betasamosake Simpson outline, despite the larger frame of the newspaper.

### **Indigenous Languages and Ethnography**

School newspapers also printed articles on Indigenous languages as part of a larger interest in ethnography, a discipline arguably born out of colonialism. As Audra Simpson (2014) writes, colonialism was more than military occupation and also included “methods and modalities of knowing—in particular, categorization, ethnological comparison, linguistic translation, and ethnography” (p. 95). Mackey (1999) also offers how increasing interest in Indigenous peoples by settlers, which included ethnographic interest, coincided with increased sanctions against Indigenous people (p. 36). It was as if settlers were communicating to Indigenous peoples, “*You no longer can speak your language, wear your regalia, eat your food, or practice your ceremonies, but the newspaper/school/ethnographer can, and knows more about it than you.*” One burgeoning form of ethnographic interest in the nineteenth century and in school newspapers was linguistic. Such desires to—quickly—record languages before they disappeared aligned with the larger efforts of salvage ethnography: the attempts of “civilized” scientists and artists in the nineteenth century to record what they thought to be unavoidably on the brink of extinction because their primitive existence could not survive in the modern world (Hochman, 2014, p. xiii).

The seeming lament for “dying” languages accelerated in the nineteenth century, particularly with the influence of German philologist Max Müller’s “diseases of language” theory in the 1850s. Müller believed that though the original meaning of a

word might be lost, its linguistic prehistory could be recovered, according with Victorians' larger preoccupation with origins (Wolfe, 1999, p. 134). School newspapers occasionally revealed this obsession: issues of *Our Forest Children* questioned whether Indigenous peoples in North America were Antediluvian (3.4:21) or originally Egyptians (3.7:71), Israelites (3.13:171), or from South America (3.9:111; 3.10:126; 3.11:141; 4.5:239; 4.6:242; 3.83:2), reporting on the discoveries of "long-lost tribes" (*Progress* 3.83:1). Wolfe views philology as a text-based precursor to anthropology, where claims made about linguistic origins of the past informed colonial claims to land of the nineteenth-century present. American scholars such as William Dwight Whitney (*Language and the Study of Language*, 1867), Lewis Henry Morgan (*Ancient Society*, 1877), and John Wesley Powell (who wrote from the 1860s to the turn of the century) put forward theories about Indigenous languages, arguing they could reveal ancient secrets and help to position peoples on an evolutionary ladder. Such research was controversial: in 1866 the Société de Linguistique of Paris and then in 1872 the Philological Society of London both banned further study on the origins of language, deeming such research unscientific (Davis, 2010, p. 66). In the U.S., though, such study appears to have thrived. So that boarding school newspapers published articles about Indigenous languages is perhaps explained by a larger historical milieu of ethnographic interest in them.

Battleford School's newspaper offers an example in its article, "Indian Languages Fast Disappearing." The article compares Indigenous languages to the buffalo, lamenting them without delving into their "disappearance." The article states most Indigenous youth now speak English. The article reports when youth are pressed to speak their Indigenous languages they are unable to articulate "even the commonest words or phrases" and

instead speak a “very imperfect Indian language.” The article goes on to praise the preservation efforts of the Smithsonian as well as the promise of the phonograph and graphophone, which were sent out to various nations to “secure a record of the Indian tongue.” The article states, “The machines of the day will record the language if it is talked into them, but the difficulty is to get Indians who can talk with the necessary degree of accuracy.” It predicts that in 20 years, no more Indigenous languages will exist (*The Guide* 7.1:4). This article ostensibly mourns the “disappearance” of Indigenous languages within a newspaper whose school was part of the problem. This supposed disappearance was not unconnected from colonial endeavors, but school newspapers packaged articles on “vanishing” Indigenous languages as seemingly respectful, scientific studies; yet, I argue, these ethnographies of supposedly dying or damaged words served as a foil to the perceived supremacy of English found in the rest of the newspaper.

Though most newspapers published articles on the ethnography of Indigenous languages, Shingwauk Home’s two newspapers exhibited sustained devotion to the topic. The school’s principal Edward Francis Wilson was an armchair anthropologist, a not uncommon crossover as the divide between the enthusiast and professional were hardly fixed in the late nineteenth century (Hochman, 2014, p. 161). Robert L.A. Hancock (2006) divides Canadian anthropology into four periods: the missionary era, amateur era, National Museum era, and university era. Wilson straddled the first two: he was a missionary and adopted techniques common of the amateur era. When he wasn’t operating the Sault Ste. Marie school for twenty years (1873-1893) as well as another boarding school in Manitoba, Wilson contributed to Canada’s emerging anthropological scene. He founded the short-lived Canadian Indian Research and Aid Society in 1890,

which had three interests: 1) missionaries at Indian schools; 2) the plight of Indigenous peoples; and 3) the science and anthropology of Indigenous peoples (Nock, 1976, p. 32). The society's membership included clergy, Indian Affairs officials, museum workers and archaeologists, as well as the Mohawk actor and lecturer John Ojijatekha Brant-Sero and Ojibway reverend John Jacobs (*Canadian Indian* 1.1:1-2). When Shingwauk Home's *Our Forest Children* disbanded, Wilson switched to a new publication, *The Canadian Indian* (1890-1891), which served as an organ for the society. Wilson began early ethnographic work with his book *The Ojebway Language* [original spelling] (1874), which included a grammar, dictionary, and exercises. The section on commands for use in school perhaps offers a taste of Wilson's pedagogy: *Go to your seat. Look at your book. Bring me your slate. Look (plural) at the black-board. You are late. You have been very idle. Your hands are dirty* (pp. 141-142). Many of the phrases relate to literacy: *Write nicely. Don't talk. Where is your pencil? Read louder. Read distinctly*. Others perhaps even threaten violence: *That is what the master says. I must whip you if you do that. Do what I say at once*. Wilson advertised the manual for sale in the school's newspapers decades later.

Wilson received praise for his ethnographic research from famed anthropologists Franz Boas and A.F. Chamberlain (3.10:127). The American Antiquarian Society, one of the oldest learned societies in the U.S., praised *Our Forest Children* because it "introduces the readers into the real conditions and peculiarities of the Indians" (3.7:76). The Society also praised Wilson for offering "ethnographic and even linguistic articles, interesting correspondence and other *sound* reading matter" unlike the "temperance and total abstinence twaddle, devotional splurges and baby-talk" found in most other "Indian journals." Marcus Tomalin (2011) posits that despite the view anthropologists distanced

themselves from the supposedly amateur work of missionaries in the century prior, the two groups in fact informed one another in this early period (pp. 151-152).

David A. Nock (1988) suggests Wilson changed his philosophy on Indigenous education after 1885 due to a new appreciation for ethnology, his interaction with Indigenous groups in the U.S., and his disillusionment with government (p. 4). Nock convincingly attributes a pseudonymous series of papers titled “Fair Play” to Wilson, in which he confesses misgivings about boarding schools (p. 135), which he published in *The Canadian Indian*. Sharon Wall (2003) takes a different tack. While conceding some ways Wilson rejected assimilationist practices, she ultimately concludes Wilson did so “to more surely secure [Indigenous people’s] consent to the educational project” (p. 19). For Wall, Wilson’s leanings suggest strategy, not a true change. Buddle-Crowe (2001) also highlights that because Wilson wrote under a nom de plume, he avoided political repercussions (p. 93). Moreover, Wilson states the following in the Fair Play papers:

We want the land. We cannot have Indian hunters annoying our farmers and settlers. If the Indian is to remain, we expect him to be a decent neighbour; and to be a decent neighbour, we expect him to accept our religion, our education, our laws, and our customs. (*Canadian Indian* 1.8).

This passage could be read as advocating for the land to be shared—Indigenous peoples and settlers could lay claim to separate land and be neighbours. Another way to read the passage is that a neighbourly existence, according to Wilson, is contingent on spiritual, educational, legal, and social assimilation. As well, the phrase “if the Indian is to remain”

could be read as threatening. The passage further reveals how Wilson's insistence that "we want the land" perhaps demonstrates the inability or unwillingness of even somewhat thoughtful settlers to slow the wheel of colonialism.

Nock is correct that Wilson moved away from some of the beliefs of his peers. He often praised Indigenous languages, arguing they were "not rude barbarous tongues, as those who have never studied the subject might suppose, but are capable of giving expression to the most abstruse ideas" (*Canadian Indian* 1.2:25). In many places, Wilson counteracts the myth that Indigenous languages were inferior. But it could appear that Wilson only valued Indigenous languages for him and his non-Indigenous peers to learn about and research, to the exclusion of Indigenous peoples' rights to their own languages. Wilson prioritized "the subject of collecting all the folk-lore and traditions of the Indians left amongst us, while yet there is time to do so, before they disappear or merge into the general community." Wilson does not frame these "disappearances" or scarcity as connected to the institutions (boarding schools) and discourses (school newspapers and ethnographic publications) for which he was responsible.

Wilson's justifications in Shingwauk Home's two newspapers for the importance of Indigenous languages are revealing. The newspapers explain that for one, Indigenous languages unlocked clues about evolution (*Our Forest Children* 3.5:43; *Canadian Indian* 1.2:25). Wilson also appears interested in Indigenous languages because he thought they were going to be gone soon (1.2:25). These justifications could be read as unified in their concern for power—to know languages and therefore all of humanity. Wilson's justifications could also be viewed as reinscribing power by confirming (albeit with seeming lament) that the colonial project was working—English was close to superseding

Indigenous languages. The efforts to preserve may also contribute to what Tuck and Yang call “settler moves to innocence.” Building on the work of Janet Mawhinney, Mary Louise Fellows, and Sherene Razack, Tuck and Yang describe “those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change” (p. 10). Wilson’s concern for threatened languages could be interpreted as one such move.

The inclusion of Indigenous languages on, say, page 6 within publications praising their eradication on page 8 is explained by school newspapers themselves, suggesting a possible link between knowing about Indigenous peoples so as to better lay claim to land. As Wolfe (1999) remarks, “Claims to authority over indigenous discourse made from within the settler-colonial academy necessarily participate in the continuing usurpation of indigenous space” (p. 3). Wilson perhaps exemplifies this connection in his thought, “We must be content at the present stage to accumulate the needful materials to master the history of the races of our own Dominion” (1.2:26). It is as if Wilson understands a link between knowing all about Indigenous peoples—mastering the history—and laying claim to “our own Dominion.” Control over knowledge, then, may be related to control over land. Battleford School’s newspaper made this connection explicit: “We cannot deal with the Indian of to-day unless we know the Indian of yesterday” (*The Guide* 7.9:3). This article appears to be claiming that knowing the history of Indigenous peoples (“the Indian of yesterday”) would help in “dealing” with Indigenous people in the nineteenth century, which at the time meant mostly making land dispossession possible. A common way “to know the Indian of yesterday” in the nineteenth century meant ethnography, which suggests the field had a direct connection

to the colonialism of the present. Still, school newspapers did not typically present their knowledge about Indigenous peoples as connected to contemporaneous claims to land.

***“Getting Indian words”***

Wilson published his illustrations and research<sup>50</sup> on Indigenous languages in two columns, which appeared in both of Shingwauk Home’s newspapers. The first column, “Indian Tribes,” located Indigenous people and their languages in the past. Appearing on the first or second page of each issue, the column typically featured the following items:

- Introduction to the Indigenous nation (the meaning behind its name; relationships [linguistic, biological, etc] to other nations; migration history)
- “Habits of these people in the days that are past” (e.g., marriages, funerals, and law)
- Vignettes of particular people in that nation’s past
- “Old, curious legends”
- Language
- Assessment of the nation’s placement on an evolutionary scale (using terms such as “wild,” “heathen,” “civilized,” and “advanced”)
- Any children currently enrolled in Wilson’s school from that nation
- Number of those still living

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<sup>50</sup> Wilson “collected” Indigenous languages with pencil and paper, which is unsurprising. When he left for his trip in 1888, the phonograph for ethnographic research was not yet viable and wax cylinders were unreliable, expensive, and unwieldy (Hochman, 2014, p. xi).



The only current Indigenous people Wilson discusses in this column are either in school or are a statistic of a dwindling population. Each issue, the column would feature a different Indigenous nation, listing Seminoles, Pacific Coast Indians, and Ona; Tuscaroras, Chipewyan, and Ottawa; Cherokee, Mohawk, and Chickasaws; as well as Pueblo, Assiniboine, and Mandan peoples. Unlike other parts of *Shingwauk Home's* and other school newspapers, this column praised Indigenous languages, faiths, regalia, and values. Such information, at times, was painstakingly sought after for its accuracy rather than total falsifications. The column reported (and did not always outwardly denigrate) Indigenous childrearing, ceremony, marriage, clothing, homes, burial rites, and customs.

A large part of each column's textual real estate was devoted to language. Wilson often used the past tense, as if the speakers no longer existed. The entry for Mandan is typical, describing Mandan territory, spirituality, creation stories, and burial practices. The passage offers "Grammatical Notes," highlighting what "letters of the alphabet are wanting" and thereby locating the Roman alphabet as the benchmark. The passage mentions linguistic terminology such as the dubitative case, as well as a pronunciation guide, using English, French, and German for comparison. The section then provides a list of words and translations (see Figure 7). Nouns include people and animals (e.g., woman and snake), the environment (e.g., house and tree), and adjectives (e.g., little axe, bad axe, big axe). These articles also included basic sentences: *It is good. Thou seest him. If I see him. Is he asleep?* (3.8:81-85). This section was less a learner's guide than an opportunity for readers to compare all languages. One issue features Wilson's monthly installments as a chart (1.4:106). He offers words for man, water, fire, and some numbers. The chart profiles 56 languages—from Apache to Zuni; Kickapoo to Omaha; Comanche

to Seneca; Pima to Chickasaw; and Pawnee to Haida, separated into eight categories: Algonkin, Sionan, Pacific Coast, Iroquoian, Shoshone, Pima, Muskog, Athabascan, Caddo, a group of unclassified languages (e.g., Pueblo languages and “Eskimo”), as well as Japanese and Ainu (the only non-North American languages on the chart).

The second school newspaper column in which Wilson presented his ethnographic research was called “My Wife and I”—a behind-the-scenes view of how he conducted his studies. “My Wife and I” describes the successes and pitfalls of his research travel: lodgings and meals; wet horse rides and broken-down trains; lost luggage and crowds; and the people he meets and interviews. His wife, Frances, is every bit a part of the travel: a barometer for how “wild” things became. When Wilson travels to Pueblo territory and the Mexican border, he leaves Frances in Denver for three weeks. Suddenly, Wilson’s descriptions of the landscape and people are more wild than when Frances was at his side (3.12:156). In “My Wife and I,” Indigenous peoples are permitted to be in the present, but Wilson continues to rank and adjudicate them, building in comparisons based on difference. This Indigenous presence, though still problematic, is permitted within the newspapers, but as amusement, as narrative.

In these two columns, Wilson bifurcated his research findings by time. In “Indian Tribes,” Wilson’s findings are old stories, ancient customs, dead chiefs, and dying populations and languages; in “My Wife and I,” we learn of these “findings” from living people who actively practice that which Wilson researches. “Indian Tribes” aimed for true objectivity, never discussing at any point Wilson’s own subject position; “My Wife and I,” in contrast, is written in the first person, filled with the quotidian of the Wilsons’ lives. “My Wife and I” also differs from Wilson’s “Indian Tribes” column in that he

explains *how* he gathered his information. When such research is repackaged as “Indian Tribes,” Wilson excludes himself and any discussion of colonialism whatever.

Wilson gathered his information on Indigenous languages for inclusion in school newspapers several ways. For one, he consulted the dictionaries and grammar manuals of the Smithsonian’s ethnological department in Washington, D.C. (*Our Forest Children* 3.5:42-43). He even sketched an image of himself, titled “Taking Notes,” to accompany the description of his research at the Smithsonian (see Figure 8). In this image, Wilson hovers over a book. In the background is a bookcase and each shelf is dedicated to, one-by-one, a different Indigenous group. He discussed the research of others (3.72:5; 3.3:13) and was active in professional organizations such as the American Folklore Association (3.5:41). He also gathered his notes from a 7000-mile trip he took with his wife through the U.S., which he documented in his two newspapers. The trip was extensive, beginning from Shingwauk Home in Sault Ste. Marie to cities such as Ottawa, Washington, Santa Fe, and Denver; through Nebraska and Minnesota; from Cheyenne and Arapahoe territory to as far away as the land of Pueblo and Zuni peoples; and finally, to so-called “civilized tribes” such as the Cherokee (3.3:8-9). The trip’s purpose was to learn about American Indian boarding school policies. But Wilson’s other motivation was to fulfill his budding interest as an ethnographer. Before the trip, Wilson had begun a comparative vocabulary of at least forty Indigenous languages, and on the trip he “wanted to be gradually adding to [his] stock.” Part of the answer to why Wilson would praise English-only policies and yet seek knowledge about Indigenous languages lies in the word “stock.” It could be argued Wilson believed Indigenous languages were for him—not Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, it could be interpreted Wilson saw these languages not

in the way Indigenous scholars cite, but as a relic to collect. Wilson frames Indigenous languages as a resource from which he extracts, mirroring the science and anthropology of his day as well as literal resource extraction in North America.

The trip was not his first: two years earlier, Wilson visited three institutions, including Carlisle, and “formed a connection” (1.5:3). In October 1888, Wilson set off on his more ambitious trip. Though Wilson sold his trip as a chance to learn about American school policies, he also took the opportunity to interview children about their languages. The first school on his trip to the U.S. was Lincoln Institute, a boarding school in Philadelphia. The Institute began after a group of women saw Carlisle School students on parade to celebrate the city’s bicentennial and were inspired to begin their own federally funded school. When Wilson writes about these school visits in his newspapers, he usually begins discussing the school’s progress in English before documenting the children’s Indigenous languages. For instance upon first arriving at Lincoln Institute, he remarks that he and his wife “could hear the quaint talk going on—just the way the girls talk to each other, in imperfect English” at Shingwauk Home. Wilson also read aloud letters that his students had written in English for the children at the American Indian boarding schools to hear. Wilson typically begins his articles providing some basic information about the schools’ policies. It is as if Wilson wished for his readers to understand that these schools, like his own, were still very much dedicated to promoting English before he devoted the rest of his articles to Indigenous languages.

But then Wilson shifts to his “business to attend to”—a desire to “get words and sentences from some of these girls in their various different dialects.” The Lincoln Institute offered Wilson three or four girls who all spoke different languages to “attend

on” Wilson for a few hours and “give [him] all the information that they could.” Wilson would spend the time in these sessions writing down “words and phrases in their different tongues” (*Our Forest Children* 3.4:24-25). From the Lincoln Institute, Wilson traveled to Carlisle School and painted a similar scene. He begins describing the English used at the school—the songs and speeches the children delivered; the conversations he had with students; and the letters from students in Ontario that he read to the children at Carlisle. But like at Lincoln, Wilson shifts to his “business.” He began Monday morning at 9AM in the office of Carlisle’s disciplinarian (a role Wilson defines as “one who drills pupils, sees after their clothing, books, bathing, &c, and occasionally whips them”). Wilson sat at the disciplinarian’s desk with a book and pencil and took down words. The following is his account of how he learned Indigenous languages from Carlisle students:

For twenty-two minutes did I ply that Comanche Indian with questions, asking him to give me the Comanche rendering of a long string of words and sentences.

“What is the word for man?”

“Say it again please.”

“Does that mean a white man or an Indian, or simply man?”

“Oh, that’s it, is it?”

“Say it again, please.”

“Te-ne-pa.”

“Do I say it right?”

“Say it once more;”

“Thank you.”

“Now, woman.”

Wilson’s version of his business in the disciplinarian’s office is a monologue. Even in Wilson’s behind-the-scenes column of how he “got Indian words,” the Indigenous children are not represented as having a voice. Instead, we hear Wilson’s responses and methods of plying. After the Comanche child, Wilson interrogates Cheyenne, Kiowa, Omaha, and Onondaga children. Wilson boasts, “Seven languages are taken down now before lunch, and ten more in the afternoon.” By Tuesday, Wilson claimed to have taken down 25 different Indigenous languages (*Our Forest Children* 3.4:27). Throughout his column, Wilson describes how he learned Indigenous languages from students. One exception was when he interviewed not students but a chief of police, who supplied Wilson with Ponca words while a boy named Charlie sat on the floor and “kept putting in a word or two now and then” (3.11:138). But for the most part, when Wilson visited a school he interviewed students on their Indigenous languages, prefacing the encounter in his column by first highlighting how the school promoted English literacy.

Wilson explains how he “procured” interviewees by presenting photographs of Shingwauk Home. As Wilson explains, potential interlocutors initially regarded Wilson “curiously,” but “their faces lighted up and they very quickly made friends” after he shared his photographs and that he had been “living twenty years among the Indians” (4.2:186). He would also ask school administrators to connect him with students whose languages Wilson required for his research. At Genoa School in Nebraska, though the school head offers for Wilson to tour the classrooms and workshops, Wilson interjects

that he is foremost interested in hearing students speak. Though the school's head tells Wilson he could "have any of these children that you wish, and procure from them such information as you need about their languages," Wilson did not require all students, as he already had many contributions to his "stock" over his research and travels (*Canadian Indian* 1.6:177). In other words, Wilson was less interested in learning from students what they had to share, but what *he* wanted. The same was true for his visit to Chilocco School in Oklahoma, which was particularly hurried. The second thing Wilson does at the school was tour the school and workshops with the Superintendent. But "the first thing, after introducing myself to the authorities, was to interview some of the children of the Caddo, Oto, and Tonkawa tribes, and take down words in their languages" (*Our Forest Children* 3.2:138). Wilson directed which words he desired to know and from whom. Wilson describes one Arapaho student, Gabriel, as having "a tongue that could talk." According to Wilson, Gabriel was "determined to tell [Wilson] every Shoshoni word he knew" and was "bound [that Wilson] should have them." However, the words Gabriel wished to share were not on Wilson's "list" (*Canadian Indian* 1.6:177).

While Gabriel appeared interested in sharing his language with Wilson, other students did not in more disturbing scenes. At Genoa School, Wilson met with "two little Flathead girls." Wilson describes them as "very shy" and that "it was long before I could even get them to open their mouths." Just when one of them was about to speak, Wilson states a "dreadful" Sioux dusting boy came in the room. The boy came into the room, leaned his elbows on Wilson's desk, and "look[ed] intently into the little Flat-head's mouth to see what she was going to say." The boy's action caused the girls to come "to a dead stop," making Wilson doubt he would hear from either girl. Though Wilson directs

the dusting boy to complete his other duties, the boy keeps his eyes on the “little Flat-head girl’s mouth” and her “fast-closed lips.” Wilson continues his directives:

“Had you better go and clean your lamps then?” I said, “ I think these little girls are shy, and I want them to speak to me and tell about their language.” The dusting boy was evidently of the opinion that his lamps could wait; and he seemed bound he would see the Flat-head girl’s mouth open before he went.

Wilson believes the boy remains because he wishes to hear the girls (as Wilson appears to desperately want as well). And perhaps this is the boy’s reason: hearing forbidden languages and encountering a space in which he, too, could safely speak his language may have motivated him to defy the orders. But Wilson may have been wrong. Perhaps the boy stayed to take the heat off the two girls who appear unconsenting in Wilson’s desire to hear them speak. Wilson realizes the boy will not leave:

I changed my tactics, and began asking the dusting boy the rendering of certain English words in his language, which was Sioux. I thought at first that this plan was going to prove a success, for both the little Flat-heads pricked up their ears and a flash of something like intelligence crossed their faces as they heard the dusting boy repeat the words I gave him in the Sioux language; the boy also evidently thought he was going to bring the girls out and make them speak, by taking his part in the play. But no, it was no good; the little Flat-heads were still mum; they had evidently made an inward resolve that they would neither of them



utter a single word in the presence of the dusting boy. (1.7:208-209)

Even though Wilson already “had” Sioux words, he asks the boy to speak so as to encourage the girls, whose language Wilson *is* interested in. Though he understands the boy to be “taking his part in the play,” again this is unknown: perhaps the boy participates as a chance to speak a language otherwise forbidden or to alleviate the girls’ stress. It is also unclear what the “flash of something like intelligence” on their faces meant: surprise to hear an Indigenous language? Relief they didn’t have to? The school head then comes in and orders the boy to leave. Now, the girls are forced to speak:

A very low whisper came from the elder girl, giving, as I supposed, the Flat-head rendering of the English word which I had just repeated to her for the fiftieth time. “Thank you,” I said, “that’s just what I want;” and I wrote it down. I had not the least idea what the child had said, but I would not discourage her by letting her know that, so I wrote down something and gave her another word; and she whispered again, and I wrote again. At length, as I had anticipated, the child gained confidence and began to speak out; and I was able to get the words from her correctly, and to correct those which I had at first written down. (1.7:209)

Now unencumbered, Wilson “plies” the girls with an air of frustration. One girl responds in a “low whisper,” a tone children were accused of using in the previous chapter. Wilson attempts to foreclose understanding the dusting boy or the girls’ silence as resistance. But

perhaps as Menominee poet Chrystos (1994b) articulates, this is a moment where “no photograph or tape recorder or drawing can touch/the mountain of our spirits” (l. 24-25).

Besides documenting these interviews in his column “My Wife and I,” Wilson also drew several pictures of how he learned Indigenous words. The sketch of his interviews at Carlisle School, titled “Getting Indian Words” (see Figure 9), shows Wilson on the left in profile, his right hand holding a pen, as he looks at a young Indigenous boy whose arms are stretched out. Wilson sits at the desk while the boy does not; above both of them is the corner of a framed map, with the Gulf of Mexico showing. In the image Wilson drew of his interviews at Genoa School (see Figure 10), the scene is from behind. The dusting boy stands on one side of a desk, his eyes on the girls. Wilson sits on the other side of the desk in profile, staring at the two girls. The smaller one stands behind a taller girl. While both face Wilson, the taller girl lowers her head. In these images, it appears imperative that Wilson portrays for readers how he learned Indigenous words—both in text and in image. Remember: this behind-the-scenes column is in addition to the column where he presented his findings. What is curious about Wilson’s sketches is that he includes himself—rather than illustrating a scene he views, he includes his own body as if someone else, not him, sketched his interviews. Both images are from behind Wilson and the children, all in profile (with the exception of the dusting boy), and both images feature Wilson as bigger than the children, who are in positions of almost supplication while Wilson’s right hand is at the ready, vested with the authority of the desk, the pen and inkwell, books, and in one case a map.

It appears even Wilson’s sketches may have been created under duress. In another episode of “My Wife and I,” Wilson relates how in Santa Fe he visited the San Miguel

Church. He decided the exterior was “too ugly” to sketch and moved inside (3.13:172). Wilson states when a boy inside appears “disconcerted” by Wilson’s presence, he proceeds anyhow because the boy “did not know enough English to express his feelings”:

He seemed very uneasy, appeared to be afraid that a priest or some one would come in,—every now and then he sighed, shuffled his feet and said, “better go now;” but I kept talking amicably to him till I got through, asked him about the pictures on the wall, ascertained that one was 700 years old, and two others each 400 years old. Then I replaced my drawing materials in my satchel, and continued my pilgrimage.

The boy clearly knows enough English to tell Wilson about the church and order him to leave, but not enough that Wilson believes he has to. The scene represents how Wilson ascertained his information outside of formal institutions like the Smithsonian (who may have gathered their research in the same way). In Zuni territory, Wilson lays out another way he created sketches, which could appear as against the will of interlocutors:

I also took several “instantaneous photographs”—that is, I took a good look at an individual, and then sketched him down before he knew it. I can manage to take down these Indians now pretty well, without their being aware of it. If they think they are being sketched, they cover their faces, turn their backs, and move off; but I always pretend to be sketching the sky, or some distant object, when my model turns a suspicious eye to me, and that reassures him, and enables me to get

another look at him before he moves off. (*Canadian Indian* 1.2:51)

Like the boy in the church, the subjects of “instantaneous photographs” appear not to welcome Wilson’s sketches. The boy shuffles his feet and directly tells Wilson to leave; the Zuni turn away and cover themselves. In both scenes, Wilson seems almost boastful of his techniques, which include what might be considered distraction, feigned obliviousness to their discomfort, and deceit (in pretending to sketch the sky). But within these scenes may be what Audra Simpson (2007) calls “ethnographic refusal.” Simpson’s larger work understands how Indigenous peoples “interrupt anthropological portraits of timelessness, procedure, and function that dominate representations of their past, and sometimes, their present” (p. 68). People thwart Wilson’s attempts at “instantaneous photographs.” And when Wilson conducted research in Assiniboine, Wilson stated, “These people do not seem to indulge much in tradition, their ideas as to their own origin and theories of the human race are very vague” (3.11:133). Leaving Wilson’s treatment of tradition as an indulgence aside, we may also read his finding as ethnographic refusal.

Scenes in which Wilson learns Indigenous words are prefaced by the work of the school—children praying, singing, and speaking English. These prefaces as well as Wilson’s sketches show a controlled environment in which students are permitted—by Wilson and the schools alone—to speak their Indigenous language. As well, Wilson offers scenes in which students do not or cannot speak any language but English:

Some of the pupils had a somewhat imperfect knowledge of their own language.

Carlisle had done its work, and had in some instances succeeded in driving the

native tongue almost entirely out of the Indian head in the course of 4 or 5 years.

Wilson describes an interview in which a student professed only to know how to say “yes,” and Wilson later discovered that even this was incorrect. He also interviews a Shoshone-speaking student who “had forgotten a great part of his mother tongue, and was obliged to withdraw after giving me a few words in a rather hesitating manner” (*Canadian Indian* 1.6:177). In these “failures,” we may read the careful balance Wilson must walk: he wishes both to showcase the successes of these schools, which he is using as a model for his own in Canada. But he also wishes to satisfy his desire to hear Indigenous words for his “stock.” Students such as the Flathead girls may indeed have forgotten, which would confirm for readers the success of an English-only curriculum; but in their silence may be resistance to Wilson’s force, resulting in claims they have “forgotten” or are “hesitating” when they instead refuse to participate.

After the trip, Wilson wrote that based on his travels he had prepared a pamphlet after “taking down the words as pronounced from the Indians’ lips” (*Our Forest Children* 3.1:47). The pamphlet included information on 80 languages, though some of the information was partial. The pamphlet therefore had blank space for readers of the newspaper, who could contribute additional information. Wilson isolated such readers as people “living among Indians, or interested in Indian linguistics” as well as “books bearing on Indian history or Indian language” (3.1:47)—not Indigenous people themselves, which could be viewed as perpetuating the myth that the languages—naturally, and in no way *because of* boarding schools—are dead or nearing it.

Of course, Indigenous peoples had their own reasons for participating in

ethnographic research in the late nineteenth century. As Hochman (2014) argues, “At a time when their collective future seemed outwardly imperiled, native peoples sat for photographs, talked to phonographs and performed in films, and they had their own motivations for doing so” (p. xxii). But in Wilson’s ethnographic behind-the-scenes column “My Wife and I,” the child speakers do not appear as willing participants. In a letter dated April 3, 1888 (six months before Wilson embarked on his second American trip), Wilson suggested to Pratt they exchange two students each for six months to a year. Wilson wrote it would do his students good, but also explains he was “deep in the study” of “Indian languages and dialects” and he could better study the Carlisle students if they remained with him for a considerable time. Though the plan seems not to have actualized, the fact Wilson even thought a second removal of children from their land and families for his research was possible or ethical perhaps reveals how permeable the colonial border was according to heads of boarding schools; but his proposition also may suggest Wilson’s thought process: ethnography no matter the cost.

## **Conclusion**

The word “sanction” denotes two contradictory meanings: as a verb, it can permit (the school *sanctioned* Indigenous languages) yet as a noun can condemn (the school had *sanctions* against Indigenous languages). As this chapter has identified, schools and their newspapers had seemingly contradictory views on the role of Indigenous languages. The previous chapter reiterated what survivors have long testified: at best, Indigenous languages were not encouraged or were denigrated; at worst, students were violently punished. UNESCO outlines six levels of support for a local compared to national language: equal support; differentiated support; passive assimilation; active assimilation;

forced assimilation; and prohibition (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006, pp. 11–12). Many nineteenth-century boarding schools edged towards the latter.

And yet this chapter has suggested how Indigenous languages were heard or read at boarding schools in certain instances. Many of these instances came from survivors such as Isabelle Knockwood, who realized if she no longer spoke Mi'kmaw it would die like Latin. Yet schools and their newspapers labeled children who continued with Indigenous languages as obstinate, diffident, and slow. Schools permitted Indigenous languages, but often as a method of teaching about Christianity or English. As well, schools—in particular Shingwauk Home and the ethnographic work of Wilson—can be interpreted as participating in the larger nineteenth-century interest in Indigenous languages as exoticized curiosities, as remnants of the past, and as scientific keys.

As Grenoble and Whaley (2006) state, outsiders who seek to “save” a language will inevitably fail:

It is the members of the community where the revitalization is going on who need to be highly invested in the outcome. They need to control decision making; they need to take ownership of the effort and construct the revitalization program which suits their ambitions, needs, and resources. (p. x)

But it was the school, church, and government who typically controlled when Indigenous languages could make an appearance. What is more, many languages did not *need* revitalizing in the nineteenth-century. Schools were largely in the business of eradicating, not preserving, Indigenous languages. UNESCO measures the vitality of a language by

the “amount and quality of documentation,” in which Wilson was certainly devoted. But this factor is last, preceded by government support and—the number one factor—intergenerational transmission (p. 6). As Standing Bear remarked, “A language, unused, embalmed, and reposing only in a book, is a dead language. Only the people themselves, and never the scholars, can nourish it into life” (1978, p. 234). What is more, we see in the case of Wilson a behind-the-scenes glimpse into *how* he documented languages—troubling scenes in which Wilson added to his stock, no matter the possibility of resistance from children. Recall the previous chapter, which detailed the almost limitless efforts of principals, including Wilson, to supplant Indigenous languages with English only: Wilson was the one who employed a *jeton* system at the school.

Today, many think of language extinction without regard for the *how*. As Battiste (2011) writes, literacy has acted “as a shield in cultural transmission and as a sword of cognitive imperialism,” but these roles are hidden by “myths and modern conceptions of literacy” (p. 165). While I am attempting to expose such myths—that Indigenous languages naturally disappeared, and literacy is necessarily a benevolent gift—survivor testimony and school newspapers suggest schools were not devoid of Indigenous languages. Students still spoke them despite the rules: accidentally, in resistance, and to sustain their languages. School newspapers also reveal how Indigenous languages were permitted as ethnographic curiosities, as something principals—not Indigenous children and their families—got to catalogue and teach readers of a newspaper.



## CHAPTER 6: TIME IN BOARDING SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS

*If we take the liberty of pointing the camera towards them, we should do so not because we fancy that they will soon be “blocked out” of nature’s picture, but because we see in them a people that have had a mysterious history in the past, occupy at the present time an interesting and remarkable position in the social vista, and are certain to exercise in the future no little influence . . . in the formation of a Canadian nation. (The Guide 5.12:3)*

This 1897 article in Battleford School’s newspaper epitomizes the key arguments of this chapter. Beyond the metaphor of the camera,<sup>51</sup> it assumes several points about time. The article begins by admonishing the myth of the “vanishing Indian” discussed in the previous chapter—that Indigenous peoples were being “blocked out of nature’s picture.” Despite the wider prevalence of the myth in the late nineteenth-century, typically school newspapers in fact disputed it by claiming Indigenous populations were actually on the rise, thanks in no small part to boarding schools. Indigenous peoples, according to this excerpt, were worthy of attention not because they were about to disappear but because of an exoticized past and a progressive present. The future, according to school newspapers, included Indigenous peoples, but only those who would help to form Canada. The excerpt suggests Indigenous peoples who refused to recognize the legitimacy of the nation-state or considered themselves sovereign were not in the picture.

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<sup>51</sup> The camera is fitting: much of the nineteenth century’s attempts to salvage the “vanishing Indian” came in the form of cameras. Edward Sherriff Curtis is the most famous (B. Evans & Glass, 2014; Gidley, 2003), but there were other photographers such as H. H. Bennett (Hoelscher, 2008) and Frank Rinehart (Ortiz, 2004) as well. Thomas King offers fiction and non-fiction responses to photographic salvage ethnography (2003, 2005). See also Elizabeth Edwards (2006), Hochman (2014), and Christopher Pinney (2011).

Nineteenth-century school newspapers offered narratives of past, present, and future for readers. Many have theorized how time appears natural but is in fact a construct. As Bruno Latour (1993) famously argues, “*it is the sorting that makes the times, not the times that make the sorting*” (p. 76). In other words, the way time is organized (sorted) constitutes it. As Dumont (2007a) writes, “time is a story we tell” (p. 35). Homi Bhabha (1999) complicates this notion with “double-time”: for him, people are both objects of a nation’s timeline (“pedagogical time”) and yet also subjects, as they puncture nationalist claims and create for themselves a reproductive present (“performative time”) (pp. 214-215). Johannes Fabian (2014) further posits how time was “naturalized” in the nineteenth century: though data “might have been selected with positivist neutrality and detachment, its products—the evolutionary sequences—were *anything but* historically or politically neutral,” leading to categories such as civilized, primitive, and modern (p. 17). Other scholars note how the late nineteenth-century was a particularly fraught period of European developments of time, with new technologies such as the telephone, telegraph, railroad, and cinema that introduced new ways of considering time (2003, p. 1).<sup>52</sup> One consequence of such technologies was a belief that history, now recordable, might be objective (Rosenberg & Grafton, 2012, p. 21). Still others suggest this sorting of time is particularly colonial. As Elizabeth Strakosch and Alissa Macoun (2012) note, “Colonialism does not just take place in time. It constructs narratives of time” (p. 49). Rifkin (2014), too, asks how “discourses and experiences of temporality [are] part of the quotidian dynamics of settlement” (p. 30).

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<sup>52</sup> Canadian Sanford Fleming developed world time zones in the late nineteenth century (Creet, 1998); Fleming was also a member of Wilson’s Research and Aid Society.

Many scholars cite a fundamental difference between Western European and Indigenous understandings of time. For Vine Deloria Jr. (2003), “western European identity involves the assumption that time proceeds in a linear fashion” and along this line “the peoples of Western Europe became the guardians of the world” (p. 63). To be sure, Indigenous peoples had varied ways of keeping time—one example includes Lakota winter counts (Burke, 2007). Lyons (2010) theorizes Indigenous time further:

If the expression “Indian time” means anything, it should signify this history of temporal multiplicity. For far too long Natives have been discussed exclusively in the past tense, and for far too long modernity has been discussed as if it were strictly a Western imposition. It is time to acknowledge not only our continued presence in history, but also the reality of Indian time on the move. (p. 13)

Lyons’ concept of “time on the move” offers a helpful lens through which to view the narratives of time in school newspapers. Despite their temporal multiplicity, Lyons argues, Indigenous peoples have been framed as in the past.

I argue school newspapers presented time in several ways. They typically established Indigenous peoples as foil to the speed, success, and industry of non-Indigenous peoples (traditional vs. modern; slow vs. industrious; dying out vs. population explosions). As well, school newspapers presented time—not the settler—as the inescapable culprit for genocide, poverty, displacement, forced removal of children, and linguicide. Principals, church members, and teachers instead wrote themselves into positions of what Dion (2009) calls “respectful admirers, moral helpers, or protectors of

law and order” (p. 179) and denied complicity. Time in these newspapers, I suggest, was another settler fantasy that located Indigenous peoples in the past while reserving the future for settlers themselves. Besides the time of the newspaper itself—its frequency, special issues dedicated to Christian holidays, and the milestones of Queen Victoria—newspapers (along with other media and technologies of the time) displayed a mostly non-Indigenous future. While Shingwauk Home had hoped to offer watchmaking as one of its trades (*Our Forest Children* 1.9:4), this chapter identifies ways in which the school newspapers used time more broadly. Some articles in these newspapers explicitly spell out the problem with “Indian time,” praising policies to correct such signifiers of “savagery.” In other instances, time was more tacit: articles on the day-to-day of classes, the schoolyard whistle, and railroad expansion. While the previous chapter argued school newspapers located Indigenous peoples and languages in the past, this chapter deepens this discussion using Elizabeth Povinelli’s (2010) concept of “technologies of temporality” (p. 30) to argue school newspapers had complex techniques for locating Indigenous peoples in and out of time, denying the “temporal multiplicity” Lyons observes.

### **Time to Change**

One way in which school newspapers foreclosed a temporal multiplicity was by blaming genocide on the unstoppable force of time. School newspapers participated in this fantasy, these “desires to erase—to let time do its thing and wait for the older form of living to die out” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 9). Regina School summarized this belief in one disturbing poem it reprinted titled “Departure of the Indians,” which depicts Indigenous peoples marching sluggishly “onward with weary steps” as they slowly sit

down, weep, die, and “give to the white man all!” (*Progress* 3.70:2-3). Newspapers discussed “these great people of the past” who had “lost their former glory” (*Our Forest Children* 3.5:34), conceiving of Indigenous peoples as embodying the “fallen condition of the nation” (3.5:34), a “vanished race” (3.79:2; 11), and “remnants of past tribal greatness” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 12.5). But more often newspapers sought to counteract the myth. Perhaps more accurately, newspapers take the myth as given, but claim their schools helped thwart this fate. Regina School reproduced an article from a Scottish newspaper predicting Indigenous peoples would be wiped out, but the school newspaper discredits the article in a preface (3.80:4). Battleford School, too, denied claims of “decline or gradual disappearance” (*The Guide* 5.12:3).

School newspapers presented boarding schools as mitigating the inevitable damage of time. Kitamaat Home’s newspaper asserted, “The Indians in the Dominion would have been extinct had it not been for the good offices of those who do not believe it is to the credit of the white man to see the Indian disappear entirely” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 30.12). It further declared that a dying-out was not the school’s aim: “it is not to our credit to see the Indians dying out, we do not wish it, it behooves us to use all means in our power to prevent it, and to save the remnant of a powerful nation” (2.2). *Our Forest Children* considered education “the wisest and most just and humane course for us in Canada to pursue” (1.1.1) because Indigenous peoples’ “condition is their misfortune and not their fault” (1.1:2). *Our Forest Children* explained, “Either we must despoil them of all their rights” or “provide for their existence in our midst and admit them into our civilization” (1.1.1), seeking to establish the schools as an ethical strategy of coping with the inevitability of time. The narrative of time that newspapers presented framed the

killing and displacement of Indigenous peoples as unstoppable and not the fault of settlers, who were mere participants in the script.

Note the difference in an article by a Dakota reverend named James Garvie reprinted in *Our Forest Children*. His perhaps facetiously titled article, “Why do Indians Advance so Slowly?” differs markedly from others by non-Indigenous writers. Garvie discusses jealousy, laziness, and gluttony. But buried in the middle of the article is what Garvie labels “the greatest hindrance”: white people. Garvie describes them as trying “every possible way to take away our lands; they run us out of our work; and, if they can, they will hinder us from going to heaven” (2.9:30). He also highlights how “there is no law that will protect the Indian. The law of the United States will pick up an Indian and put him in prison, send him to the penitentiary and even hang him; but it will not protect him any more than animal.” He concludes: “who is heartless enough or cruel enough to talk about the Indians not being advanced faster when all these things work against their advancement?” While most schools used their newspapers to deny culpability in the pain of Indigenous peoples, instead blaming time and framing themselves as benevolent helpers, Garvie redirected blame from time to white people.

School newspapers promoted the idea that Indigenous peoples required time to transition from past to present. Again using the metaphor of wood found in chapter 3, Kitamaat Home’s newspaper emphasized, “We cannot reasonably expect in a few years to bring into perfect cultivation huge tracts of territory which are covered with weeds, noxious herbs, giant trees representing the growth of centuries. Neither can we reasonably expect in a few short years to uproot all customs, all superstitions, habits, antipathies, tempers, the growth of centuries of paganism” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 8.1). Years later,

the newspaper maintained the metaphor, claiming, “Old customs are like the great pines and hemlocks with which our forests abound hard to uproot” (25.8). Within this dehumanizing metaphor, where people are trees permitted only to assimilate or die, was the humane alternative proposed by the newspapers: generously allow time for Indigenous peoples to move from past to present. One bureaucrat explained the government “should be content to let [Indigenous peoples] creep for a time before they attempt to walk,” as “it is only a few years since they were wild untamed savages” (1468/10). Wilson offered a similar compassion for time:

The change which we expect the Indian to make, and make so quickly, is a far greater one than is required of any of those nations above enumerated [Germany, Sweden, France, Italy] . . . With the Indian, the change is a radical one—a change of dress, a change of dwelling, a change in mode of gaining livelihood, a social change, a religious change, an educational change, a *totum in toto* [all in all] change . . . We allow him no choice and we allow him no time.

(*Canadian Indian* 1.8).

Wilson goes on to state, “The Indians, I believe, must have time. These changes that we think so good for him, must not be forced upon him too suddenly” (p. 223). Wilson further asserted, “The civilization of England took centuries to come to its present stage—let us not expect too much, or too rapid results, from the efforts put forth in behalf of the untutored heathen” (*Our Forest Children* 4.8:4). Newspapers frame their schools as a compassionate way of assisting the inevitable transition from past to present.

In addition to newspapers establishing schools as the salve for a painful present to which Indigenous peoples had to adapt, newspapers also called attention to the present through the quotidian of the school: buildings built and burned down, picnics, exams, visits from inspectors and politicians, and football matches. Much of the day-to-day in school newspapers referenced Christian markers of time: Christmas, Easter, baptisms, and Sunday, for instance. But the newspapers' present also assumed Indigenous peoples had a problem with time. One issue of a Saskatchewan school's newspaper from 1907 explained Indigenous people thought of time differently: "The Indians had no division of time in to weeks before the coming of the missionaries" and the church had "brought Sunday" (*Progress* 16.11:1), as if the Christian Sabbath existed independent of human creation. A later article claimed, "An Indian has no anxiety for the future" and "observes literally—too literally the command 'take no thought for the morrow'" (18.9:2). Another newspaper believed, "There is no word in the Red Indian language [importantly, singular] for the word 'year'" (*Our Forest Children* 3.3:1). Battleford School published an article titled "Prompt People," which advises readers not to "live a single hour of [their] life without doing exactly what is to be done" (*The Guide* 4.11:2). Another article ominously cautioned, "There is no room for drones, sleepyheads and incompetents in the battle of life. They are soon tramped out of sight" (7.12:3).

Newspapers offered advice on how best to control time: from lassoing time like a horse (*Progress* 18.5:3) to advising students not to dream when they should be awake and responding to bells (14.4.8). Survivor Augie Merasty (2015) notes how at his school in Saskatchewan in the 1930s and 40s, Brother Johannes (a particularly cruel teacher and sexual predator) went to Germany and brought back several cuckoo clocks, which kept



time at the school (p. 33). Johannes—a “Hitler worshipper, a complete fascist”—would read a German newspaper and tell Augie and his peers, “The Germans were the smartest people in the world, supreme above any other race” (p. 34); he also mentioned how the clocks that kept time were purchased to contribute to the German war effort.

More than clocks, in the nineteenth century schools kept time with bells and schedules, which school newspapers would print. These schedules narrated a day-in-the-life for readers, sometimes even in 15-minute increments. One issue of *Our Forest Children* provided such an agenda, beginning with the waking of the school’s captain:

Thomas Johnson has an alarm clock at his bedside, which goes off a few minutes before six in the morning. As soon as its disturbing notes are heard he rouses from his slumbers . . . to ring the great bell over the porch. There is then a general rousing all through the dormitories . . . As soon as all are washed and dressed, silence is called by the monitor in each dormitory for prayer; then the stair gates are unlocked and all file down . . . [The teacher] Mr McKenzie is in his place at his desk and calls the roll, and all answer to their names.

And this, all before 7AM. At such time, the school captain would sit on a raised seat at the back of the dining hall and watch other students file in. After another bell, students would say grace. Yet another bell would signal when students would sit down and eat.

The reprinted schedule proceeded to describe how a bigger bell would then ring at 8AM for morning prayers and chores, and 9AM for the start of either work or schooling depending on the particular student’s rotation. At 9:05, the teacher rang a smaller bell to

signal the official start of class. A few minutes past noon, students took lunch and switched to the opposite duty (either classroom or work). Tea was at 6PM, prayers at 7PM, and self-reporting to the principal on bad behaviour followed. From 7:15 to 8:15, depending on their age, students sang, prepared for sleep, or turned in. The outer gates were locked at 9:30PM, and then at 11:15PM the principal would go “round of the dormitories to see that all is safe” (*Our Forest Children* 2.10:16). The newspaper also published the reports of dormitory monitors, who noted which children got up on time and which did their chores.

*Our Forest Children* also reprinted the schedule of Battleford School. The article describes “the daily routine of the pupils, who are in an excellent state of discipline, particularly considering their origin” (3.3:13). The article documents the morning of the school and then continues with the day:

At 12 the large bell rings. Preparations for dinner follow; and at 12:15 dinner is served, also under charge of an officer; and it is a treat to see the way in which they behave and handle their knives and forks. Recess till 1; trades again till 5; tea at 6; recreation till 7; study till 8, and then prayers. After prayers, each boy as he passes up stairs says, “Good night, sir,” to the Principal.

Not all newspaper or government reports included as much detail as this example, but most follow the same pattern of outlining for readers the school’s strict adherence to time. Other articles discuss the timing of meals, dormitory inspections, and garden recess—a misnomer for building gardens, stonewalls, ditches, and fences (1.4:4). One

article titled “Day to Day at the Shingwauk” is from the perspective of Wilson. After the 9AM bell rings and students either go to work or to study, Wilson begins his day in his “private office, deep in pen, ink, paper and thoughts.” The day continues as Wilson evaluates the work of students, attends to sick children in the hospital, and supervises the work of the school—a road being leveled and graded, in this example. By lunch, the mail arrives but Wilson is pulled away to attend to a boy with a dislocated shoulder, which he pops back in place. After sending the child to the school’s nurse, Wilson concludes:

My horse is waiting, and I have to rush the remainder of my lunch, glance hastily through my letters, and then off to the Wawanosh [the girls’ school]. Such and such like is our daily life at the Shingwauk. (3.3:6)

Survivor accounts of later periods cite time controlled by bells; nineteenth-century schools did as well, and their school newspapers reprinted them for readers.

What would these printed agendas in school newspapers have communicated to readers? Like *Our Forest Children*’s title and masthead, agendas included in newspapers would communicate there was a problem with time, which the school was remedying. Agendas in the newspapers—whether formal like Wilson’s or the description of each school’s day-to-day activities—exemplify Foucault’s (2012) concept of the micro-penalty. This is “an area that the laws had left empty” and that “the relative indifference of the great system of punishment had allowed to escape” (p. 178). Foucault lists many forms of micro-penalty found in boarding schools: activity (e.g., inattention and lack of zeal), behaviour (e.g., impoliteness), speech (as was discussed in chapter 4), cleanliness,

and sexuality. Foucault also highlights time: lateness, absence, and interruptions from the schedule. Katanski (2005) discusses this concept in relation to American Indian boarding schools, and the same applies in a Canadian context. Agendas in school newspapers perhaps assured readers such micro-penalties were being corrected by the school.

Johnston's (1989) memoir of school in the 1940s demonstrates how students challenged the time of the school, offering a counternarrative to that found earlier in school newspapers. Johnston printed a sample of the agenda at his school:

6:15 Rise

6:45-7:25 Mass

7:30-8:00 Breakfast

8:05-8:55 Work

9:00-11:55 Class/work

12:00-12:25 Dinner

12:30-1:10 Sports/games/rehearsal

1:15-4:15 Class/work

4:15-4:30 Collation

4:30-4:55 Work/chores

5:00-5:55 Study

6:00-6:25 Supper

6:30-7:25 Sports/games/rehearsal

7:30-10:00 Study and prepare for bed. (p. 47)

But before listing this detailed agenda, Johnston's memoir annotates it:

6:15 A.M. Clang! Clang! Clang! I was nearly clanged out of my wits and out of bed at the same time. Never had anything—not wind not thunder, awakened me with quite the same shock and fright.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

“Come on! Up! Up! Up! What's the hold-up? Not want to get up? Come on, Pius! What's wrong, Henry? You no like get up?”

Clang! Clang! Clang! Up and down the aisles between the beds Father Buck walked, swinging the bell as if he wanted to shake it from its handle. (p. 28)

Father Buck uses the bell to elicit shock and fright, mocking students' English all-the-while. Between each bell, Johnston lists the oppression of the clanging (an onomatopoeia he repeats throughout the scene). He also relays the subversions. Johnston explains that though some days stood out, “Most passed by as the seconds, the minutes and the hours mark the passage of time, in work, study, prayer, and proper play.” For Johnston, “Were it not for the spirit of the boys, every day would have passed according to plan and schedule, and there would have been no story” (p. 47). At Johnston's school, the students' survivance—their spirit, their story—defied the imposed schedule, agenda, and time of the school. Johnston also describes how defying the agenda of the school was a method of push-back:

Since the boys could not openly defy authority either by walking out of the school

and marching north or south on Highway 17 or by flatly refusing to follow an order, they turned to the only means available to them: passive resistance, which took the form of dawdling. (p. 30)

Though school newspapers printed correctives to the problem of time and its micro-penalties, Johnston notes that at least in later boarding school periods, resistance to such oppression came in the form of spirit, story, and slowness.

### **Beforeing and Aftering**

Another temporal narrative school newspapers offered was what I am calling “beforeing and aftering”—examples of Indigenous peoples in the past alongside examples of them in the present. This proximity of examples served as a foil that could not be accomplished were newspapers to exclusively isolate discussions of past and present. This concept is inspired by the work of Jean O’Brien (2010), who observes a similar technique in the nineteenth century she labels “firsting and lasting.” O’Brien describes how New Englanders celebrated “firsts,” such as birth, death, marriage, and settlement, and “lasts,” which highlighted the supposedly last Indigenous person in an area. O’Brien plays on the word “lasting,” uncovering ongoing Indigenous presence and resistance. These two turns O’Brien calls a “double act of colonialism,” whereby settlers “appropriated and displayed . . . evidence of Indian demise, and constructed a story whereby Anglo Americans logically and rationally—legally, it is asserted—replaced Indian peoples and cultures with their own” (p. 94). Through this double act, O’Brien argues, “Indians can never be modern because they cannot be the subjects of change, only its victims. This discourse locates Indians in an ahistorical temporality that relegates

Indian history to a degeneracy narrative” while “non-Indian New Englanders reserve to themselves the authorship of recorded time” (p. 107).

Boarding school newspapers, in a later time and different place, share the technique of firsting and lasting. An issue of Kitamaat Home’s newspaper celebrated one of its teachers, Mrs. Anderson, as “the first white woman to settle in Kitamaat Valley” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 12.7). Another article highlighted the first female missionary in Kitamaat, Susannah Lawrence (21.1) and the first to start a colony there (1.3). Other newspapers applauded early missionaries (26.9) or the first reverend to publish a dictionary in Blackfoot (*Our Forest Children* 4.2:179). When firsting extended to Indigenous peoples, it represented death and assimilation. Examples include the first suicide of an Indigenous woman (*The Guide* 6.6:3); the first Indigenous woman to work for Indian Affairs (*Our Forest Children* 3.11:141); the first pupil at Shingwauk Home (4.6:254); and the first death of a student at the school (*Na-Na-Kwa* 6.8). In these cases, an Indigenous first could in fact be a last. School newspapers also celebrated lasting, including the deaths of chiefs such Piapot (*Progress* 17.4:1), Washakie (17.4:4), Old Sun (3.72:6), Swift Bear (18.5:3), Pontiac, Blackhawk (*Our Forest Children* 3.3:3), and Captain White Eyes, whose descendant the newspaper makes quick to note is now a pupil at the school (3.7:1). Battleford School discussed the deaths of a “prominent Mohawk woman” (*The Guide* 6.10:4) and Old Jacob Sasakwamoos (7.8:1). Regina School ran an article on the life of “an old buffalo hunter,” almost entirely in the past tense despite the hunter, Charles LaRoque, being very much alive and an active hunter (*Progress* 3.78:2). Though the larger discourse of school newspapers depends on articles like the death of Chief Piapot

(i.e., lasting) to be read together with articles on the first white female settler (i.e., firsting), the example of the old buffalo hunter highlights how a present can be past-ed.

Battleford School's newspaper devoted three articles to the death of Chief Ahtahkakoop. School newspapers almost consistently elided or buried student death in their pages. So why was so much more attention allocated to a chief? Perhaps because Ahtahkakoop's death represents O'Brien's concept of lasting, while the death of a supposedly assimilated student represents the failure and horror of the schools. The newspaper referred to Ahtahkakoop as "that eminent old chief" (5.7:1; 5.12:3), neglecting the events of his life highlighted by oral history (Christensen, 2000). *The Guide* focuses instead on how he was the "last surviving real Cree Chief—that is [,] one appointed, or elected, by the Indians themselves under their own old system" (5.6:1). The articles also highlight his "consistency" in being a Christian and his loyalty during the Riel "rebellion." His delegation to the Prime Minister is contained by the newspaper as being "taken down by the Government to visit Eastern Canada: he was greatly delighted with the trip and the many wonderful things he saw" (5.6:1). Just as O'Brien finds in New England, firsting and lasting operates within these school newspapers as well.

An important part of O'Brien's concept is not only that archives contained firsts or lasts, but that they contained both in tandem. I am borrowing O'Brien's emphasis on simultaneity and extending it to another "double act of colonialism" found in these newspapers: beforing and aftering. In this technique, Indigenous peoples are conceived of before school (in the past) and after, supplying—both visually and textually—a benchmark, a foil, for understanding the many other articles and images. Note how the titles of nineteenth-century Canadian newspapers *Progress* and *Our Forest Children*



invoke this concept. The concept is well represented in the before-and-after photography made famous at Carlisle School in Pennsylvania. The principal, Pratt, would display photographs of students upon their arrival alongside photographs of uniformed children with their hair cut (Malmsheimer, 1985, pp. 55–56). Pratt and reservation agents would use the images in their recruitment pitches to parents and communities. Additionally, Pratt included before-and-after photographs in annual reports, materials for the school’s benefactors, and Carlisle’s school newspapers (p. 62-63).

Canadian newspapers and reports also used this technique—one of the many ways in which Canada modeled its techniques after the U.S. The before-and-after images of Thomas Moore have acted as a visual stand-in for boarding school history. The original appeared in the 1897 annual report of the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA). The image has since been reproduced in reports and on the cover of books about boarding schools.<sup>53</sup> In this photograph, before and after goes beyond dress and hair: the images represent a new name and even background, with the civilized stage featuring Moore assertively leaning on a Greco-Roman post with a tamed potted plant behind him (Milloy, 1999, pp. 4–6). Racette (2009) considers how these photographs were meant “to solicit public support, silence critics, and illustrate the launch of an ambitious initiative” while representing “the government as a benevolent, caring agent, the harbinger of progress” (p. 56). Such photographs also combined schools’ theories on past and present. *Our Forest Children* reproduced two photographs of Carlisle students. The photograph on the

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<sup>53</sup> At the 2014 conference for the International Association of Genocide Scholars, which used the image of Thomas Moore in its promotional material, a discussion ensued surrounding the ethics of disseminating images such as these. As Susan Sontag (2003) writes, “perhaps the only people with the right to look at images of suffering of this extreme order are those who could do something to alleviate it” or “those who could learn from it. The rest of us are voyeurs, whether or not we mean to be” (p. 42).

left rests above the caption “Indian pupils as they look on their first arrival to the Carlisle School” (2.13:10-11). The children are barefoot, with mismatched clothing and long, untied hair. Importantly, the photograph is outside, as if the shot were really taken before students stepped into the institution. The photograph on the right features children in uniforms. The boys’ hair is now cut short, the girls’ hair tied. The after photograph is indoors, demonstrating the civilizing effects of Carlisle. The caption explains, “This is how the pupils look after a four months training.” In the second photograph, students lose the epithet “Indian” and are simply “pupils.”

One example of beforing and aftering appeared in Kitamaat Home’s newspaper and was not of children, but of homes (see Figures 11 and 12). The newspaper featured an illustration of a traditional coastal home with the following annotation: “These houses, so fast disappearing from the Coast villages, here [in the newspaper] remain intact to be a constant reminder of the tribal system which even at the present time exerts its influence amongst the natives.”<sup>54</sup> According to the newspaper, the traditional houses have “but one door, no windows,” and a fire within the home, which the newspaper blames for blinding residents. On the opposing page is a cut titled “The New Fashion: Glimpse of the New Village.” According to the newspaper, “In outward appearance the houses are ‘white man’s style,’” symbolizing “an advancing civilization impossible in the old native houses, where two, three, and four families eat, sleep and live together.” For the newspaper, the difference between before and after is the consequence of old and new *fashion*—like time, an inevitable thing and not the result of colonialism. The old homes exist (though “fast disappearing”) as a symbol for how far Indigenous peoples have

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<sup>54</sup> For more on Indigenous architecture and planning, see Lomawaima (2014) and Natcher, Walker, and Jojola (2013).

progressed: lightless homes, with threats of sexual deviance due to their mixing of gender and overcrowding, as well as a blinding fire. In this example of beforing and aftering, the home similarly represents what Thomas Moore does.

Most times, though, school newspapers depended upon beforing and aftering less overtly. One such example is an image found in Kitamaat Home's newspaper of the "boys at lively play with their bows and arrows" (see Figure 13). Though there is only one photograph, the caption points out three of the boys in the picture are at the Coqualeetza Institute and another three are dead (26.1). While a reader might see this photograph and assume the Kitamaat boys were not assimilating because they were playing "lively" with bows and arrows, the caption assures readers that six of the eight are in fact aftering (either with further schooling or death). Rather than concerning readers with such a startling rate of death (as well as the newspaper's disturbing choice to publish the photograph in the first place), such a caption may have assuaged readers concerned by an image supposedly of before (bows and arrows) with no accompanying image of the after. A later issue exhibited the image of "an Indian Medicine-Man" (31.10) nested within a larger issue about death and the success of the community hospital. An earlier issue uses similar language, captioning an image of an Indigenous girl from Bella Coola. Her "costume, or lack of it," is labelled as the "old fashion." Though *Na-Na-Kwa* does not present a cut of the new fashion, a student on the same page writes about her ability to read the Bible, bake bread, and sew (8.1)—rather than didactically presenting before and after images explicitly, perhaps in these instances readers were expected to draw their own conclusions. In an extreme example, Wilson proposed (though never realized) a live exhibition of beforing and aftering at a school in

the Rockies. He chose this location because “the many visitors who resort to this locality every summer would thus have an opportunity of seeing for themselves what Indian children can do when civilized and educated; and attached to the institution would be a museum of Indian curiosities and relics” (*Our Forest Children* 1.9:3). For this proposed institution, visitors would visit a “research” site with its signifiers of Indigenous past and then also view the school and its living examples of transformation. With all of these examples, whether the before was placed next to the after or whether it was implied, the double act of past and present mattered more than one in isolation.

Another form of past coupled with present found in newspapers included Shingwauk Home’s tableau performances, which displayed students past and then present. Tableaux typically exhibit actors frozen in action, sometimes imitating a famous painting or scene. In the nineteenth century, tableaux (often historical, allegorical, or patriotic) were sometimes featured at the end of a play and also served as a popular parlour game (Durham, 1998, p. 76; Glassberg, 1990, pp. 16–20; Pavis, 1998, p. 377). Normally in a tableau, actors delivered a presentation and then remained frozen at the end, attempting to embody the stillness of a painting. In Shingwauk Home’s renditions students moved silently and sometimes spoke and sang. Wilson toured tableaux of students on several occasions and wrote about them in *Our Forest Children*.

One tableau routine Wilson described in the school newspaper toured in late 1887 through Western Ontario, with stops in Sarnia, Walpole Island, St. Thomas, Kingston, London, and Montreal. The show at Carleton Place (near Ottawa) attracted an audience of 500 and required an unexpected second show (*Our Forest Children* 1.9:4). Wilson

described in the school newspaper the three 5-minute sections of the performance:

1. Boys sang as they conducted their trades (e.g., blacksmiths; shoemiths; carpenters; tailors), delivering one speech in Ojibway and one in English on what the white man thinks of the Indian.
2. Boys sang as they conducted their chores (e.g., cutting wood; peeling potatoes), followed by “glee rounds.” A Sioux boy then described the history of his life.
3. Girls sang as they worked (e.g., laundry) while boys gave writing, spelling, geography, and drawing lessons.

Rhythm mattered. As Wilson noted about the performance in Ottawa, the sounds from the blacksmith hammer, the barbers’ scissors, and girls’ irons were all intended to harmonize with the children’s song (1.8:3). One local newspaper remarked the children “sang as they worked, regulating their movements to correspond with the measure of the cheerful ditty on their lips” (1.9:4). These tableaux preceded “Indian Singing, by the Sioux boys from the North West” as well as a debate titled “That the Canadian Government has treeted [sic] the Indians better than has the American Government,” which lasted for 30 minutes and ending with sacred music. The entertainment then included a tableau of a typical Sunday evening at Shingwauk Home, where students recited texts and answered questions about the Bible.

One review in a local newspaper and reprinted by *Our Forest Children* cited this final tableau, the only one to feature Wilson with “his entire school about him,” as the most interesting. It described Wilson in the tableau as “austere, stately and December-cold in his perpendicular dignity,” a coldness thought to be “the secret of his grip on the untutored mind of savages” (1.9:5). This appears to be the only time Wilson or any other teacher was on stage, as one local newspaper explained that “from the beginning of the entertainment to its close, the teachers disappeared, and the Indians were left to run their own show” (1.4:1). Then came what Wilson called the “presentation scene,” described as “when the members of each different tribe were presented separately”: students who were Delaware, Sioux, Ojibway, Ottawa, Pottawattamie, and Blackfeet would, by nation, step to the front and take a bow. The evening took 2.5 hours, concluding with “God Save the Queen” (1.4:2; 1.8:3). With these tableaux, Wilson explained the purpose was not to raise money, but to prove to the public the progress of the schools and that each child had “the full capability of taking his place side by side with the white man and emulating him in every branch of industry and civilized occupation” (1.4:2).

So if the purpose was to demonstrate assimilation, why did Wilson include the students singing in Sioux and lecturing in Ojibway? Why feature the Sioux boy who described his “wild early life” (*Our Forest Children* 1.4:1)? And why bother having the children bow at the end not as a homogenous group but as distinct nations? Perhaps he did so because like other techniques, Wilson knew that to exhibit the present did not make sense without also exhibiting what an audience would deem the past. Not all inclusions of the past were employed simply to demonstrate how far the schools had brought students into the present. Inclusions of the past may have delivered what

audiences *really* wanted to see. This came across in how Wilson pitched his request for volunteers to lodge students while on the tableau tour. Wilson insisted on billeting students—two per host (1.9:1)—while on tour to keep down expenses but also to better acquaint Canadians “with our young Indians.” Like elsewhere in school newspapers, Wilson caricatures the children:

Each [billeter] take one Indian to their homes for the night. One could have great tall Snayamani from North West, another can have Charlie Baker from St. Joe’s, another little Gracie from Walpole Island for the other. Peter Oshkahboos, the boy who draws so well from Serpent River. The other, Smart, the bootmaker, and little Negaunewenah . . . another, Jane Samproon, the clever tailoress. (1.4:2)

Wilson mentions trades and therefore progress, and the very fact that he advertises lodging the students (“each take one Indian home for the night”) asserts his authority, when the children’s parents were seldom able to take their children home. But Wilson markets billeting by playing on pastness when he includes students’ “exotic” homelands and qualities (e.g., height and artistry). Community newspapers reviewing the Shingwauk tableaux also highlighted markers of the supposed past: the thrill of billeting students included seeing they were clean, neat, and “ate with refinement of manner.”

However, one article states the white hosts enjoyed “consorting with the children of the forest.” It seems families initially “consented to the proposal with reluctance, some, in fact, with horror; and they began to think whether a bed in the woodshed would not be more satisfying to the spirit of the roving rascals” (*Our Forest Children* 1.8:4). But

“when the electric wires of human nature were strung, and the whites and reds looked into each other’s eyes, the fog of misconception dissipated, and there came a feeling of warmth and fraternity.” At the same time, the newspaper also delights at recounting how students also made bows and arrows for their billets and one particular student hunted a bird during the visit. Present and past are contained in the review of billets, but perhaps the greater thrill lay in references to the past.

The thrill for white audiences of Indigenous pastness may have been known to Wilson. He had reprinted several articles from Carlisle publications that condemned Buffalo Bill performances, which Pratt also opposed (Pfister, 2004, p. 71). Pratt felt Buffalo Bill shows undermined his efforts to display “progress,” especially at the Chicago World’s Fair when the two performances played on neighbouring fairgrounds (Trennert, 1987). Wilson became increasingly frustrated, as did Pratt, since audiences desired to see students in what they considered the past rather than present. When Wilson attempted to take the tableaux to England, he wrote in *Our Forest Children* he had to cancel due to lack of lodging but also because he received word “a party of Indian boys *in ordinary dress* would create no interest” (2.4:16). Though the tableaux Wilson choreographed for Montreal and Western Ontario included students in what audiences would consider the past through song and language, the primary focus was the present. At some point in Wilson’s plans for England perhaps someone took him aside and told him the same show would not work, that his tableaux of students working and wearing uniforms would not be welcomed by British audiences. Two years later, the England trip *did* happen—but with a performance that met such expectations. Wilson’s revised trip was scaled down: only two children came. The trip included a tour through Nova Scotia



and New Brunswick, where the two boys would “sing hymns, recite a dialogue, and dress up in the costume of wild Indians” (4.2:179)—a marked change from Wilson’s tours two years prior. Part of the change included a different motivation for the travel: while in his Ontario and Montreal tours Wilson cited his purpose was to change the minds of Canadians, his Maritimes and British tour was to shore up funds for his Canadian Indian Research and Aid Society (4.3:195) and also a new school. Perhaps Wilson’s new show reflected his desperation for funding by giving in to audience expectation; or, maybe he changed his beliefs as well as his involvement in the Society grew.

Wilson wrote in *Our Forest Children* about the two boys who accompanied him on the Maritimes and British tableau trip in late 1890: 12-year-old Soney (Pottawatomi from Walpole Island) and 8-year-old Zosie (Ojibway from the north shore of Lake Superior). The newspaper describes the boys using the foil of past and present. *Our Forest Children* recounted how Soney was at first illiterate, but could now read and write in under two years. Zosie is also befores as previously “a regular little wild Indian, living in a birchbark wigwam” and knowing “nothing about the English language or ABC.” Though an image from the newspaper features Soney and Zosie in traditional clothing (see Figure 14), the accompanying text about their progress in school alters them. During this complicated version of beforing and aftering, the paper lists Soney’s and Zosie’s “Indian names” and meanings. In this revised show, the two boys began wearing the school’s uniform: a navy serge jacket with a scarlet sash. The two boys repeated verses from the Bible and sang hymns; they would then enter a dialogue about where each other came from and how they liked Shingwauk—the answer being “first rate.” The beginning of the performance featured the boys’ present. Then the performance turned to the boys’

imagined past. One boy would ask the other how to say phrases in his language. One phrase was “I like coming here very much,” which Zosie would translate as “Ah-peche ne minwandumomaundupe ke-pe ezhahyaun.” The boys would then wear Wilson’s understanding of traditional Indigenous clothing, which he described as “dress up” (unlike the school uniform). The dialogue would then focus on their clothing:

ZOSIE: What’s that stick in your hand studded with brass nails and two leathern thongs attached to it?

SONEY: That is the kind of whip the prairie Indians use when they ride their ponies . . . It is said they use the lash for their ponies and the stick for their wives.

The performance concluded “with a war dance, accompanied by drum, rattle, and a weird kind of song, to the great amusement of the audience” (4.4:212-213). These two tableaux greatly differ—from a Canadian show exhibiting mostly present with minor past to a British show that concludes with Wilson’s imagined past.

Philip J. Deloria (1998) considers how in an American context, “The fact that native people turned to playing Indian—miming Indianness back at Americans in order to redefine it—indicates how little cultural capital Indian people possessed at the time” (p. 125). But Deloria also suggests, “Mimetic imitations could alter political, cultural, and personal identities in unanticipated ways” (p. 125-126), adding, “Native people playing Indian might also reaffirm [stereotypes] for a stubborn white audience.” At the same time, Deloria explains that what was often mimicked were white understandings of

Indianness. Such performance is difficult to define:

As they shifted, altered, crossed, and recrossed cultural boundaries, these native people demolished those boundaries, rendering their own identities slippery and uncertain in the process. This kind of native identity, so complex and rich and yet so often and so easily dismissed, has been especially energized by the transformations I've clustered around the ideas of the modern and the authentic. If being a survivor of the pure, primitive old days meant authenticity, and if that in turn meant cultural power that might be translated to social ends, it made sense for a Seneca man to put in a Plains headdress, white American's marker of that archaic brand of authority. (p. 189)

The children in Wilson's tableaux were not the same as Buffalo Bill performers or Deloria's example of a Seneca man donning a headdress: they were not adults, were not paid, and perhaps had no choice in the matter. Their tours of Ontario, Montreal, the Maritimes, and England meant children were even more geographically removed from parents than they already were at the school. Notification to parents or permission granted by them for the children to tour is unlikely. As well, Pratt and Wilson opposed Buffalo Bill shows because they undermined and did not exhibit the progress of schooling; Wilson's tableaux featured the progress of schooling, though this became muted during the tour of the Maritimes and England. And it is unclear whether the students enjoyed themselves during these tableaux. Although on the Ontario tour students got to meet Barnum little people Count and Countess Magri (Bogdan, 1988, pp. 147–160), students

also had to sing on cue under the dome of the Library during a tour of Parliament led by Minister of the Interior—also the Superintendent-General for Indian Affairs in the nineteenth century—Thomas White. During the tour, White “examined carefully the various specimens of [students’] workmanship” (1.8:3). The trip would have included fun, but also clearly business. We do not know how Soney and Zosie felt, nor how readers of *Our Forest Children* were interpreting descriptions of the tableaux.

After the tour of the Maritimes and England concluded, *Our Forest Children* printed Zosie’s response when asked how he enjoyed the trip. He answered, “I was getting a little tired of it” (4.6:241)—a similarly blunt response issued by Gilbert Bear on his experience at the Chicago World Fair in chapter 3. Upon their return from England, Barbara Birchbark’s column focused on the two boys:

Both [Zosie] and Soney are proud possessors of a watch each. Of course one of first questions asked was, “Well, Soney, what is the time?” “I can give you English time,” said Soney, in a most magnificent tone of voice.” (4.6.242)

What would readers have understood as “English time?” Given the script of Barbara Birchbark’s typical column, Soney’s response is possibly meant as humorous. The rest of her article catalogues the gifts Soney and Zosie received on their trip to England, suggesting they foolishly and in a “reckless way” gave them to their peers (whom the newspaper refers unironically to as “inmates”). Birchbark implies the watches may have followed the same fate, invoking the trope of the Indian who does not understand capital, time, or other markers of the present (an interpretation that ignores generosity as a

Christian value). But perhaps “English time,” said in a “magnificent tone of voice,” meant something else: perhaps a trip away from the bells of the school or even a mocking of supposed Indigenous pastness for the complicated reasons Deloria addresses.

Regardless, school newspapers used the technique of beforeing and aftering in ways that were not always as straightforward as the before-and-after photography. Though the tableaux began as a clear example of beforeing and aftering on the Canadian tour, Wilson adapted the script for a British audience and wrote about both in the school newspaper.

### **The Future**

While school newspapers wrote about Indigenous people in the past and the present, they rarely located them in the future. These newspapers instead typically imagined a future free of Indigenous peoples, populated instead by a thriving nation of settlers. As Tuck and Yang (2012) state, “In order for the settlers to make a place their home, they must destroy and disappear the Indigenous peoples that live there” because ongoing Indigenous presence and futurity undermine settlers’ claims to land (p. 5). It appears as though school newspapers participated in Tuck and Yang’s definition of destroying and disappearing, both as extensions of the boarding school system as well as in their content of predicting an Indigenous-free future.

But the newspapers’ fantasies of a future free of the “white man’s burden” are arguably more sophisticated than simply predicting a wipe-out or admitting to genocide in any direct way. Instead, the newspapers employ several “technologies of temporality.” In the first page of its first issue *Our Forest Children* explained, “As time goes on and our White population increases we must necessarily come more and more into contact with them” (1.1.1), that “as time goes on [settlers] shall keep advancing more and more.

Every year will bring our white population more and more into contact with the wild Indians of the North West.” The issue goes on to explain that as “our population increases we must necessarily come more and more into collision with [Indigenous peoples]” through a “gradual aggressiveness” (1.1.2). The newspaper reduces colonial encroachment to *collision* or, even more innocuous, *contact*. The reason for such encounters is chalked up to time. Any admitted violence—*aggressiveness*—the newspaper deems as gradual, as slow (and therefore more humane).

Such a future, with time as the culprit, was also painted by Kitamaat Home’s newspaper, which went so far as to claim it was “almost an assured fact that the Kitamaat Valley is about to be settled by [the] white population” (*Na-Na-Kwa* 2.2). According to the school’s newspaper, “Hitherto the tribe has largely kept to itself and apart from the outside world,” but this was a “new era” in which “a number of white men are coming and going, government employees, surveyors, explorers, also civil engineers and prospectors. Thus far all had had a good influence. No word of complaint has been heard by us” (4.3). The newspaper frames Indigenous people as an anti-future (but uncomplaining) group surrounded by an encroaching “new era” of professionals. Regina School’s newspaper similarly phrased such inevitability:

History shows a resistless onward march of intelligence, industry and thrift. Races have had to fall in with the tide or perish perhaps in the efforts to escape. The Indian sullenly, stubbornly and often successfully refused to do either. Meantime the vast resources of a productive country could not be developed. (3.70:8)

Indigenous peoples in this passage had two choices: assimilate or die—“perhaps.” The newspaper frames resistance a stubbornness, resulting in a waste of “development.”

Cracks in innocence occasionally emerge. The newspapers only thinly veil that these are merely *moves*, not actual innocence:

The United States Government has spent millions of money in trying to reduce the Indians to subjection and compelling them by force not to interfere with the advance of white immigration. But time has made the Americans wiser; they have found that killing the Indians and driving them westward does not pay, the process has been too expensive. (*Our Forest Children* 1.1.2)

It further explained, “Instead of having to fight them, [Indigenous peoples] may join with us in building up this great country” (1.1.1) and “every year will embitter the feelings of jealousy which already exist; the Indians may not perhaps dare to meet us in open warfare, but they will probably be increasingly a terror and an annoyance.” Casting settlers, then, as helpers of Indigenous peoples for the future occasionally reveals itself as perhaps a way to mitigate warfare, eliminate blockades to development, and save money. More often, though, it could be interpreted that the future of school newspapers is free of Indigenous peoples because of time, and settlers are guiltless benefactors.

And the settlers’ future? School newspapers, it can be argued, forecasted prosperity, progress, and longevity. Regina School was hopeful: “Everything new is coming our way. New Year, a new Province, new Parliament, new settlers, and new resolutions” (*Progress* 15.1:7). This newness—including Saskatchewan’s entry into

confederation and Laurier's parliament—is inevitable, “coming our way” rather than tied to the work of schools. *Our Forest Children* described the future in Sault Ste. Marie as “booming”: not only had the school's property appreciated in value 12 times, its newspaper also reported the future construction of a canal and international bridge (1.3:3-4). Kitamaat Home's newspaper painted a picture of the proto-resource extraction industries of B.C.—surveyors, fisheries, and Asian trade (*Na-Na-Kwa* 2.4; 24.10; 22.12). More frequently Kitamaat's newspaper reported on mining potential (20.11). Early on, the newspaper reported, “Traces of minerals were found by us, which indicate that the mountain chains on both sides of the Valley would bear prospecting” (3.6). *Na-Na-Kwa*, over the years, continued to cover the activities of prospectors (4.7; 22.8; 24.7) and on the copper and gold of the region (14.10). It even included a facsimile of a “mineral claim” because “some of Nanakwa's friends never have seen, perhaps never will see” one. Because the name of the reproduced claim was the “Golden Crown,” *Na-Na-Kwa* thought it particularly fitting to include in its coronation special issue (19.8), symbolically connecting for readers the metropole (the crown) and the colony (its resources). *Na-Na-Kwa* would also reprint letters it received from prospectors, who were also likely readers (7.5). The school's newspaper plainly states, “Many of the readers of Nanakwa are watching the development of this country” (19.2). A new post office also signaled “progress” (9.5), as did a mail route between Kitamaat and Hazelton (22.9) and Indigenous postal workers who brought mail for miners, prospectors, and missionaries (23.9). Like a Richard Scarry children's book, newspapers predicted a future full of the signifiers of progress—government, infrastructure, resource extraction, and mail.



Perhaps the railway signaled the strongest example of “progress.” *Our Forest Children* predicted the coming of four lines connecting the U.S. and Canada (1.3:3-4). While its first issue cautioned that the railway’s encroachment could trigger open warfare with Indigenous people, who likely “associated the disappearance of the buffalo with the laying down of the steel rails of the CPR” (1.1:1), the next issue contains the narrative:

Our hitherto quiet little village is now all astir in anticipation of the coming railroads . . . IT is perhaps a little unfortunate that the railway is to cut through the vestry of ST. Luke’s church . . . Others of our friends are trembling for their houses, others have their gardens and backyards broken into. Still all are in good humor, and all seem to welcome the advent of the iron horse. (1.2:4)

*Na-Na-Kwa* hyped future railroads, figuring Kitamaat as a “gateway to the interior” (1.4) and reporting on the Deputy Minister of railways’ visit (2.4). It also reported on the legislation purportedly guaranteeing the coming of a railway (5.7), the proposed railway from Cape Scott to Kitamaat and Hazelton (15.4), the Pacific Northern and Omenica railway (25.11), and the Grand Trunk Railway (30.13). The train had a revolutionary impact on Victorians’ understanding of time. As Matthew Beaumont and Michael Freeman (2007) note, “The railway should be reappraised neither exclusively as a transport system nor merely as some floating signifier for the spirit of modernity” (p. 7). In the case of nineteenth-century boarding school newspapers, its description could be interpreted as even more loaded.

## Conclusion

What technologies of temporality operate today? One that persists is the freezing of Indigenous peoples in the past, which came to a head with the Makah whale hunt in 1999. Many non-Indigenous people and media opposed it because hunters appealed to treaty rights and traditional practices while using modern-day tools (Marker, 2006; R. J. Miller, 2000; P. S. Raibmon, 2005). In high school, I remember the Makah hunt as an essay prompt: “Should Native people be allowed their treaty rights if using modern tools? Should treaty rights and inhumane practices from the 19<sup>th</sup> century have any place today?”—as if non-Indigenous students like myself had any right to weigh in. I didn’t realize it then, but the central point of the debate was time: according to many non-Indigenous media outlets, Makah people should not appeal to a centuries-old treaty and to millennia-old practices; *if* they were to, they should not use supposed non-Indigenous markers of the twentieth century such as powerboats and guns. The problem was time.

The Van der Peet decision is another example. The case, decided in 1996, found that a Stó:lō woman could not sell salmon acquired through Aboriginal fishing rights. Because selling the fish was not deemed traditional, she could not do it in the present day. John Borrows (2002) argues the Van der Peet decision “has now told us what Aboriginal means. Aboriginal is retrospective. It is about what was . . . Aboriginal means a long time ago, pre-contact” (p. 60). Dale Turner (2013) explains how the Van der Peet decision connects directly to boarding school history:

The problems with the frozen rights approach run deeper than merely “freezing” Aboriginal rights in a pre-contact context. The rights that flow out of Aboriginal

“distinctive practices” are associated with precisely the kinds of practices the boarding schools were designed to eradicate . . . An asymmetry arises when the government, on the one hand, apologizes for the past forced assimilation of Indian schoolchildren in boarding schools, while on the other hand demanding that Aboriginal peoples, in the present, associate their rights with the very cultural practices that government policies have attempted to destroy. (pp. 106-107)

For Turner, the present-day technology of temporality locates Indigenous peoples in the past, co-opting and appropriating such locations as non-Indigenous people see fit; but the same technique denies any state-sanctioned attempts to decimate such practices.

Another contemporary technology of temporality exists in the problematic terms “postcolonialism” and “postcolonial theory.” Scholars are right to critique either term in a Canadian context because they imply that colonialism is over. Anne McClintock (1995) also correctly notes that “postcolonial” reifies a “commitment to linear time and the idea of development,” even though both the concept and the theory attempt to disrupt such linearity (p. 10). There is no *post* in a settler colonial context like Canada because its very definition is to “replace Indigenous peoples on their land permanently” (Strakosch & Macoun, 2012, p. 41). Indeed, “Settler colonialism has an ongoing, structural temporality, which is generally unacknowledged and contrasts with the linear colonialism–decolonization–post-colonialism narrative” (p. 51). Even without using the terms, a present-day technology of temporality exists in understanding colonialism as “over.” Worse, still, is Harper’s denial that it ever happened.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> For a transcript of Harper’s comments in 2009, see Aaron Wherry (2009).

These newspapers could be interpreted as both constituting and participating in many technologies of temporality, assisting the structure of settler colonialism. Reading them carefully helps to denaturalize time by exposing the words, moments, rhetoric, and logic that posit Indigenous peoples as the past and colonialism as the future. But much of this future was never realized. Many towns that declared a boom in school newspapers have all but folded today. The certainty *Na-Na-Kwa* had never come to fruition: in 1908 Grand Trunk Pacific decided on Prince Rupert as a terminus station and “Kitamaat slipped into obscurity” (Kelm, 2006, p. xxv). The exhibition school in the Rocky Mountains never opened. And most importantly, the pastness of Indigeneity that newspapers mostly attempted to both represent and reify never, never happened. As the collection of poetry that Chrystos’ poem I cited in the previous chapter is called, Indigenous peoples were and are *Not Vanishing* (1994a).<sup>56</sup> Considering time in these newspapers could begin to prompt an excavation of current technologies of temporality.

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<sup>56</sup> To read an interview with Chrystos, see Jorge Antonio Vallejos (2010).

## CHAPTER 7: SPACE, PLACE, AND LAND IN SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS

As this chapter began to take shape, ‘Namgis First Nation hosted a survivor ceremony and demolition of the former St. Michael’s Boarding School in Alert Bay, B.C. Indigenous leaders, community members, and survivors gathered to witness and participate in the destruction of the old school’s brick building (Hyslop, 2015; Stueck, 2015). The Royal Winnipeg Ballet’s production of *Going Home Star* (2015), a dance written by Joseph Boyden with music by Tanya Tagaq, features one adult survivor who dances with a model of a miniature residential school on his back; throughout the dance, he and another survivor seek to remove the literal burden of the school’s architecture from his body. In addition to the physical structure of boarding schools with which these examples engage, this chapter asks how school newspapers represented and constituted space, place, and land.

Many Indigenous scholars distinguish understandings of space and place from Eurowestern ones. Coulthard (2014) writes, “Place is a way of knowing, of experiencing and relating to the world and with others” (p. 61). However, Lyons (2010) warns of romanticizing Indigenous understandings of place:

Everyone knows what Indian space is like. It is circular, communal, and never near a cosmopolitan center. (Even when it is, it’s not.) It is always pungent: smoky and sagey in a manner that evokes the past . . . This is a stereotype, but persistent to say the least. (pp. 15-16)

School newspapers partook in romanticizing space the way Lyons illustrates—for instance, when Wilson wrote about Indian Territory<sup>57</sup> in *Our Forest Children*:

There is no mistake about Indian land. The change is noticeable directly a stranger enters it. The train goes rattling along as before,—but there is a quiet, a peace, a calm, an absence of rush and bustle,—the prairie rolls away to the horizon, without a village, a house or even a hut in sight; the soil is unbroken, it is one great unfenced field, a few trees here and there, a solitary rider perhaps. (3.7:73)

Wilson’s observation, that space in and out of Indian Territory differs, reifies Indigenous land as only limited to that which *settlers* designate as such. These kinds of spatial practices reconceptualized land as property, making it not only romantic but “exchangeable, saleable, and steal-able” (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 64).

Sandra Styres, Celia Haig-Brown, and Melissa Blimkie (2013) challenge space and place as property by emphasizing land. Land for them comprises water, air, and the underground. It is “spiritual, emotional, and intellectual” as well as sentient—“*Land* is a living thing” (pp. 37-38). Other scholars frame Indigenous land as our first teacher, acknowledging how land communicates with us as learners and also the connections amongst land, teacher, and learner; related to this concept of land as first teacher is the concept of land as pedagogy—the ways in which teaching practices are informed by land (Zinga & Styres, 2011). Outside of Indigenous scholarship, studies of space and place are

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<sup>57</sup> A shifting area of land in the south central United States marked off by government for Indigenous peoples whose land was allegedly ceded. More often, Indigenous groups were forcibly, violently removed and sent to live in Indian Territory. Many groups continued to live there despite forced relocation until Indian Territory “became” Oklahoma in 1907 (Justice, 2006).

more common. Henri Lefebvre (1991) famously stated, “(Social) space is a (social) product” (p. 26)—space is neither neutral nor empty, waiting to be filled, but instead produced through relationship. School newspapers certainly created space and place for readers, but Tuck and McKenzie cautiously approach conflation of place and the social because it can metaphorize land (p. 40). When school newspapers constructed space and place, they did so on and out of locatable, non-abstract Indigenous land.

I argue school newspapers erased Indigenous understandings of and claims to land. Instead, newspapers oscillated between what Jo-anne Fiske (2009) calls colonial space—“a sense of an empty wilderness that lay outside of civilization”—and colonial place: “the site of settled experience” (pp. 146-147). Some of newspapers’ conversion of space into place referenced Canada; other examples overtly borrowed from the place of England and America. This chapter is inspired by Tuck and McKenzie’s definition of critical place inquiry, which “addresses spatialized and place-based processes of colonization and settler colonization” (p. 19). As Sarah de Leeuw (2007) writes, “if we are truly interested in understanding colonialism, particularly as a spatialized set of endeavors, it is crucial we investigate the sites and places where it was practiced” (p. 341). Razack (2002) concurs, stating that white settler mythologies disavow genocide through “deeply spatialized stories” (pp. 2-3): settlers claim they are entitled to land empty or unused by Indigenous peoples. Tracey Banivanua-Mar and Penelope Edmonds (2010), too, identify “the distinctive and specific spatial histories of settler colonialism’s dispossession and marginalization of Indigenous peoples” (p. 3). Spatial practices can include positioning, naming, locating, and mapping. There are many spaces mentioned in school newspapers: vague notions of Indigenous land, wastefully unpeopled and unfilled

and the space of Canada, as-yet unfilled but which inevitability will be a place called Canada. This chapter describes how school newspapers articulate this transformation to argue these publications had complicated ways of re-placing Indigenous land.

### **The Place of Canada in School Newspapers**

Inside the pages of school newspapers emerged a story of Canada as a site of conversion from a barren landscape devoid of culture—a space—to a site of civilization: a place. Sometimes this meant establishing the supposed emptiness of colonial space. Tuan (2011) describes how space and place are dialectical: “From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa” (p. 6). The first issue of *Our Forest Children* informed readers that Indigenous peoples were “scattered throughout the Dominion of Canada” and they were “among us” (1.1.2). Indigenous peoples are framed as *within* Canada (rather than the reverse) and are *scattered* rather than organized, fully formed nations. Many boarding schools required students’ participation in the creation of place, assessing student success on their capacity to reflect back colonial knowledge that cut land into colonial maps of geography. *Our Forest Children* published these questions from a geography exam:

1. Where and what are Queen Charlotte, Charlottetown, Fraser, Assiniboine?
2. Name each Province of the Dominion, with its capital or chief city?
3. Through what Provinces and what principal cities does the C.P.R. pass, and what are its termini? (2.9:31)



Other exams asked students to locate Ecuador and Santiago (3.6:55) or to define a lagoon, a glacier, and the first meridian (3.13:162). In these examples, children were being asked to reformulate understandings of space, place, and land. While white students at the same time were learning similar lessons across Canada, the purpose was different within a boarding school for Indigenous children. Sometimes the creation of place was abstract. Regina School's newspaper recounted one particular celebration of colonial place, where the Governor General and the Prime Minister delivered speeches:

The pictures of Earl Grey and Sir Wilfred [sic] were displayed by the fireworks and then the band played God save the King. So the day closed in upon us with flashes of light and sound enabling us to carry away with us the pictures of the great men who had come to visit us. (*Progress* 14.4:2)

Colonial space here was actively converted into place. From the speeches to the anthem to the fireworks: the holiday aided in transforming supposedly empty space into place. As Banivanua-Mar and Edmonds (2010) state, "It was never enough just to acquire legal title to Indigenous land. Instead it needed to be reimagined and shaped by the colonial eye" (p. 5). Some students were able to push against colonial place-making. One student at Regina School defined the place of Canada in the school newspaper *Progress*:

Canada is a place where Whitemen and Indians and other tribes live . . . The Canadian girls and boys go to school and read of the History about Canada and other parts of the world, and also read out of the Alexandra readers and do

arithmetic and write compositions [and] also write in the copybooks. (18.2:7)

This student mentions Canada includes “Indians and other tribes,” despite the larger homogenizing thrust of school newspapers. And despite the school’s assimilative attempts, this student distinguishes between Indigenous people and white men. Perhaps the thorough description of what “Canadian girls and boys” do at school is meant to contrast the common experience at boarding school compared to schools for non-Indigenous students at this time: academically inferior, with a focus on labour and domestic training. Another student wrote a piece about her home:

My home is near a lake and near it are many trees around it; some poplar and fir trees and all mixed trees in the great woods. My home is just forty miles from the town; but there is a store near w[h]ere we get our mechewin and clothing; also there is a school: not an Industrial school nor a boarding school, and there is a church where all my friends go to . . . I lived in it till my mother died and I came here. There were seven of us children besides mother and father; but six died and I am the only one living and five years ago I came to this school. When I went home to visit I went no more in that home, my father had given it away when my mother died. We had a new house when I went back and I missed the old one very much. (*Progress* 17.4:5)

Unlike schools’ attempts to denigrate Indigenous family life, this composition provides a positive picture of home. This student continues to use the Indigenous word “mechewin”

instead of food, and also—importantly—describes her earlier home as having an on-reserve day school and church with her friends (rather than what she has now).

Furthermore, her description of home is in the present tense, even though she reveals her family has died and no longer owns the home. These examples could be considered brave dismissals of the narrative that Canada was empty until settlers created place.

School newspapers often highlighted the place of the school itself. de Leeuw (2007) argues a school's architecture "transmitted a colonial narrative of non-Aboriginal domination and superiority" and "enveloped" students (pp. 343-344). Lomawaima (2014) also describes how school architecture was imbued "with powerful physical, moral, and spiritual effects on human beings" (p. 149). She writes how schools "segmented and organized space inside and outside of buildings, as design, construction, and furnishings were consciously formulated to maximize their inherent powers to uplift Native pupils" (p. 150). Woolford (2014) observes that school buildings would have been larger than what most children had ever seen and reiterates how "space was used to separate children from opposite-sex siblings and to culturally disorient them, replacing the openness of Indigenous territory and structures with the regulated and compartmentalized space of the classrooms" (p. 41). But Woolford also acknowledges that envelopment was not always totalizing: students sought hiding places "where food could be stored, conversations could go unheard, plans could be made, love could blossom, or tears could be shed."

While school newspapers would sometimes describe the inside of their schools—a new wing or room, new furniture, or a repurposed industrial building—they more often showcased the space of the school's outdoors. As Fiske (2009) suggests, the grounds of a boarding school marked a taming of the surrounding "wilds" of the land (p. 151). Fiske's

observations can be seen in Regina School's own description of its landscaping:

Over five thousand new trees are being sent us this spring by the Forestry Department of the government. These are planting along the east side of the grounds. They consist of Box Elders, Cottonwoods, Elms, and Ash. A liberal tree planting policy has been wisely followed since the early days of the school, and the good results are beginning to show themselves. We have now the handsomest grounds in Regina and many of our trees are as yet only small. In a few years when the ones being set out now have grown, our grounds ought to be very beautiful. (*Progress* 13.3:7)

Battleford School's newspaper, too, boasted that its "large acreage has been put under cultivation, and the prospects of a bountiful yield of wheat, oats and barley are good. The gardens are also coming on splendidly" (4.1:1). As well, *Our Forest Children* reprinted a description of Carlisle School in Pennsylvania:

It would hardly be possible to find a better location for an Indian School than here . . . In fact, there is nothing here to remind the Indian of his aboriginal condition, except the Indian trail from Gettysburg Junction—across the green, through two brickyards, over fences, across a field, through mud, shoe deep . . . Then there bursts upon the view the commodious buildings, arranged around a lovely lawn, the trees, the flowers, everything to make a school attractive. (4.3:204-206)

The article admits that a trace of Indigenous space—a trail—may remain, but only beneath layers of lawn and fence and tree. One of Barbara Birchbark’s articles in *Our Forest Children* also describes the grounds of Shingwauk Home as newly tamed:

One of the little Islands in front of the Home has now become quite a popular resort. A rustic wooden bridge has been built to connect it with the mainland, and it has been nicely cleared—that is to say a good deal of the thick underbrush has been cleared away, and delightful little paths made, twisting and winding by a sign-board pointing to “Readers’ Retreat,” “Bay View,” “Shingwauk View,” etc. (4.5:225)

In this description, the newspaper paints for readers a view: of an idyllic home amongst an outdoors tamed by paths, tourist signs, and constructed viewpoints (e.g., “Bay View”).

Some newspapers’ descriptions combined both the buildings and the grounds. *Our Forest Children* printed a “visit,” conjugated in the first person plural, to Battleford School originally published by the *Saskatchewan Herald*:

We turn off the road at the top of the hill and pass through a large gate in a neat wire fence (put up, as we are informed, by the boys) and enter the school grounds, passing a compact vegetable garden surrounded by palisading and trees planted last spring. We find the boys playing football on our left, and see farther on the lawn tennis court and swings for the girls. The front of the building faces the north-east, and on entering we find ourselves in a lofty hall.

This article, which begins “let us pay a visit,” asks readers to think of themselves as a guest, who moves from the road to the grounds to the inside of the school. *Our Forest Children* also printed the experiences of an actual visitor to its own school:

The Home is about two miles east of the Sault, and is one of the prettiest spots in the world. On the way down we passed a group of small picturesque islands, near the shore, covered with tamarac, spruce and birch, and looking like so many large bouquets in the clear blue river. A little further on, we reached the Home,—a massive stone building, somewhat like an hospital, with a fenced area in front. A little to the right side was the Chapel—a unique little stone building, standing in a beautiful native grove on rising ground, facing the river, and a model place of worship in every way. Over the front gate, a rustic archway is built, with a gabled roof; and the church-yard has a very neat dry stone wall around it. (1.10:1)

The visitor’s impressions—of not only the school’s enveloping structure but also its grounds, chapel, and surrounding area—graced the newspaper’s front page, along with an image of students playing in the snow with the school and its forest in the background (see Figure 15). Wilson even sent photographs of his schools to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London in 1886, which won awards (1.4:3). He also advertised photographs for sale for 35 cents (see Figure 16) titled “SHINGWAUK, CHAPEL and a General View of the Shingwauk Buildings from the river” (4.2:192). In this image, left to right, are the hospital, the Shingwauk Home, the chapel, the bandstand, and the drill hall. The

dock is also visible, as is the rail line from the dock to the school.<sup>58</sup> Importantly, spaces such as the cemetery for children who died at school are not visible in this photograph.

Why would these images and descriptions be of interest to a school newspaper's readership? For one, they perhaps broadcasted the school's assimilative envelopment, but in painterly and seemingly humane strokes. The "picturesque" in the nineteenth century was a popular way of taming or containing land and reframing it as landscape, a representational practice seen in these views. Tourists could gaze onto the school like any other pastoral scene. And as de Leeuw and Fiske illustrate, it would not have been a far leap for readers to understand these scenes of control over land—converting colonial space into place—as a stand-in for the assimilation and control over children. These examples hail readers as part of the conversion, offering impossible, omnipresent perspectives: from the water or both in and outdoors. It could be argued readers were granted visual power over place through these depictions in school newspapers.<sup>59</sup>

School images could also act as what Veracini (2010b) calls "anticipatory geographies," which foresee a place that does not yet exist (p. 179). The very act of describing it, though, is an attempt to will a place into being. One example exists in a bird's-eye-view printed in *Our Forest Children*. The sketch (see Figure 17) depicts Shingwauk Home's entire grounds in existence at the time, including parts newly developed such as the beachfront, "which was formerly a wilderness." The view also

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<sup>58</sup> I thank Adam Stewart for his knowledge of Shingwauk's grounds.

<sup>59</sup> Though the newspapers do not showcase the possibility for the power of school architecture to eventually diminish, survivor fiction such as Wagamese's *Indian Horse* (2010) offers a helpful counternarrative. When the character Saul first attends school he is overwhelmed by the "four-storey red brick building with a cupola bearing a tall white cross as its only adornment" and a stately driveway (pp. 43-44); however when he returns as an adult, the once enveloping structure has been defaced by smashed windows, bullet holes, graffiti, and human excrement (pp. 195-198), perhaps by other former students who also returned to the school grounds. I argue it is helpful to read parts of these newspapers alongside survivor memoir, fiction, and testimony to disrupt the seemingly totalizing narratives offered by school newspapers.

showcases the new field for the school baseball team (the Buckskins) and the brass band. But the birds-eye view also *imagines* place: a new central building with a dining hall, kitchens, and officers' quarters as well as school-rooms; a new girls' school that would be closer to the boys'; and a new laundry facility. The text accompanying the birds-eye view pleads for readers to donate money so that imagined parts of the sketch may be realized (3.10:118-119). Stoler (2009) labels these archival traces "the non-eventful: in drafts of proposals, in unrealized and unrealizable plans, in short-lived experiments, in liabilities and in failed projects. They are rather templates of the present and visions of the future" (p. 106). Shingwauk Home's birds-eye-view was indeed a fantasy—parts of it did not yet exist; but publishing the view coaxed readers into donating money so that plans could materialize. In this way, the imagined space became a realized place.

Wilson's anticipatory geographies became more ambitious in his proposed 9-acre site for a school in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Coming from what Kathryn Oberdeck (2005) calls "archives of the unbuilt environment" are documents of Wilson's concerning his intentions for Sokitaphe School, which began construction in 1890 but never opened. Medicine Hat's local newspaper reported the initial plans:

The building will be constructed of frame and concrete, the timber showing on the outside. It will be 38 x 40 ft with a rear wing of 17 x 23 ft and two stories in height. It will overlook the river from which it is distant about three hundred yards. The ground floor will be divided into a porch and hall, superintendent's sitting room and office, dining room, kitchen and pantry.



But despite what appear as firm plans, locals recounted how “at one blow the whole bottom fell out of the project” due to a lack of government funding. According to one resident, “Wilson had to bear the sight of the failure of all his plans.” While the building stood vacant, the local church attempted to continue, issuing a 4-page pamphlet advertising the building as “substantially built of concrete, roofed in, and fitted with some of the interior woodwork. It still requires doors, windows, flooring, and plastering” (see Figure 18). The pamphlet did not work—the building was eventually pulled down and some of its material was attached to the church. In 1910, the land was sold to the city.

Why pay attention to the site of a school that never opened? One answer would be that the failure of the Medicine Hat school confirms the thesis of *A National Crime* (1999): government funding was devastatingly unreliable. But a longer answer would point to how this failed fantasy could perhaps expose the same techniques of the schools that did open: imagine the place and it will materialize. Wilson published a sketch of himself assuming the pose of a reclining viewer, consistent with the nineteenth-century picturesque, at the proposed site of the Medicine Hat school (see Figure 19). Wilson adopts the position of the Rückenfigur: a figure in an image who stares at a view, and whom the viewer of the image can see from behind. Instead of facing us, the Rückenfigur faces the same view we look at. In this way, the Rückenfigur is “not just a represented object in the picture, but also the embodied subject of the aesthetic experience—we look *with*, rather than merely *at*, the Rückenfigur” (Prettejohn, 2005, p. 56). With this method of representation, the view of the figure and the audience are implied to be the same. Wilson’s sketch could be understood as inviting the reader of the school newspaper in which the sketch was published to literally see what Wilson sees in his imagining of the

new school. His sketch is almost identical to a common photograph of the bridge at the time (see Figure 20), except that he has inserted himself, leisurely on a hill gazing at the town of Medicine Hat from the north end, across the Saskatchewan River. The location is unsurprising: the patch is picturesque like the views Wilson imagined for his other institutions. But this space—as yet unfilled by a school—is also near a city. As Wilson described elsewhere, he believed “the right place for an Indian institution to be [is] in a *White centre*, where the pupils can learn trades, mingle with white people, attend an English Church, and be as far as possible separated entirely from their old friends and old habits and associations” (*Our Forest Children* 2.7:21). And yet as we see from a photograph of the view from town looking towards the school (see Figure 21), it was isolated from town. The only way to cross the river at this time would have been by ferry, by foot when it froze over, or by illegally crossing the rail bridge visible in the image.<sup>60</sup>

But Wilson’s rendering of the failed school offers more than a comment on the site in relation to the town. Wilson created place for readers even when it never existed:

There is the very spot where the Institution is to be built, right on the banks of the River Saskatchewan, on the opposite side from the town . . . See how anxiously a certain gentleman is gazing on the spot from his grassy couch on the hill top, picturing in his mind the three handsome buildings which are to arise by-and-by, on those three vacant patches. (3.11:130)

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<sup>60</sup> I thank Philip Pype at the Esplanade Museum for these details.

Through the Rückenfigur, Wilson could be understood as suggesting that the reader of the school newspaper also should feel anxious about the vacant patches. The reader, like Wilson in the image, is directed to gaze on the space and imagine a place. As is the case with colonial spatial practices, the first step was often to describe space as wastefully vacant prior to the visionary planning of a settler. Like the images and descriptions of a school's grounds, Wilson's sketch suggests a possible offer of visual power to readers. In addition Wilson offers an amateur's sketch rather than a photograph or a map, perhaps situating himself as both in control (literally commanding a view) and yet not a professional. This simultaneous assertion and yet denial of power was seen in chapter 3, where principals described school newspapers as modest, amateur, little, and timid. Yet from Figure 21, the reverse of Wilson's sketch, we see that the hills he positions himself sitting on are in fact quite high. So despite his seemingly amateur sketch, Wilson gives himself an almost impossible birds-eye-view of the proposed school all-the-while framing himself as merely sketching out an idea, anxiously sitting on his "grassy couch." In Medicine Hat, Wilson's colonial imagining of place never materialized; but his techniques of imagining place were the same as in plans that did.

Newspapers did not just mention their own schools but also others in Canada, forming a loose network. Such a network is difficult to argue given the fierce competition amongst schools for limited funds and "denominational rivalry" (J. R. Miller, 1996, p. 132). *Our Forest Children* warned readers that the gains Jesuits had made in boarding schooling could prove disastrous and urged all Protestants to put aside their differences and unite or else "the Roman Catholics will have it all their own way" (2.7:21). The newspaper occasionally acknowledged the work of Catholics in boarding schooling

(1.8:1; 3.1:46) and advocated working “harmoniously together, sink[ing] all petty feelings of rivalry and jealousy” (3.11:140). At the same time, it appears Wilson’s understanding of “opening arms” meant to other Protestant denominations. For Wilson, Canada “must be a *Protestant country*” (3.1:46); the network Wilson envisioned, then, was exclusive. Wilson suggested having a common uniform amongst all Protestant schools, “So that whether at school or at home, traveling by steamboat or traveling by rail, they would always be known and recognized” (2.8:27). Wilson also proposed “Our Indian Homes” monograms on all uniforms and a flag (2.11:38). He recommended himself as “chief” and constructed “general rules which are to govern all the Homes.” He had hoped to institute a local superintendent for each school, with monthly reports and financial statements sent back to his head office in Sault Ste. Marie.

School newspapers reveal collaboration amongst other Canadian boarding schools. The principal of Rupert’s Land School paid Wilson a visit when he first began so Wilson could go “thoroughly into the matter, showing him our book of rules, our various publications, printed forms, slips, &c, and explained all our plans and system of management” (2.8:27). Newspapers would also provide updates on other Canadian schools. *Our Forest Children* apprised readers on the progress at Elkhorn and in Medicine Hat but also schools with which Wilson had no ties: Battleford, Mohawk, Mount Elgin, Rupert’s Land, and Qu’Appelle. Battleford School’s newspaper mentioned schools in Calgary (4.4:1; 7.2:3) and the Pas (7.2:4). It also reported a fire at Washakada (4.6:1; 4.8:2) and the appointments of principals at St. Paul’s and Middle Church Schools (5.3:4). Regina School’s newspaper described the particulars of other schools—from the ventilation system of Mt. Elgin’s School (3.71:10) to the garden at Brandon Industrial

School (17.9:7). An 1898 issue of Battleford School's newspaper reveals a deeper connection: at the opening of a new school at the Pas in Manitoba, the school laid the foundation stone and sang in both English and Cree, with speeches from clergy, politicians, and teachers. The ceremony also included burying newspapers in a time capsule, including the Battleford School's newspaper (*The Guide* 7.2:4). The quotidian of Canadian schools arguably mattered little in and of itself. But put together, perhaps such articles projected not individual schools but a larger *system* extending across the newly forming place of Canada, a system both depicted and aided by school newspapers.

### **Boarding Schools and the Place of England**

While newspapers could be viewed as converting supposedly "vacant" space into Canadian place, this place was unsurprisingly British in origin. Canada of course began as several British colonies (becoming a dominion after 1867), many of the school principals were British-born, and some of the school newspapers had a British readership. Even after immigration from England decreased, immigrants from outside England understood themselves as British (Buckner, 2008; Martin, 2011). It could be argued newspapers also represented British place because *the schools* represented British place. Newspapers frequently mentioned their schools' devotion to Queen Victoria, praising her at picnics (*Na-Na-Kwa* 11.6), the close of summer holidays (*Our Forest Children* 4.5:225), and graduation (*Progress* 3.77:7). Most school celebrations would include singing "God Save the Queen" or "Queen, Flag, and Country" (*The Guide* 7.10:1; 7.11:1). School newspapers ran articles praising Queen Victoria's longevity (*The Guide*, 4.7:2; 5.6:2) and the growth of Christianity under her "splendid reign" (5.11:2). Newspapers further commented on the Queen in the curriculum: a teacher from

Battleford School composed a song praising her (*The Guide* 6.6:1). Regina School's newspaper also reported, "A large book of 498 pages, entitled *Queen Victoria. Her Life and Rign* [sic] has been in great demand by both boys and girls for the past month" (3.80:8). In these instances, schools imported the ultimate symbol of England.

Newspapers also praised Victoria through image. Upon the visit of an inspector to Battleford School in 1899, one student created an oil painting of the Queen (*The Guide* 7.5:1). Its newspaper remarked that the school "felt proud" and thought the painting should be given to the Queen (7.8:1). Communities also received images. Kitamaat Home's newspaper related how Chief Shakes of Kitkatlah received "a life sized picture of [the Queen] in oils set in a very magnificent massive gilt frame" (*Na-Na-Kwa* 14.2). This cover featured a photograph of the Queen (see Figure 22), though the community learned late in their "isolated corner of her wide domain." Regina School also received a portrait and this note from the Lieutenant Governor of the Northwest Territories:

[The Lieutenant Governor] is sure that no artificial stimulus is necessary, to awaken sentiments of love and loyalty in the breasts of all true Canadians, and well knows that the teachers and pupils will offer a fervent prayer to-night for the safety, welfare and happiness of Queen Victoria, whose sixtieth anniversary of sovereignty will be commemorated. (*Progress* 3.80:9)

So the portrait was an important part of the jubilee, but the giver of the portrait makes it clear that its "artificial stimulus" was unnecessary. The added layer is the lieutenant-governor gives this image to students at a school devoted to cultivating "true Canadians."

The image of Queen Victoria also entered Shingwauk Home. To celebrate the Queen's jubilee,<sup>61</sup> students at the school wrote a letter on "two sheets of gilt edged cardboard" accompanied by a watercolour sketch Wilson made of the school grounds with "some Indian wigwams in the back ground." The letter read:

We the pupils of the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes desire to congratulate our Queen on her Jubilee. We wish to relate your Majesty about our procession this morning; we took your picture, and above it the bible to indicate that always to put first God whatever we do in this world; our teacher had told us before you gave a present to a prince from Africa, and you said "This is the secret of England's greatness." You so love the bible and we love you. When we got [to] the town we all turned to the people and [sang] the Jubilee hymn.

The letter concludes with student names and nationalities: Ojibway, Ottawa, Sioux, Pottawatomie, Blackfoot, and Delaware. Below the letter, *Our Forest Children* printed the Queen's acknowledgement of the student letter, less than one month later (1.6:2). The newspaper reveals no less than three images associated with the school's jubilee event: the picture of Victoria held under a Bible as the children marched; Wilson's watercolour, featuring the trinity of school, hospital, and church and signifiers of being Indigenous ("some Indian wigwams") symbolically in the background; and the 1863 oil painting "The Secret of England's Greatness" by Thomas Jones Barker (see Figure 23), with which the children were familiar. The painting depicts Queen Victoria presenting a Bible

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<sup>61</sup> For jubilee celebrations in Quebec, see Stanworth (2014, pp. 185–220).

to a bowing East African ambassador. The painting is based on the legend that when an African or Indian prince asked Queen Victoria what the secret behind her powerful empire was, she passed a Bible and proclaimed the book “the secret of England’s greatness.” The phrase itself was commonplace in the latter half of the nineteenth century, particularly amongst Protestants, and the image was widely circulated (Barnes, 2013, pp. 2–3). Here, image mattered in both preparing for and celebrating the jubilee.

Not all jubilee events were imaged-based. Battleford School’s newspaper reported how its event began at the Barracks with a speech from a major, with dinner and games back at the school (*The Guide* 6.1:2). Regina School students listened to a reverend lecture on “her Majesty’s Canadian Realm,” and the newspaper made sure to mention students were in “full force,” listening attentively for 1.5 hours and even asking for more (3.80:8-9). The newspaper transcribed part of the speech:

Before another sixty years passed, [the reverend] said, the Indian of Canada would no longer represent the teepee; but would be possessors of civilized homes, surrounded by the adjuncts and joining in the customs of civilization, and imbued with the spirit of Christianity, equal in the sight of their sovereign and equal in intelligence and loyalty with their white brethren. (3.80:9)

At Regina School, the jubilee was an opportunity to forecast 60 years ahead with a bleak prediction: Indigenous peoples in many ways would be re-placed by markers of England.

But the jubilee celebration at Battleford School may also have been a chance for parents to see their children. The school’s newspaper reported, “Between 1100 and 1200



Indians were camped near the race course to take part in the ‘Diamond Jubilee’ proceedings.” They observed the Sun Dance for three days prior to the school’s jubilee celebrations, even though the *Indian Act* of 1885 prohibited it. The school newspaper framed their visit as ephemeral—that upon their departure, “nothing is now seen of their ‘Canvas Town’ but the old fire places” (5.12:1). But students’ articles tell a different story. Many children remarked how they were able to see their friends and family. One student wrote he “was very glad to see all my friends yesterday.” Another explained his “father came here on 17<sup>th</sup> of June and I was very glad because I have not seen him for two years.” Yet another student wrote he “was very glad to see my father and mother when they came here to see us.” And one student admitted he was “very glad to see one of my friends from Stony Lake”; this friend had the duty of delivering word from home that the student’s “father is sick so that he couldn’t come and see” him. Another boy explained he “went over to the tents and I saw my parents.”

Some students mention visits of family more guardedly. One student writes, “During this month several visitors have arrived for the purpose of seeing their children and I am sure they felt happy to see them in a healthy state.” This student distances himself: he describes family, perhaps his own, as visitors. Maybe his own family did not visit him; still, it appears unusual that he does not include himself as a student with the first person plural like his other classmates. As well, the student assumes rather than admits to knowing for himself that parents were happy. Still, he writes that the reason “visitors” arrived was to see their children, not necessarily to celebrate the jubilee. This entry is similar in its distant tone to the newspaper’s own reportage:

An almost innumerable company of others from the surrounding country, were among the visitors who came to see their children, nieces, nephews, brothers and sisters, grandchildren [sic] and other ‘relatives’ during the month.

The newspaper’s voice, as opposed to most of the students’, speaks in the third person and puts “relatives” in scare quotes, as if they are not truly related. However, more students wrote in the first person. Though they also mentioned the weather of the celebrations and the prizes won, students make far more mention of the opportunity to see family. The jubilee brought Indigenous families back together despite the school’s goals of separation. In this way, it appears as though the jubilee represented more than what the school intended. Vine Deloria Jr. (2003) describes how this phenomenon was not unique: “When people saw that they could no longer practice their ceremonies in peace,” he writes, “they sought subterfuge” (p. 240). He explains how Indigenous peoples in the U.S. would choose an American or Christian holiday, “thus fulfilling their own religious obligations while white bystanders glowed proudly to see a war dance or rain dance done on their behalf.” Child (2014a) provides an example of how Red Lake people in Minnesota held their powwow on July 4 “as a clever ploy to continue holding traditional gatherings in an era when such activities were being banned and suppressed” (p. 125). Perhaps similarly, parents and children at Battleford School subversively used Christian and colonial celebrations such as the jubilee for their own purposes.

Shingwauk Home’s golden jubilee celebration was the most elaborate: a visit to Montreal for the Jubilee Sunday School Demonstration. Wilson announced in *Our Forest Children* that 20 boys and 10 girls at his school had been invited to join 12,000 other

Sunday schoolers, including those from the “blind and deaf and dumb Institutions, also Chinese, Japanese.” The children were to gather in a parade beginning at McGill, followed by religious services at the Victoria Skating Rink. The Fisk Jubilee Singers also performed (*Canada Presbyterian* 16:41:657), an African-American a cappella group from the Historically Black Fisk University in Tennessee. The singers had toured the world, introducing slave hymns to primarily white audiences (Ward, 2001, p. xii; xiv).<sup>62</sup> These diverse groups—Shingwauk students, the hearing impaired, African-American university students, and Chinese and Japanese groups—performed for white settlers who came to celebrate that the sun never set on the British Empire. But when the Fisk Singers sang for Indigenous peoples in Australia and New Zealand, it resulted in a “major emotional, crying exchange” of mutual understanding (pp. 390-391). How did Shingwauk students react to hearing such songs of survivance? While reactions are speculative, Wilson outlined his own motivations for participating. For him, the trip “afforded us the opportunity of bringing our Indian Children face to face with a vast concourse of white people and white children. They will see what our pupils look like and be able to judge a little of their capabilities” (*Our Forest Children* 1.7:2-3). At least in his statements in the newspaper, Wilson’s motivations for the trip were less about the jubilee or opportunities for cross-student contact than showcasing the school.

*Our Forest Children* relayed for readers how inclement weather forced the demonstration indoors. Still, each Sunday school carried a flag and a banner, and when

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<sup>62</sup> When the group traveled to Canada they might have expected refuge from the racism they faced in the southern U.S. But in Toronto, four hotels denied the Fisk Jubilee Singers accommodation. The fifth accepted but overcharged them (Ward, 2001, p. 387).

the Shingwauk children crossed the platform “an immense cheer went up” (1.8:2). The programme included readings of scripture and the Lord’s Prayer by children. Shingwauk students also performed tableaux. The students each received “a jubilee cup—each cup being [a] *simile* of those given in Hyde Park, London, in the last. They will be highly prized by our young Indians.” Two years after the trip, Wilson advertised photographs in *Our Forest Children*: one titled “JUBILEE DAY PROCESSION—Wild Horses on Horseback” and a group portrait of the children who went to Montreal (see Figure 24), taken in Ottawa (the second part of the jubilee trip). Wilson sold this photograph in a 7.5 x 10.5 inch format for 50 cents, or for free if readers would send \$3 and the names and addresses of six new subscribers. “The block from which the engraving is printed has been very kindly loaned by the Secretaries of the Colonial and Continental Church Society,” allowing Wilson to print them for profit (3.4:22-23).

The image features 29 students, some standing and some lying down or sitting. In the centre sits Wilson with his daughter on his left. Students hold several props, including a wheel, chain and hook, and a picture stand—metonyms for the school’s industries. Wilson names every student and his or her nationality and home territory (e.g., “Ojebway, from Walpole Island”). The article also informs readers where, two years after the jubilee trip, students are now. Some were still Shingwauk students and bookmakers or weavers or telegraph operators in training. Some students from the jubilee trip were now employed: two were teachers; one a blacksmith. A few students had transferred schools. The newspaper listed other students as simply having left the school or “back among [their] people,” leaving it unclear whether Wilson lost track or whether he deemed their lives unworthy of reporting. Two students were listed as dead. One was very sick.

Though Wilson used the photograph two years after the jubilee to highlight assimilation and gain subscribers, it captures devastating statistics: three out of 29 young people were gravely sick or dead. The entire celebration—from the flags and the tableaux and the cups to the photograph two years later—worked to establish the place of England within the place of Canada. Though *Our Forest Children* presents the jubilee one way, we do not know how the diverse groups who assembled in Montreal considered the experience.

The place of England was also poured into the seeming void of space with other celebrations of the monarchy. Schools celebrated the Queen's birthday by flying flags, holding processions, and races. Battleford School preceded its annual celebratory picnic in 1896 by electing two girls as May Queens. Children skipped, tug-of-warred, and played cricket and danced around the maypole (*The Guide* 4.12:1). Newspapers also commemorated Victoria's death. Kitamaat Home observed it with a purple wreath of flowers made by the children. The community held a procession starting from the school, where everyone was given "a memento in the form of a linen badge with a picture of the Queen" (*Na-Na-Kwa* 15.2). At King Edward's coronation celebration, Kitamaat Home's newspaper remarked, "The native races of the British Empire are loyal, and take great interest in such an event," relating how the community celebrated with memento badges, a procession, picnic, firecrackers, and "God Save the King" (19.2). One student even wrote a composition (19.4). Kitamaat Home's newspaper insisted, "Indians as a nation are just as loyal to the great totemic symbol of the Empire the British Lion, as they are, individual tribes, to their particular crests" (24.5). Such purported enthusiasm can be read in multiple and often contradictory ways: as perhaps what the newspaper had hoped—that the supposed emptiness of the space of Canada was being filled by notions of empire,

but also perhaps in another way: that Indigenous people in Kitamaat saw themselves as participating in a nation-to-nation relationship with the Queen.

### **The Place of America in Boarding Schools**

But more than England and empire, Canadian school newspapers consulted with and compared themselves to the place of America. While comparisons amongst the boarding schools of Canada, Australia, or New Zealand may be more common, I argue particular attention must be paid to Canada and the U.S. For one, they share a border, which divided and divides Indigenous families and communities. As one example, Michel Hogue (2015) writes of the Plains Metis<sup>63</sup> people in the nineteenth century. Hogue observes how “their migrations back and forth across the hardening international boundary drew out the contradictions in settler colonial projects in the United States and Canada and prompted sharp questions about belonging” (p. 5). Although Hogue calls the border a fiction, it had real consequences, delineating where and if one could hunt, trade, live, and whether one could join treaty or vote (p. 8). Hogue also remarks how despite the ways the border fractured communities, the Plains Metis used the border to thwart authorities such as the Hudson’s Bay Company. And family ties persisted, forming “an alternate vision of community and belonging to those preferred by colonial states” (p. 9). In the late nineteenth century, Indigenous peoples called the border the “medicine line,” a term likely first used by the Sioux at the end of the 1870s when Sitting Bull and others escaped the U.S. cavalry by crossing to Canada after the battle of Little Bighorn (Rees, 2009, p. 5). The Blackfoot, too, considered the line “a thing with magical political

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<sup>63</sup> Hogue does not use the *accent aigu* because the people he writes about do not uniformly self-identify as Métis.

power” (LaDow, 2002, p. 40), which they used to their advantage. The Canada-U.S. border still fractures communities today: Audra Simpson’s (2014) work untangles the “interpretive gymnastics” this border represents for Indigenous peoples (p. 193).

Wagamese (2010) speaks of a lack of borders in his own history:

There were no straight lines in Ojibwa culture, so there were no grids or maps or delineations to assume or claim territory . . . For the Ojibwa and the other native groups across North America, land could not be divided. It was whole, as defined by the Creator. (p. 53)

The border between Canada and the U.S. began and continues to separate traditionally connected communities, moving away from the wholeness Wagamese records.

Despite this shared border, comparisons often focus more on the border of Mexico and the U.S. When studies do consider Indigenous peoples and the Canada-U.S. border (S. Evans, 2006; McCrady, 2006; McManus, 2005), as Woolford (2014) points out boarding schools are rarely compared (p. 29). An exception includes *Indian Subjects* (2014), edited by Brenda J. Child and Brian Klopotek. This text is one of few studies that “pushes toward more hemispheric and global conversations” (p. x), which includes North America but also places such as Peru and Venezuela. But usually, studies on boarding school history frequently discuss either schools in Canada *or* schools in the U.S. One reason may be scholars do not see the U.S. as a settler colonial nation because it severed ties with England. But as Walter Hixson (2013) states, “the United States should be perceived and analyzed *fundamentally* [original emphasis] as a settler colonial society”

(p. 1). Another barrier in comparing American and Canadian systems is their significant differences. The American system wound down earlier, so fewer generations of families attended in the U.S. As well, Canadian schools never experienced a reform period like the U.S., where challenges to the assimilationist agenda began in the 1930s. Children also entered school at a younger age in Canada, and U.S. parents had more input as to what school their children would attend. American boarding schools also had more of a military rather than religious foundation. But as Woolford notes, many of these differences “resulted in a similar treatment for students” (p. 37). Another barrier for comparison is the narrative that Canada’s brand of colonialism was less violent, which Mackey (1999) calls the “Benevolent Mountie Myth” (p. 1). Kiera L. Ladner (2014), too, acknowledges the variations but insists that in both countries “Indigenous peoples were completely decimated; they were extirpated from their lands, and their territories were occupied” (p. 228)—the differences do not change this fundamental similarity.

I argue in this final section that comparisons between boarding schools for Indigenous children in the U.S. and Canada matter as well because these newspapers reveal sustained consultation. I see school newspapers as suggesting the two systems did not operate on parallel tracks but were in conversation, keenly interested in each other. Veracini (2010a) calls such settler-colonial consultation “peer reviewing” (p. 24). Formal peer reviewing between Canada and the U.S. began in 1879, when John A. MacDonald commissioned Nicholas Flood Davin to conduct research in the U.S. on its form of “aggressive civilization.” Based on his American travels, Davin outlined how schools might be funded through church-government partnerships. Some of Davin’s recommendations were followed, such as preference for industrial over day schools and



compulsory attendance; other recommendations were not, such as regular inspections and teachers hired directly by government and paid well. Milloy (1999) cautions that we cannot think of the Davin report as *the* text authoring boarding schools (p. 52). Still, when Davin lectured at Regina School in 1897 its newspaper noted that the beginning of boarding schools for Indigenous children in Canada “was in a measure due to [Davin’s] report” (*Progress* 4.8:8). So if we can conceive of colonial peer reviewing beginning with Davin, what do school newspapers reveal about later cross-border consultations?

Canadian school newspapers often printed American understandings of Indigenous issues such as allotments or the legacy of Sitting Bull. Washakada School’s newspaper even had a column titled “From Over the Line: Interesting Items from the United States.” Commonly, Canadian newspapers zeroed in on American Indian educational news by summarizing conferences, policies, and reports. Often, these inclusions began with a preface about how American contexts had relevance for Canada. Battleford School’s newspaper, for instance, relayed perspectives from the El Reno Indian Teachers’ Convention, which pushed for compulsory education and separation of parent and child (*The Guide* 4.9.2). Newspapers also reported on the mundane aspects of American boarding schools—a fire or the trend of elaborate graduation ceremonies, for instance. They occasionally profiled opportunities for Indigenous students in Canada to study in the U.S., like one pupil of Regina School who went on to attend Hampton Institute in Virginia (*Progress* 17.8:3). But the practice was disputed: Regina School noted, “It would be better if any of our pupils who desire to take a more advanced course than can be given in the present system of Indian schools, would go to the High Schools, Universities, and Colleges that are available in our own land” (18.9:1).

A common refrain of Canadian school newspapers was that America was “doing” colonialism better. One of Wilson’s biggest critiques of Canada was its lack of money for boarding schools. The first page of the first issue of *Our Forest Children* plainly stated that Canadians had “in all probability the same troubles in store for us that they have been suffering for so long in the United States” (1.1:1). In a letter to the founder of Carlisle School in Pennsylvania, Richard Pratt, Wilson explained he wanted “our government to take up the Indian cause the same way that your government is doing in the States.” Wilson praised American philanthropy, implying Canada should follow suit:

How is it that in the United States, notwithstanding all that has been said of their cruel and unjust treatment of the Indians, they have some 32 large Institutions for Indian children, notably the Carlisle Institution in Pennsylvania for 600 pupils, which receives \$80,000 a year from the United States Government, and \$10,000 a year from the United States public? (1.6:1)

The Benevolent Mountie Myth appears here, but with a twist: America may have had a violent past, but its government and public now pay for schools. Wilson’s argument that the government should pay for schools ran counter to the larger belief of the day—that Canada should not fund non-Indigenous schools so parents could better control education. Wilson’s argument perhaps reveals how inadequate he viewed Indigenous parents of making decisions about their children’s education.

Such peer reviewing was not always about money. Though *Our Forest Children* remarked Canadians and Americans were “*all one* in our work for God,” it believed that

the U.S. had more “good people championing the Indian cause” (3.1:1). Wilson praised the U.S. for its split day between labour and academics as well as its outing system, where students would spend their summers working for a white family. The newspaper also lauded the U.S.’s small ratio of Catholic-run schools and its groups, such as the Women’s National Indian Association, the Syracuse Indian Association, the New Haven Indian Association, and the Pittsburg Indian Association, asking “why have we nothing of the kind in Canada” (3.1:47; 3.13:176). Wilson also asked why the U.S. but not Canada employed special police to retrieve school runaways (2.11:38). Battleford School’s newspaper also praised the U.S. for providing education to children who had a white father and an Indigenous mother (*The Guide* 4.11:2). Regina School’s newspaper, too, stated, “The American people are interested in their Indian population as they never were before” (*Progress* 3.77:10).

Occasionally, newspapers featured Indigenous perspectives. When Wilson shared with Chief Buhkwujjenene his findings on American spending, the Chief was “gratified to hear that the Americans had so completely turned round in favour of the Indians” but doubted the Canadian government “cares enough for the Indians” (*Our Forest Children* 1.2.3). In stark contrast, one Regina School article quoted poet Pauline Johnson:

The Indians are so handicapped in the United States, by ill government and erroneous methods introduced by the white people, that I fear it will be many years before they accomplish what the Canadian Indians have done. You see, we Canadians are respected by our government, and so considerately used that we advance much more rapidly than when we had the set-backs that the unfortunate

American Indians suffer. (*Progress* 3.83:2)

Unlike Chief Buhkwujjenene, Johnson saw the U.S. as holding back Indigenous peoples, setting them behind those in a country whose government respected them. In comparison to the frequent and near-unanimous support Canadian publications had for American policy, its scant inclusion of Indigenous perspectives remained more divided.

Yet American publications only occasionally mentioned Canada. An 1885 article from Carlisle School devoted several pages to “Canada and her Indians,” mentioning Louis Riel and the “uprising” (*Morning Star* 5.10:2-4). The newspaper described how the U.S. should look to Canada for “how it should be done.” But according to the newspaper, Canada was never superior: its “inhospitable” climate allowed “relations between the original and incoming inhabitants [to] have more time to adjust themselves.” Other articles attributed Canada’s “greater quiet” to the low turnover of Indian Affairs employees (5.10:4), less impact of the whiskey trade, and Canada’s perceived fairness. But the praise was not unanimous: one issue reprinted the opinion, “The Canadian Government is doing nothing whatever for most of the Indians of the Mackenzie basin” (9.10:7). Despite the applause, most praise in school newspapers flowed north to south.

Canadian schools kept informed of the goings-on of American institutions in one way by reading American newspapers—perhaps even voraciously. Most Canadian reportage on America was not original but clipped directly from American publications, though was not always credited.<sup>64</sup> Both *Our Forest Children* and *Progress* had whole sections devoted to American school clippings; other Canadian newspapers simply

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<sup>64</sup> Clipping from American publications by Canadian publications was not uncommon, seen in newspapers such as Ryerson’s *Journal of Education*.

blended these with their own content.<sup>65</sup> Canadian newspapers especially clipped from Carlisle's many publications, to which even Canada's Department of Indian Affairs subscribed (DIA, 1899, p. 695). Canadian schools accessed American newspapers through paper exchanges—one school would trade its newspaper with another, just like other literary societies at the time. Some of these exchanges remained within Canada: Battleford School swapped with Regina School, for instance. However, Canadian schools were more likely to clip from and exchange with an American publication. Regina School boasted of having fifty exchanges (1895, p. 176), which included newspapers from a whopping 18 states (*Progress* 3.84:6-7). In 1888 alone, Shingwauk Home's exchange list included Santee School and Genoa School (Nebraska), Hampton Institute (Virginia), Sisseton School (South Dakota), Muskogee Mission (Oklahoma), two newspapers from Carlisle, and more: it asked "to receive any other papers published in the interests of the Indians, either in the United States or in Canada" (2.8:28). Though a Canadian newspaper's clipping of an American article typically meant endorsement, there were exceptions. A student at Battleford School disagreed with a reprinted Nebraska newspaper's claim that Indigenous children were incapable of comprehending math. He stated, "Most white teachers go the wrong way about their work in teaching mathematics. The Indian's head is every bit as good as the white man's" (*The Guide* 7.9:1). But more often, Canadian schools reprinted American articles with which they agreed.

Canadian schools may have been interested in American school newspapers for several reasons. For one, they provided free reading material in underfunded institutions

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<sup>65</sup> *Our Forest Children* also reprinted excerpts from the serialized fiction of Carlisle School's newspaper *Indian Helper*, which was called *Stiya* (4.2:190). Like M.O.T.B.S., Mariana Burgess wrote *Stiya* (though under a pseudonym). Katanski (2005) and Fear-Segal (2007) view the narrative of *Stiya* as an extension of M.O.T.B.S.—a warning of what happens to children when they return to their family and reservation.

promoting literacy. Wilson also thought American exchanges meant he would “be able to keep our readers informed of the good work going on across the border” (1.5:3- 4). *Our Forest Children* advised readers to “subscribe for some of these little papers published in the States so that they may see how wide awake people are across the border in dealing with the vexed Indian question,” offering the titles and prices of his recommendations (1.7:4). Exchanges were also a form of mutual praise. A Canadian newspaper might applaud an American newspaper for superior printing or content. Battleford School’s newspaper, for instance, called *Indian News* from Nebraska “one of our highly valued exchanges” (*The Guide* 7.9:1) and the *Indian Helper* from Carlisle “one of our exchanges [that] is always read with great interest” (7.2:1). Regina School’s newspaper called Carlisle’s *Red Man* “always brimful of encouragement for the Indian” (*Progress* 3.80:3). Mentioning these exchanges accomplished several things: it boasted to Canadian readers the breadth and worldliness of a school’s reading material. As well, it was a plug—Canadian readers might have subscribed after reading these pseudo-advertisements. These “shout-outs” also demonstrate the I-scratch-your-back mentality of the exchange—any schools reading the praise may wish, too, to subscribe. Sometimes, praising an American exchange was an underhanded form of self-promotion. *Our Forest Children* stated the U.S. had more newspapers than Canada devoted to Indigenous peoples:

We know of no other periodical in Canada that is undertaking this work. In the United States there are numbers of papers published in their interests, societies in operation for maintaining their rights; but in Canada we look in vain for anything of this kind. Not one paper is there, so far as we are aware, except our humble

little FOREST CHILDREN, published in behalf of the Indians. (3.1:45).

Here, Wilson's praise for American newspapers could be read as self-aggrandizing.

Finally, praising American newspapers reinforced the image of the network of schools on both sides of the border. Listing how many American publications a Canadian school was reading offered the impression that schools were not operating in isolation.

Canadian newspapers were being read south of the border, too. As *Our Forest Children* explained, American Indian school newspapers “have nearly all of them from time made mention of our work here at the Sault St. Marie, and the pupils of these Institutions in the States correspond with our pupils” (1.7:3). Canadian schools typically reprinted any praise offered by an American school. For instance, Battleford School's newspaper reprinted when a Nebraska School called it “one of the brightest of Indian school papers” (*The Guide* 7.5:4). Shingwauk Home, too, reprinted a Carlisle shout-out:

Boys and girls! Wouldn't you like to have a little paper called OUR FOREST CHILDREN, printed at an Indian School, away up in Canada, by Rev. EF Wilson, Principal of the Shingwauk Home? It is only ten cents a year, and Dr. Given is getting up a club. Give him your name and ten cents and let us keep up a brotherly feeling between the two schools. (*Our Forest Children* 1.10:12)

The praise could be construed as almost exoticizing Shingwauk Home—an “Indian School, away up in Canada.” Because this praise was in *Indian Helper* (Carlisle's student publication), naming Wilson was likely less important than for Wilson to read that Pratt

had levied praise publicly. Similarly, Battleford School's newspaper reprinted a letter from Carlisle. After reading in an earlier issue of Battleford School's 18 honour students, one printer at Carlisle wanted to address 18 copies of *The Indian Helper* personally to them. Battleford School thanked Carlisle for its "fraternal action." Such "brotherly feeling" or "fraternal action" is complicated: there *are* Indigenous relations preexisting the colonial border; what is more, these schools actively sought to disrupt relations, separating children from parents, siblings from one another, and students who spoke the same language. And yet, through exchanges, both American and Canadian schools claimed to cultivate what could be considered an enforced fraternity—a colonial relation.

Some articles hinted at relationships that preexisted the border. One issue of Battleford School's newspaper reprinted an article presumably from Chemawa Indian School in Oregon. The reprint explained the American Chemawa students read there was also a Chemawawin in Canada: "Chemawa sends greetings to Chemawawin its Northern neighbor and hopes that it will succeed in all its noble undertakings" (*The Guide* 7.9:1). Rather than interrogate the unnaturalness of the colonial border, these greetings perhaps guise themselves as thanks to the newspapers that such relations were uncovered. Articles also asked whether Indigenous people on either side of the border were related. *Our Forest Children* profiled a lecture given by ethnologist Arthur Chamberlain, who argued, "The question of the relation of the Canadian aborigines to those of the United States was pointed out as being of very great importance" (3.12:155). Some of Wilson's ethnographic work attempted to uncover these connections, for instance the similarity between Apaches people in the Southwestern U.S. and Sarcee people in the Canadian Northwest (4.3:209). In another issue Wilson appeared surprised Ojibway nations were



in the states of Michigan and Minnesota (rather than the inverse) yet also Lake Winnipeg. School newspapers reconfigured what space was natural and what was alien (1.12:1). American school newspapers occasionally praised Canadian ones. Carlisle's *Morning Star* praised *Our Forest Children* and Wilson (8.11:3; 9.5:2). The newspaper of Haskell Institute in Kansas also mentioned that Regina School's newspaper "contains many items of interest about Indians both of the United States and Canada" (*Indian Leader* 1.3.2). It even reprinted a graduation address from Regina School's newspaper (1.6:3). More frequently, though, newspaper-based peer reviewing remained one-sided.

Out of all American Indian institutions, Canadian newspapers most closely kept tabs on Carlisle School in Pennsylvania. The fascination may have stemmed from Carlisle's reputation as America's first federally funded, off-reservation school. But Canadian schools may have also heard more about it: Carlisle had eight newspapers<sup>66</sup> filled with Carlisle-related news, and many Canadian schools subscribed. Canadian newspapers followed Carlisle's policies, attendance statistics, English-only rules, and funding. Canadian schools even reported the quotidian: from Carlisle's choir and football team to the school doctor's death. *Our Forest Children* even mentioned when a dove took residence in Carlisle's hospital (3.12:159). Battleford School argued that the Carlisle way "can be, and is being, accomplished in our Schools" (*The Guide* 6.7:3).

Such fascination is no more evident than in *Our Forest Children*, where Wilson would list the ways Carlisle and Pratt influenced him. Pratt seemed to have inspired

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<sup>66</sup> Carlisle's eight newspapers existed at various points in Carlisle's history, beginning in 1880. Some publications were intended just for children while others were for a wider, adult audience. Topics included the day-to-day of Carlisle as well as American Indian policy more broadly. The eight newspapers were *Eadle Keatah Toh*, *Morning Star*, *Indian Helper*, the *Red Man*, *Red Man and Helper*, the *Arrow*, the *Carlisle Arrow*, and the *Carlisle Arrow and Red Man* (Fear-Segal, 2007, p. 206). Some of these publications were distinct; others were just new names for a repackaged newspaper.

Wilson's travelling tableaux. Pratt's tableaux also ended with debates such as whether "the Indian [should] be exterminated" (*Our Forest Children* 1.2:1-2). Wilson copied the Onward and Upward Club after Carlisle as well (4.2:177). Wilson also credited Carlisle with inspiring his choice for an enlarged and illustrated newspaper (DIA, 1890, p. 22). He further likely copied his rhetorical technique of beforing-and-aftering in text, image, and tableaux from Pratt, who employed it extensively in his newspapers and photography.

Wilson also shared news about Pratt. *Our Forest Children* ran Pratt's biography, from birth to military career and Carlisle. It also printed an article on Pratt's answer to the "Indian question" (1.10:4). Wilson and Pratt occasionally corresponded by mail, and Wilson would sometimes reprint the letters. One such letter from Pratt praised Wilson's "heroic work." Though Pratt denied Wilson's request for help in securing accommodations for his failed trip to England, Wilson still felt Pratt's response was worth reprinting in *Our Forest Children*: "I wish I could help you big and strong, like you need and deserve, but I can do little more than pray for your success in every way" (1.10:16). Pratt goes on to request the latest issues of *Our Forest Children*. In another letter published from Pratt, he advises Wilson as one boarding school head to another:

Don't do less than you started to do. Go farther and do more. Start the secular press at work in your favor, and the church and clergy will fall into line very soon. You and I see that the field is ripe, and if we can't make others see it and help, then the Lord has made a mistake in selecting us. (2.4:16)

These published letters reveal at least two things: for one, Wilson and Pratt's relationship was in many ways professional. As the head of an institution widely regarded as the best of the best at the end of the nineteenth-century, Pratt provided strategic advice to Wilson. Particularly for my argument, Pratt also highlights the role of the press in their shared vision of Indigenous education. The second thing these letters reveal is Wilson's pride in them. These letters offered little to readers of *Our Forest Children*; instead, publishing them perhaps reinforced to readers a big name like Pratt had faith in Wilson.

Sometimes, Wilson's fascination with Pratt stepped beyond professional lines. In one article, Wilson reported on his visit to Pratt's private residence:

[Pratt's living room] was interesting on account of the Indian pictures, curiosities and ornaments which adorned it on every side. Parts of the carpet were covered with handsome Navajo blankets, of bright colors, and clear, sharp patterns. On the mantel-piece and over the bookcases were specimens of Pueblo pottery, large white clay jars of globular shape, standing fifteen or eighteen inches high, and covered with curious Indian devices in red and black paint. On one wall was a large collection of curious Indian weapons and articles of bead-work, forming quite a trophy, and from the corner of a bookcase hung suspended a splendid Sioux head-dress, consisting of a crown of eagle feathers, and eagle feathers pendant from a long strap, which extended from the back of the head to heels. The captain put this head-dress on to show us how it looked. (3.4:26)

In this less official scene, Wilson perhaps deviates from his professional interests in the curriculum and pedagogy of Carlisle School. We see here Pratt's own ethnographic leanings, best symbolized by his donning of a headdress. Wilson's second visit, this time accompanied by Mrs. Wilson, further focuses on Pratt-the-man:

We heard the captain's voice within, and in another minute he appeared at the doorway and extended us a warm welcome. Captain Pratt is a tall, powerful-looking man . . . stooping a little, as though he were accustomed to pass through doorways a little too low for him, wearing a black sack coat on his back, and a kindly smile on his face; he won our affection at once, and we soon became fast friends. (3.4:26)

Wilson here depicts Pratt's body, which cannot be contained by the space of Carlisle.

Wilson also describes a lecture by Pratt, less concerned with its content than its delivery:

When the children's part was all over, the great, tall, towering form of the captain appeared on the platform. We expected to hear him speak in a big voice, but he didn't; he spoke rather low, but very clearly, and everybody listened. (3.4:27)

Some of Wilson's and Pratt's interactions remained professional, and Carlisle clearly influenced Wilson's policies and pedagogy. But Canadian newspapers in places almost glorified Pratt and Carlisle as *the* person and institution to emulate.

Through newspapers, Canadian schools compared notes with American ones. But such peer reviewing also occurred face-to-face. The future principal of Rupert's Land School prepared with visits to Carlisle School and Hampton Institute in Virginia (*Our Forest Children* 2.8:27). The commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Northwest Territories, Hayter Reed, also visited Carlisle in 1889 (3.3:14). Carlisle's newspaper printed, "Every moment of his five hours' stay was spent in industriously looking through our school, asking questions and discussing the Indian problem." The article also praised Canada's consultative approach (*The Morning Star* 9.5:1). But by far the most prolonged consultation between American and Canadian schools was Wilson's 7000-mile trip through the U.S. In total, Wilson visited 13 schools during his trip (see Table 3).

On October 20, 1888 Wilson stood on a platform of Shingwauk's schoolroom and prepared teachers, friends, students, and the Bishop of Algoma for his trip with a map:

It is an Indian map, and its object is to shew the location of all the Indian tribes still existent in Canada and in the United States. The figures denote the number of Indians in each State of the United States and in each Province of Canada. The crosses indicate institutions for training Indian children: one hundred and nine in the States, but as yet only ten in Canada. After giving these particulars, I point to a dotted line on the map which marks our intended tour. (2.10:1)

As Tuan (2011) states, "Drawing maps is indubitable evidence of the power to conceptualize spatial relations" (p. 76). This map communicated three things: Wilson's locating of Indigenous nations; the lack of schools in Canada compared to the U.S.; and

his planned trip. As Wilson stood on the platform, his map played into the “vanishing Indian” paradigm by pointing out the First Nations “still existent” and charting the growth of schools. This map helped to prepare his school and his readers for the trip. But perhaps oddly, he begins discussion in *Our Forest Children* of his American trip with the image of England:

We have not always lived among Indians. Our home is England. We were married in a dear old ivy-clad church, with a great old Norman tower, in Gloucestershire, and thence, while the bells were clanging, we walked together as bride and bridegroom, amid a throng of smiling villagers to the dear old Rectory, mantled with clematis and Jessamine and honeysuckle; and within the Rectory walls we had our wedding breakfast, and cut our wedding cake; and then we bade adieu and went to Chepstow, and Clifton, and Cheltenham for our honeymoon. (3.3:9)

Razack’s (2002) work clarifies why Wilson begins an article about life in the “wilds” of North America by describing England (which he rarely mentioned):

The subject who comes to know himself through such journeys first imagines his own space as civilized, in contrast to the space of the racial Other; second he engages in transgression, which is a movement from respectable to degenerate space, a risky venture from which he returns unscathed; and third; he learns that he is in control of the journey through individual practices of domination. (pp. 13-

14)

As earlier chapters have suggested, Wilson relished his life “in the wild” and was consumed with his side career as a budding ethnographer. But Razack’s point is critical: before Wilson can “come to know himself through such journeys” he must first establish, for himself and readers of his newspapers, the initial space he inhabited was civilized—from the ivy-clad church and its old Norman tower to his wedding breakfast. Only after establishing these details can he transition from “respectable to degenerate” space, ultimately exerting control over it. Wilson exhibited this same tactic when describing the Indigenous languages he recorded by first prefacing they knew English.

Wilson emphasized exchange between American and Canadian schools on his trip, such as when Wilson met a commissioner of the Indian Bureau in Washington:

After bidding me be seated he asked me several questions about the Canadian Indians, the prospects for their education and civilization, etc. and said he hoped I would write to the Bureau, after the completion of my journey, and give some account of my impressions as a stranger. (*Our Forest Children* 3.5:43)

This interaction perhaps shows the two-way, cross-border exchange Wilson desired. The meeting was also strategic: Wilson asked for a formal letter to smooth his movement through America. Wilson also brought with him more unofficial documents to help facilitate his travels: letters written by Shingwauk students, which he read aloud at American schools. One letter Wilson read was addressed “*To our Unknown Brothers and*

*Sisters: Dear Relations,*” and explains the space of Shingwauk Home as “beautifully situated on the banks of the River St. Mary” (3.4:25). In turn, Wilson received responses from American students that he later published in *Our Forest Children*. These exchanges were highly formalized: students may or may not have known that what they wrote would be both read aloud by Wilson and later published in his newspaper, but they reveal nothing private. In a letter to Pratt, Wilson explained how, once home, he had students

from both homes collected in the school room and I told them all about you and showed them the photographs and pictures and read to them the letters which you sent; and now there are two or three boys busy in the school room writing to you. All our pupils were very much astonished at the photograph of the Carlisle group, it looks such an immense number and the faces are all so plain. My boys and girls were much pleased too to see the specimens of your school work and drawing.

Here, the cross-border exchange continued. Wilson sustained his correspondence with Pratt, who continued to send letters, photographs, and schoolwork from his students, who in turn composed responses. Wilson then published some of these in his newspaper. Perhaps students on both sides of the border valued the exchanges with one another. But it could be argued Wilson positioned himself as the one “reuniting” relations. Also, reading the Shingwauk letters to American Indian children, like the Indian Bureau commissioner’s letter, smoothed Wilson’s movement in the U.S.

Wilson also continued with his emphasis on exchange outside of student letters. After his first trip to Carlisle, Wilson visited Indigenous people in Sarnia, where he had



“two meetings with them and told them all about my visit” to Carlisle. Wilson showed several objects he collected on the way—Cheyenne moccasins from Carlisle; a doll and pottery from Hampton Institute; and many photographs. Wilson wrote to Pratt, “The Indians were very much interested in seeing all the things.” Wilson also shared what he learned on his trips through “a conference with the Heads of the Indian Department” of Canada. Rarely, Americans visited Canada to trade notes. Pratt’s assistant, A.J. Standing, paid a visit to Shingwauk (3.7:77). Regina School also reported a visit from the Superintendent of Phoenix School in Arizona, who “took some photographs of our boys and girls, and left us a handsome book of pictures of his own school” (*Progress* 17.8:3). But largely, the exchange was much more initiated north of the border.

America for Wilson was a peer review as well as an extended practice in classifying races. Wilson wrote the following of his trip in *Our Forest Children*:

The Mexican men are dark-skinned, have black hair and eyes and generally short stubby beards; the women wear shawls, generally dark ones, over their heads and drawn up round the lower part of the face; the children look much like those of the French half-breeds in Canada. The people are generally quiet, well-disposed, industrious and happy, but seem to be slow-moving and old-fashioned. (3.12:158)

Wilson’s categories encompass physical features as well as where on a continuum of progress someone lies. Wilson found himself on the other end when he was described, by an interpreter, as “an Americano from a long way off up north and had been twenty years among the Indians” (4.3:201). In this reversal, where someone else classifies Wilson

based on looks and speech, he is converted into an American but also an almost-Indigenous person. The categories of English or Canadian—how Wilson self-identified—are not available. But his rare reversal of the power to classify had no consequence for Wilson, unlike the categories he typically administered.

In Shingwauk Home's newspapers Wilson also classified the African-American men he meets, often along lines of servitude. To be sure, this is a larger comment on the realities of Black lives in late nineteenth-century America. But Wilson went further in his descriptions. He was sure to mention when his waiter was a "superior colored man" (*Our Forest Children* 3.4:29) or, on the other end, ignorant: when Wilson went to a cotton field in Oklahoma and encountered a "negro shoveling cotton seed in a storehouse," Wilson claimed the man was unaware of the purpose of his job (3.8:89). Wilson further described African-American men as a looming hazard for his wife, invoking tropes of Black sexuality as threatening. Wilson mentioned when a "black man" assisted in hoisting his wife on the train (3.4:24). When a train scheduling error separates Wilson and his wife, an African-American porter<sup>67</sup> delivers his wife the message (3.6:61), as if to heighten the potential danger of the mix-up. After a railway accident, another African-American porter answered Wilson "ambiguously," declining to tell Wilson the full story (3.11:139). Perhaps one reason Wilson chose to highlight African-American men in his articles was to further offer a "different" territory for his white readers. Though Rinaldo Walcott (2004) importantly reminds those who forcefully choose to ignore or forget that Black Canada has "an almost five-hundred-year past" (p. 280), perhaps the inclusion of

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<sup>67</sup> Being a porter on a sleeping car was one of the better jobs available to African-American men after the American Civil War for nearly 100 years. In 1925, "Pullman Porters" as they were known established the first union exclusively for Black people—the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (Bates, 2001). For the history of Black porters in Canada, see Sarah-Jane Mathieu (2010).

African-American men in Wilson's newspaper highlighted a not-Canada for readers. As well, in these scenes, Wilson subordinates Blackness to inflate whiteness, a process Toni Morrison (1992) observes in American literature more generally. For Morrison, these images are "the vehicle by which the American self knows itself as not enslaved, but free; not repulsive, but desirable; not helpless, but licensed and powerful; not history-less, but historical; not damned, but innocent; not a blind accident of evolution, but a progressive fulfillment of destiny" (p. 52). Morrison calls this phenomenon in American literature "the process of establishing others in order to know them, to display knowledge of the other so as to ease and to order external and internal chaos" (p. 53). Perhaps Morrison's observations extend to the African-American men Wilson meets, but also more broadly to the Indigenous peoples he attempts to contain in his ethnographies.

The biggest source of anxiety with respect to racial categories for Wilson was in Indian Territory, where his usually dependable classifications fail. Wilson had heard the Cherokee territory Vinita was a "civilized Indian town," with its own insurance offices, parliament, and judges. Relevant to Wilson, he even heard they ran a newspaper:

[The *Vinita Chieftain* is] owned, as we had been led to suppose, by an Indian proprietor, and edited by an Indian editor; and in this newspaper we had seen advertisements of lawyers and doctors and dentists and butchers and milliners and hotel-keepers—all Cherokees . . . [It] seemed to us to smack so very much of the American,—indeed it was a marvel to us—knowing as we did so well the Indian character—that Indians of whatever tribe could have been led so far to forget their ancient traditions as to adopt not only the dress and the language, but also the

swagger and the greed of the white race. (3.7:73)

Wilson describes himself reading the *Chieftain* as his train arrived in Vinita, aghast at an Indigenous people capable of white “swagger.” Wilson even published advertisements from the Vinita newspaper in *Our Forest Children*, as if to share the disbelief.

But Wilson was confounded: Vinita was, according to Wilson, white. He observed most of the teachers and students at the school “seemed to be entirely white, and shewed their white character by their behavior; some few were partly Cherokee; of full blood Cherokees there were none” (3.7:74). The stores, Wilson realizes, were all kept by white men, and the Governor “was not very much Cherokee” (3.8:90). Even the newspaper “was owned by a man who had one-fourth part Cherokee blood in him, but it was edited by a white man” (3.7:74). Wilson learns why from a Cherokee professor:

All the land on which [the] town is built is Indian property; it belongs to the Cherokee Nation . . . These blue-eyed, golden-haired children, which you see about are, in fact, Cherokees, members of the great Cherokee Nation; entitled to hold Cherokee property, and to have a vote in the Cherokee elections,—not because they have Cherokee blood, but because they have been united in marriage with some one having a slight taint of Cherokee, or the offspring [sic] of such marriage. (3.7:74)

Wilson is not satisfied with the answer. As he explains, “It would have been more satisfactory to have found a veritable Indian community, unmixed with whiteblood,

casting off, voluntarily and determinately, the old Indian way of living, and adopting the customs and the mode of living of white men” (3.8:88). The professor points to a field:

“*There* are the Indians,” he said contemptuously pointing to a wagon load of those individuals, just come in from the country. Yes, there they were,—blankets over their shoulders, long black straggling or plaited hair, moccasins on their feet.— Yes, those were Indians, they were full-bloods unmistakably. (3.8:88)

Later, Wilson sees another group of Cherokee people:

I took a good look at the motley throng assembled under the trees. I was glad to see so many dark faces, and so much of the pure Indian element among them. True, there were a good many American-looking beards and American-looking eyes and noses, but the great bulk of the assembled throng was Indian, or at least half-breed; a goodly proportion might even have passed for full-bloods. (3.8:90)

His reaction might at first appear confusing: Vinita ostensibly might seem to represent Wilson’s proposed future for Indigenous peoples.

Justice (2006) helps to historicize Wilson’s reaction. He states that traditionally, Cherokee people were the “most widely perceived as assimilated” (p. 41). For Justice, Cherokee identity “is often seen as conveniently porous and easily appropriated, diluted from an ideal Indigenous purity” (p. 6). He views these tropes as a “variant of the ‘vanishing Indian’; the Indians aren’t necessarily gone, but they exist only as dislocated

and washed-out halfbreeds” (p. 212). Wilson likely arrived at Vinita with his suitcase and these stereotypes. Justice distinguishes between assimilation—“the wholesale rejection of Indigenous values and their replacement with Eurowestern values, either through choice, coercion, or violence”—and acculturation: “the adaptation of certain Eurowestern ways into a larger Cherokee context, thus changing some cultural expressions while maintaining the centrality of Cherokee identity and values” (p. xvi). Perhaps Wilson’s disappointment is two-fold: while he encounters acculturation, and hears its definition from the professor, Wilson desires assimilation. Acculturation—what Wilson encounters in Vinita—is not on white terms, unlike the assimilation he strives for at Shingwauk. As Renisa Mawani (2002) states, “Many feared that mixed-race people, if assimilated into the white population, would claim land as easily as white settlers could. If counted as Indians, however, this expanding population would financially burden the provincial and federal governments” (p. 50). Perhaps such fears manifest in Wilson’s disappointment, when his typically dependable categories fail him in Vinita.

## **Conclusion**

An issue of Regina School’s newspaper reported on the Zayante Indian Conference, held annually in California by the Northern California Indian Association (a white-led charity devoted to assimilation). It invited Indigenous speakers to indicate what they thought their needs were, and (unsurprisingly) the first named need was land. The newspaper did not reprint details of this conference to contemplate the speakers’ demand for land, for to do so would arguably undermine the settler colonial goals of both the Regina School that printed the newspaper as well as the Northern California Association. Instead, the article dismissed this clear demand, focusing on what *the Association* deemed

were the immediate needs of Indigenous peoples: protection from liquor traffic, industrial education, and on-reserve physicians—in other words, needs that supported settler colonial goals. The article admitted the Zayante conference had relevance for Canada, though in Canada “our’s have plenty of land; more than they need” (17.9:3; 6). If the violent displacement of Indigenous peoples from their land was arguably at its height at the end of the nineteenth century, why do both the Zayante conference and Regina School’s newspaper deny it? Because to accept the number one demand—land—undermines the number one goal of settler colonialism. For the Zayante conference or Regina School to take this demand seriously (rather than state that Indigenous peoples “have plenty of land”) would perhaps require interrogating the very existence of settlers on Turtle Island. As Tuck and McKenzie (2015) state, “settler futurities foreclose all others” (p. 164).

This chapter does not focus on Indigenous demands for land or the primacy of land in Indigenous epistemologies because Canadian school newspapers actively erased these realities, replacing their own conceptions: space and place. Newspapers converted seemingly nebulous space into the place of Canada. Even the very place of Saskatchewan changed as its newspapers unfolded: where originally the tagline of Regina School’s newspaper for location beneath its title read “Regina, Assiniboia,” by the year 1905 when the territory became a province it had changed to “Regina, Saskatchewan.”

Less officially, school newspapers also documented the colonial conversion of space into place through holidays and geography exams. They discussed the place of schools themselves—as enveloping institutions, with outdoors that tamed the “wild” space surrounding them. A place did not even yet have to exist for a newspaper to

describe it for readers, as the anticipatory geographies of *Our Forest Children* illustrate. Newspapers also referenced other places to construct their own. British references, through image and celebrations, helped to convert supposedly empty space into place, as did the peer reviewing between Canada and America. The peer reviewing that happens today—the Benevolent Mountie Myth—obfuscates the fact that both nations violently dispossessed Indigenous people from their land, overwriting it with place and space. Furthermore, the newspapers' concern with comparisons reified the naturalness of the border, locating the power with schools (not Indigenous families and nations) to establish “brotherly” and “fraternal” relations. The peer reviewing seen in these school newspapers could be seen as less a competition and more an example of the network of boarding schools. A common form of denial in Canada is to treat abuse as isolated, and a big part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been to educate Canadians in understanding Canadian schools as in fact a system; these newspapers reveal the system is larger still. Treating American and Canadian boarding schools as distinct muddies the fact that these are settler colonial institutions with minor differences that were in consultation much more than has been previously considered. This network amongst schools within Canada (albeit along denominational lines) as well as between the U.S. came in the form of rare face-to-face consultations and the more sustained contact of school newspapers. Wilson's trips demonstrate the deference Canadian schools had to American ones, found particularly in their glorification of Carlisle and Pratt. American sources occasionally praised Canada and borrowed ideas as well.

But resistance—ways in which “Indigenous people have been able to subvert that system of spatial control, transgressing its numerous finely drawn boundaries” (Byrne,



2010, p. 103)—peeks out. The jubilee celebrations at Battleford School may have been established to reinforce the place of England; however, families used the jubilee to conduct ceremony despite its ban in the *Indian Act*. Furthermore, students defied the unspoken taboo against discussing their parents in the newspapers by highlighting the visit of their families amongst trivial details about the jubilee races and prizes. Resistance as well comes from the Cherokee professor Wilson meets in Vinita. But it is not in the newspapers' interest to document the resistance to spatial control and land dispossession at the end of the nineteenth century that was alive and well—newspapers instead profiled spatial subjugation, an erasure that continues today. This chapter distinguishes amongst the place-making of Canada, England, and America as if they themselves are distinct. Yet the larger argument of this chapter is that they are all variations of the same end-goal. The newspapers emphasized these differences, which reinforced their own particularity and therefore blurred their shared purpose of land dispossession.

## CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

*[Amos Key, educator and language advocate from Six Nations of the Grand River] tells the story of encountering scepticism when expressing a wish for the First Nations to recover their languages. What's the point? To which he replies: well, when I die and go to heaven, I shall want to communicate with my ancestors, my grandfathers and grandmothers. To which the sceptic replies: but what if you have been evil and ended up in the other place? No problem, because I know English. (qtd. Phillipson, 2013, p. 151)*

Over the five years I have written this dissertation, Indigenous languages have been in the news and on my mind. In 2012, Miranda Washinawatok was suspended from her parochial school in Wisconsin for speaking Menominee. When the 12-year-old girl (whose grandmother directed the Menominee Language Program) was caught teaching a friend how to say “hello” and “I love you,” her non-Indigenous teacher retorted:

“You are not to speak like that! How do I know you’re not saying something bad? How would you like it if I spoke in Polish and you didn’t understand?”

(ICTMN Staff, 2014)

In this response the teacher imposed an English-only rule, assumed what the student said was bad, and equated a European language with an Indigenous one. Indigenous media was quick to historicize the punishment. Jerry H. Hill (2012), president of the Indigenous Language Institute, wrote that the incident demonstrates how “the use of one’s

Indigenous language is still an active, controversial and, sometimes explosive issue.”

This teacher participated in a broader amnesia of the history of English on this land.

A few years after this news story, I was struck by some graffiti on the backside of a building on my university campus in Toronto, Canada. It read: “english broke my father’s confidence. We will break English” (see Figure 25). The first “english” is triply defiant: not only does it begin both a proper noun and a sentence with a lowercase “e,” the double underline (proofreader’s notation for “make lowercase”) insists the grammatical transgression is not a typo. The father may be a former boarding school student. Perhaps he is a newcomer to Canada facing barriers to employment or has been offered “accent training.” Or maybe he is a university student, written off by professors for his “non-standard” English. And the child—determined to “break” the language: this second use of the word “English” is capitalized, as if to say the breaking hasn’t happened yet. It is as if English has not yet been dethroned, but the intention has been notated.

In the summer of 2014, a 3-year exhibit on the 34 Indigenous languages of what is now called British Columbia opened at the provincial museum (“Our living languages,” 2014). It highlights the languages’ beauty and complexity, the history of what the exhibit calls “disruptions,” and artwork that complicates European linguistic understanding. The museum space also includes a “language forest” and a “language cocoon.” It could be argued the museum’s larger narrative (like other provincial museums) participates in the settler colonial fantasy of Indigenous erasure, while this exhibit problematizes such absence.

This summer, Indigenous languages made headlines in the final report (2015) of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The report demands the federal government

acknowledge language as an Aboriginal right and that it develop an Aboriginal Languages Act (p. 2). It further calls on post-secondary institutions to develop programs in Indigenous languages. The report ties these calls to rights and treaties, insisting on the need for adequate funding and for Indigenous peoples to be in charge of these language programs. This same summer the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Perry Bellegarde, called for the nearly 60 Indigenous languages in Canada to be national languages. Responses were swift, as non-Indigenous commentators got bogged down in the feasibility of what Bellegarde proposed. As one journalist in the *Calgary Herald* wrote, “If languages are dying out and remaining unlearned despite the millions of dollars spent annually on teaching and preserving them,” then “at some point, people have to take advantage of the opportunities offered them” (Lakritz, 2015). This position, invoking the trope of the unappreciated “hand-out,” ignores the history of why Indigenous languages are under threat and what barriers people have to learning them today. Focusing on feasibility and cost ignores Indigenous languages as a right.

Also this summer, CBC’s radio program *The 180* produced an episode with the polemic title, “Do First Nations Have a Right to Indigenous Language Schools?” Lorena Fontaine, a professor of Indigenous Studies in Manitoba, described how her Ojibway-speaking father and Cree-speaking mother raised her with English only because of their own trauma of language as children. Lawyer David Leitch, the other guest, argued that not providing immersion language programs for Indigenous peoples might violate the constitution. And yet the host, Stephen Quinn, asked the following questions:

- “What would an entire education, though, in a First Nations language accomplish that could not be accomplished with classes teaching that language?”
- “In Canadian society, David, there’s an expectation that people will be fluent and competent in either French or English. Would an education purely in a First Nations language—would that prepare a student for life in Canada?”
- “How does broader society benefit over this?”
- “What is in it for English and French Canada if First Nations have this right?”

Not all of the host’s questions are this pointed. But like the attacks on Bellegarde’s proposition, these four questions are telling. The host’s biggest concerns are 1) how Indigenous children will participate in “modern” society without English; and 2) how non-Indigenous peoples will benefit. Even though the lawyer argues against the host and sides with the Indigenous scholar, his own motivations actually align with the host’s:

We’re talking about languages that are not spoken anywhere else except in Canada. English and French are great languages. I love them. But they are not Canadian languages. They are European languages that were—brought here. Our national anthem says we’re supposed to protect our home and native land; I think we should be protecting our home and native languages.

The lawyer’s logic may be as problematic as the host’s in four ways: the lawyer argues that 1) there is an equivalency between Indigenous languages and European languages, ignoring their different histories and cultural capital; 2) that European languages were “brought” here—perhaps simply meaning from another place, but maybe also “brought”

as in a gift, uncomplicated by motivation or by possibilities that Indigenous peoples used English for their own purposes; 3) that Indigenous languages require protection by the state, referencing the national anthem as proof; and 4) that Indigenous languages are “our” Canadian languages. On the other hand, the Indigenous scholar cites her own history and the trauma associated with language. She, too, in the format of the radio show has to appeal to how knowing more languages is a norm in other parts of the world and increases a child’s intellectual potential. But her larger point is she was not able to communicate with her grandparents and she has nowhere now to send her children to learn these languages. The non-Indigenous host and lawyer, in contrast, appeal to the same logic as the nineteenth century and ignore the professor’s appeal to justice.

For many Indigenous people, speaking their languages “is a sacred act” (Armstrong, 1998, p. 183). But this dissertation has documented ways the English language (and, though outside of my scope, French) was naturalized as official in North America. Indigenous languages did not “disappear”: they were stolen, killed, and disrupted, as the museum exhibit shows; this interruption was traumatic and severed generational ties, as the professor on the radio indicates; they can *still* be forbidden in school, as Miranda Washinawatok’s punishment reveals; and English continues to command a capital letter even when people fight its supremacy, as the graffiti exposes. In the example of the radio host and the lawyer, non-Indigenous people focus on feasibility, on how Indigenous languages *belong* to and can benefit Canada. Even scholars who discuss the violence of English and literacy in North America (Prendergast, 2003; Stuckey, 1991) neglect this history entirely. As long as this historical amnesia is perpetuated, such “mythhistories” (Létourneau, 2006, p. 71) will continue unchecked.

This research has revealed how English was used as a colonial tool in nineteenth-century Canada, offering one part of a larger critical history of literacy. School newspapers do not overtly display what survivors reveal: the corporal punishment, rewards, humiliation, peer-surveillance, and other linguicidal tactics used to police Indigenous languages. Instead, school newspapers packaged these tactics as a civilizing foundation and a *lingua franca* for mutually unintelligible and supposedly deficient Indigenous languages. This research charted the various means of English instruction: the reading materials, telegraph lessons, the magic lantern shows, and literary societies; the student letters, compositions, and of course the newspapers themselves. But schools elided the violence of English, naturalizing its acquisition by students who “preferred” English and “forgot” how to speak the language with which they were raised. As Albert Memmi (1991) writes, for the colonizer “to possess victory completely he needs to absolve himself of it and the conditions under which it was attained” (p. 52).

Though schools promoted English they seldom conceded student mastery, criticizing enunciation and labeling students diffident and slow, occasionally along gendered lines. These chapters also revealed that schools were not devoid of Indigenous languages, and schools did not treat North America as a *lingua nullius* (Phillipson, 2014)—a land with no language. Students, at young ages with threats of grave consequences for doing so, sought safe spaces to maintain their languages to evade the same fate as Latin. Schools and their newspapers also promoted Indigenous languages, but as a gateway to English and Christianity through bilingual programs, syllabics, sign language. Indigenous languages also acted as entertainment, as was the case with the *Boys’ Own* how-to guide on sign language or the Cree “God Save the Queen” gift for the

Prime Minister. This dissertation has also argued school newspapers located ethnographic authority on Indigenous languages with themselves, “saving” languages they were also attempting to quash. In particular, this dissertation documented how Shingwauk Home’s Wilson went to great lengths to “get Indian words” by arguably using force to “extract” language, like a resource, from boarding school students. I read this seeming contradiction not as praise, lament, or concern for the linguicidal mission of the schools but as a continuation of other settler-colonial tactics. I argue schools, through their newspapers, attempted to dictate who did and did not get to know Indigenous languages.

Yet students learned and parents promoted English as a means of survival and futurity as well; school newspapers reveal scenes of students and parents embracing English as their own tool, and memoirs reveal students finding pleasure in reading English.

In addition to language, this dissertation has argued school newspapers constructed time and place for readers. Boarding schools established Indigenous peoples as foil to the speed, success, and industry of non-Indigenous peoples. They constructed time—not the settler—as the unavoidably genocidal culprit. The primary authors of these newspapers such as principals and teachers wrote themselves into positions of temporal helper rather than as directly complicit. Schools used micro-penalties, daily agendas, techniques of firsting and lasting (O’Brien, 2010), and beforeing and aftering to construct a settler futurity. But as Wilson’s tableaux indicate, *what* timeline could be directed by audience desire and expectation. Like time, schools imagined colonial space as empty, wild, and otherwise wasted; place, in contrast, was modeled after England and the U.S., to the exclusion of Indigenous land. These techniques included geography exams, the



architecture of the school and its grounds, and anticipatory geographies such as the unbuilt school in Medicine Hat. School newspapers helped form a network of boarding schools across North America. While research on boarding schools in the U.S. and Canada (and other settler colonial states) is often separated, this research considers how the U.S. and Canada in fact engaged in colonial peer-reviewing. These consultations reified the border, obfuscating each country's shared purpose of land dispossession. In turn, schools and their newspapers actively ignored Indigenous demands for land or the primacy of land in Indigenous epistemologies, which delegitimize settler-colonial claims.

These newspapers—considered a way to promote English, a trade, and to offset costs—are complicated documents. Though printing programs were small and few, I argue they were charged sites of surveillance, language, oppression, and resistance. In addition, they served as a classroom tool but also a benchmark of civilization. An Indian agent in 1896 at Fort Alexander in Manitoba observed the following in a report:

The Indians of my agency are a law-abiding people. No strangers from a foreign land need be afraid to come among them. Many of them subscribe to newspapers, and are sure to read all matters pertaining to their race. They no doubt sigh for the good old days, and many of the pagans and ignorant, who are a minority among them, still talk of the Stone Fort Treaty, and desire to be spoon-fed but there is no doubt that they are far better off, more civilized, better clothed, better housed and educated. In fact they are new Indians. (DIA, p. 112).

The only way offered in this report to understand Indigenous reading practices was as

evidence of assimilation, and treaties only represent nostalgia coupled with laziness. This report omits how Indigenous peoples fought for the Stone Fort Treaty of 1871 (a.k.a. Treaty 1) to be amended four years later to contain verbal agreements that were never in fact written. In similar ways, school newspapers reframed and even forcibly excluded threats or challenges to settler-colonial narratives of language, time, and place.

As Moreton-Robinson (2015) claims, “It takes a great deal of work to maintain Canada, the United States, Hawai’i, New Zealand, and Australia as white possessions” (p. xi). Much of this maintenance I originally considered everyday and quotidian. But as Snelgrove, Dahmoon, and Cornthassel (2014) ask, everyday for whom? Moreton-Robinson insists that for Indigenous peoples, “White possession is not unmarked, unnamed, or invisible” but is instead “hypervisible” (p. xiii). Shane Belcourt and Yvette Nolan’s (2013) film *A Common Experience* about intergenerational trauma and boarding schools makes this very clear: While the money awarded to survivors as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement was called the “Common Experience Payment,” the film confronts the logic required to ever regard such trauma as *common*.

This dissertation has included moments where students were able to push back against the colonial apparatus of the newspaper. Robin Brownlie and Mary-Ellen Kelm (1994) admonish scholarship that “uses evidence of Native resilience and strength to soften, and at times to deny, the impact of colonialism.” Hochman (2014), too, warns of how concentrating on agency “has had the adverse effect of obscuring some of the most enduring and troublesome legacies of the salvage ethnographic project” (p. xxii). But much of this dissertation has outlined these disturbing aspects; to neglect examples where students defied expectations would be an omission. To ignore instances of resistance is

also to participate in what Tuck (2009) calls “damage-centered research,” which “looks to historical exploitation, domination, and colonization to explain contemporary brokenness” but in the process pathologizes communities (p. 413). Desire-based research, instead, accounts for despair but is also “concerned with understanding complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives” (p. 416). For Tuck, desire “thirds” the binary of damage vs. resistance. And because desire “is an assemblage of experiences, ideas, and ideologies, both subversive and dominant, [it] necessarily complicates our understanding of human agency, complicity, and resistance” (pp. 419-420). This dissertation has attempted to depart from a damage-based framework by focusing on causes; as well, I have attempted a desire- rather than damage-based framework by taking seriously Indigenous creative output—for instance literature, poetry, film, dance, and novels. I have read these as well as survivor memoirs and testimony alongside the newspapers not (necessarily) to argue for a continuity between the nineteenth century and later periods in which survivors documented their own narratives, but to aim for the desire-based framework Tuck advocates.

Each chapter has provided examples of resistance, such as the debate club whose members did not unanimously agree, “Indians were happier before the coming of the white man” or James Garvie’s article on “why do Indians advance so slowly,” which blamed the government. Indigenous conceptions of archives, reports of runaways, and the girls who “played grandmother” all exemplify resistance, as does Gilbert Bear, who refused ill-treatment at his printing job and answered “no” when asked if he enjoyed being on display. Children and their families used jubilee celebrations to reunite and practice ceremony, defying school intentions. Johnston and his peers dawdled while their

teachers rang bells. Wilson consistently faced resistance to his ethnographic research—from the Cherokee professor in Vinita who challenged Wilson’s racial classifications to his interlocutors, who would mumble, remain silent, and dodge his “instantaneous photographs.” Newspapers did not broadcast that students maintained their languages, which survivor testimony and the sheer fact that Indigenous languages exist today disprove; however, annual reports leak out the difficulties in (i.e., resistance to) enforcing English-only policies. Schools also remarked on the “dilapidated” condition of their libraries and students who voraciously read in English; students in turn narrated how they used English for their own purposes and in addition to Indigenous languages.

One wonders why such strictly censored newspapers would even permit such fissures in the narrative. In documents heavily guided by expectations of principals, teachers, and readers—where bylines insisted students could provide labour but not content—why not excise all challenges to the script? Trouillot’s (2012) work on runaway slaves in nineteenth-century Haiti is helpful. He writes how “planters and managers could not fully deny resistance, but they tried to prove reassuring certitudes by trivializing all its manifestations” (p. 83). Trouillot contends that for authorities to contemplate anything else was unimaginable: “To acknowledge resistance as a mass phenomenon is to acknowledge the possibility that something is wrong with the system” (p. 84). Perhaps schools could safely acknowledge resistance in their newspapers by reframing them as isolated cases or as anything other than resistance. Examples of this technique included falsely framing students who learned English as assimilated or those who continued to speak Indigenous languages as slow. For a school to acknowledge these examples as sustained defiance would have required acknowledging the children’s humanity.

Some (not all) archivists I encountered considered the newspapers as proof of the “lighter side”—the picnics, swimming, and skating. For such archivists, the newspapers and photographs confirmed their preferred reading of boarding schools. Sunny, beneficial, or banal experiences of boarding school existed and cannot be dismissed (Child, 2014b). Similarly, Niezen (2013) argues that TRC events privileged a particular narrative of horror, excluding former students “who think of themselves as having suffered only minimally or not at all” (p. 59). This dissertation has presented some of these moments. Coleman, whom Lomawaima (1995) interviewed, attributed his confidence to his print training. Printers such as Louis Laronde valued visits to the *Winnipeg Free Press* and wrote they dreamed of becoming printers. But these experiences do not justify the barriers Gilbert Bear faced. They do not erase that schools bestowed upon their newspapers child-like personae while simultaneously denying the same humanity to students. Warrior’s (2005) speculations on the “Indian boys” newspaper bylines are instructive: students may have fought to include this line proudly; or, they may have laughed at it. Printers may have been signing Lyon’s concept of the x-mark in their excitement over and desire to write, edit, and print.

A word with which this dissertation has not engaged was reconciliation, despite it being one third of the TRC’s title. The TRC is significant as the only such Commission in a democratic country, that examined crimes perpetrated exclusively against children, and that was over such a long period (150 years). Its calls to action demand much-needed reform of curriculum, museums, healthcare, and law. Many survivors cite the benefits of the TRC, and this cannot be discounted. But I side with people who are wary on the grounds that reconciliation is too soon or one-sided, with the onus on Indigenous peoples.

Unlike South Africa's TRC, Canada's almost exclusively included the testimony of Indigenous peoples only. For Tuck and Wang (2012), reconciliation is "about rescuing a settler future" (p. 35). The prefix "re-" may also be of concern, implying there ever existed a period of conciliation, to which certain measures can *return* us.

Another focus has been on the here-and-now. As Trouillot writes, "What we know about slavery or about colonialism can—should indeed—increase our ardor in the struggles against discrimination and oppression across racial and national boundaries. But no amount of historical research about the Holocaust and no amount of guilt about Germany's past can serve as a substitute for marching in the streets against German skinheads today" (p. 150). Simon (2004), too, suggests Indigenous testimony "makes a claim on us to learn of events hidden to most North Americans, to hear a story of people who suffered and died unnecessarily and as a result of government action, and to work in solidarity with those who are still living the legacy of this event and attempting to recover a viable and dynamic communal life" (p. 197). Simon urges not for memorialization or retribution but a change in relationship, which will require that non-Indigenous people "learn to listen differently, take the measure of our ignorance, and reassess the terms on which we are prepared to hear stories that might trouble the social arrangements on which we presume a collective future." Pennycook (1998) and Sterzuk (2011) both identify how English taught today is affected by the varied histories of teaching English. This research may prompt questions about how this history still affects communities, people, and pedagogies today, and how this history can disrupt the narrative that Indigenous languages were lost rather than stolen. This research may also prompt questions about our own technologies of temporality today and how present-day concepts of space and place

may continue to supersede Indigenous claims to land. A further line of questioning might be concerning the trajectories of resistance from the nineteenth century to now. Though answering these questions pushes beyond the scope of this dissertation, I wish for this research to prompt these perhaps arresting propositions for Canadians today.

This history also connects to now in terms of a broader argument about white supremacy. While Moreton-Robinson (2015) and Byrd (2011) rightly caution against conflating all examples of racism, thereby excluding the specific experiences of genocide in North America against Indigenous peoples, a broader experience existed: the anti-Asian rhetoric on the prairies, which emerged alongside the perceived threat of boarding school print shops; the African-American porters Wilson used as a foil; and the Fisk Jubilee Singers, whose music resonated with Indigenous peoples in Australia and New Zealand but who could not find a hotel in Toronto. Also related are the histories of Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Richard Wright who (in different times and contexts) used English to defy (V. W. Smith, 2007, p. 93). This dissertation's scope was limited to the colonial practices of boarding schools for Indigenous peoples, but they did not operate in isolation (yet are also not the same as) other non-Indigenous histories of white supremacy in North America.

I see future work as moving these archival findings to application, asking how Canadians might learn about boarding schools without the denial, self-identification, historical inaccuracies, and potential triggers for intergenerational survivors. With the TRC's calls for each province and territory to develop new curriculum, and with the unprecedented access to primary documents and survivor testimony through the new National Research Centre, at no other time has there been more public, political, ethical,

and pedagogical impetus to learn. But little work has been devoted to moving learners beyond denial, guilt, voyeurism, and satisfaction in merely banking “the facts.” As Regan (2010) argues, “*how* people learn about historical injustices is as important as learning truths about *what* happened,” requiring not just curricular but also pedagogical reform (p. 11). Textbooks and provincial curriculum have begun to move beyond outright silence (B. Smith, Ng-A-Fook, Berry, & Spence, 2011). How, *now*, can educators develop a “learning from ‘the past’ that is a critical recognition or discovery that unsettles the very terms on which our understandings of ourselves and our world is based” (Simon, 2005, p. 106)? Without attending to the *how*, I foresee several risks. Without pedagogical reform, the risk also exists that the burden of this work will be entirely left to Indigenous scholars and teachers (Cannon, 2012, p. 21; Dion, 2009, p. 8). As well, lessons may continue to frame this history as a chapter or anomaly rather than as larger and ongoing (Mackey, 2013, p. 50).

If a teacher were to google “teaching about residential schools” she may stumble upon CBC’s Digital Archives website, which currently offers three lesson plans on residential schooling: write a diary from the perspective of a survivor, brainstorm the “challenges and opportunities” of residential school, and write a letter to parents. All three lessons problematically ask present-day students to put themselves in the role of a residential school student. Lesson plans such as these ask Canadians to identify with residential school students rather than promote a space to bear witness to survivor testimony. What is more, the examples here are historically inaccurate: residential school students were not normally permitted spaces like a diary to openly write; abuse is more than a challenge; and letters home were usually censored and written in English only.



I propose a three-text approach to teaching about and learning from boarding school history. The first texts are survivor testimony, which could come in the form of published memoirs, videos collected from the TRC, and live speaking engagements. The second are primary documents, including government reports, memos, and school newspapers. And the third texts I propose are art-based, which include novels, poetry, drama, dance, and film. Such an approach guards against the dangers of empathy through self-identification (Dion, 2009; Simon, 2005) by reckoning with the past of the primary documents—a way to investigate and make accountable “colonial frontier logics” (Donald, 2013, p. 44). Survivors and their testimonies are front and centre, but the history of colonialism is not let off the hook. Including art, the third prong, ensures that the resistance, strength, survivance, and possibilities of Indigenous peoples today also have a place (McKegney, 2007). I see this approach as possible in many disciplines, including but not limited to history and English classrooms. Such an approach has the potential to move learners beyond “facts” to a witnessing of historical trauma.

...

The architecture of Wilson’s Shingwauk Home still exists. Like many boarding schools still standing, it has been converted into a new school—Algoma University and Shingwauk Kinoomage Gamig, realizing the dream Chief Shingwauk had for education in 1850. In front of the school, if facing it from the road, is a cairn dedicated to Wilson (see Figure 26); on the other side, if looking at the cairn with the school behind you, is a plaque and a garden dedicated to survivors (see Figure 27). These two sides symbolize so much of boarding school history. The recto and verso of the cairn are worlds and time periods apart, and both must still be thought of on the same page.

## TABLES

<b>Title and School</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Denomination</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Circulation (self-reported)</b>	<b>Price</b>
<i>The Guide</i> <b>Battleford Indian Industrial School</b>	Battleford, Saskatchewan	Church of England	Monthly	July 1891 - June 1899	4 pages	?	50 cents/ year
<i>Na-Na-Kwa: Or, Dawn on the Northwest Coast</i> <b>Kitamaat Home</b>	Kitamaat, British Columbia	Methodist	Quarterly	1898 - 1907	4-18 pages	3000	By donation
<i>Progress</i> <b>Regina Industrial School</b>	Regina, Assinaboia/ Saskatchewan	Presbyterian	Semi- monthly	1894- 1910	8 pages	1000	25 cents/ year
<i>The Canadian Indian</i> <b>Shingwauk Industrial Home</b>	Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario	Church of England	Monthly	Oct. 1890- Sept. 1891	26 pages	?	20 cents/ year
<i>Our Forest Children: And What We Want to Do About Them</i> <b>Shingwauk Industrial Home</b>	Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario	Church of England	Monthly	Feb. 1887- Sept. 1890	4-16 pages	2000	10 cents/ year

Table 1: Newspapers Profiled

School Name	Location	Reference in Shingwauk Home Newspapers
Albuquerque School	Albuquerque, NM	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 4.4:218-219
Araphoe Mission School	Darlington, Indian Territory	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.9:108-109
Carlisle School	Carlisle, PA	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.4:25-28
Cherokee Seminaries	Indian Territory	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.8:91
Cheyenne Mission School	Darlington, Indian Territory	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.9:108; 310:123
Chilocco School	Indian Territory	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.11:138
Genoa School	Genoa, NE	<i>Canadian Indian</i> , 1.6:176-177; 1.7:208-213
Lincoln Institute	Philadelphia, PA	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.4:24-25
Mennonite Mission School	Darlington, Indian Territory	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.9:108
Ponca School	Ponca?	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.11:137-138
Ramona School	Sante Fe, NM	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 4.1:172-173
Worcester Academy	Vinita, OK	<i>Our Forest Children</i> , 3.7:73-74
Zuni Protestant School	Zuni Territory, NM	<i>Canadian Indian</i> , 1.2:51

Table 2: Wilson's American Indian School Visits, 1888

Full Name of School	Location	Denomination	Years it Ran	Type of School
Cape Croker Indian Day School	Cape Croker, ON	Roman Catholic	1860-?	On-reserve, day school
Chooutla Residential School	Carcross, YT	Anglican	1911-1969	Off reserve, residential
Crowfoot Indian Residential School	Cluny, AB	Roman Catholic	1909-1968	Off reserve, residential
Gordon Indian Residential School	Punnichy, SK	Anglican	1886-1996	Off-reserve, residential
Kootenay Indian Residential School	Cranbrook, BC	Roman Catholic	1898-1970	Off reserve, residential
Kuper Island Indian Residential School	Penelakut Island, BC	Roman Catholic	1890-1975	Off reserve, residential
Mohawk Institute Residential School	Brantford, ON	Anglican	1831-1969	Off reserve, residential
Mount Elgin Indian Residential School	Muncey, ON	Methodist	1848-1948	Off reserve, residential
St. Anthony's Indian Residential School	Onion Lake, SK	Roman Catholic	1891-1968	Off-reserve, residential
Peigan Indian Residential School	Brocket, AB	Anglican	1880-1961	On-reserve, day until 1890
Prince Albert Indian Residential School	Prince Albert, SK	Anglican	1906-1947; 1949-1995	Off-reserve, residential
Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School	Lebret, SK	Roman Catholic	1884-1969	Off-reserve, industrial
Shingwauk Indian Residential School	Sault Ste. Marie, ON	Anglican	1873-1970	Off reserve, residential
Shubenacadie Indian Residential School	Shubenacadie, NS	Roman Catholic	1930-1967	Off reserve, residential
St. Joseph's Indian Boarding School	Fort William, ON	Roman Catholic	1936-1964	Off reserve, residential
St. Mary's Mission Indian School	Mission, BC	Roman Catholic	1863-1985	Off reserve, residential
St. Michael's School	Alert Bay, BC	Anglican	1929-1975	Off-reserve, residential
Wawanosh School for Girls	Sault Ste. Marie, ON	Anglican	1877-1938	Off-reserve, residential

Table 3: Additional Canadian School

**FIGURES**

Figure 1: “Walk for Reconciliation”

Ottawa, May 31, 2015: Author’s photograph



Figure 2: *Our Forest Children* Masthead

Algoma University Archives





Figure 3: “A Class of Printers (Indian Boys) with their Instructor”

1896: R-A1877 (1), Saskatchewan Archives Board

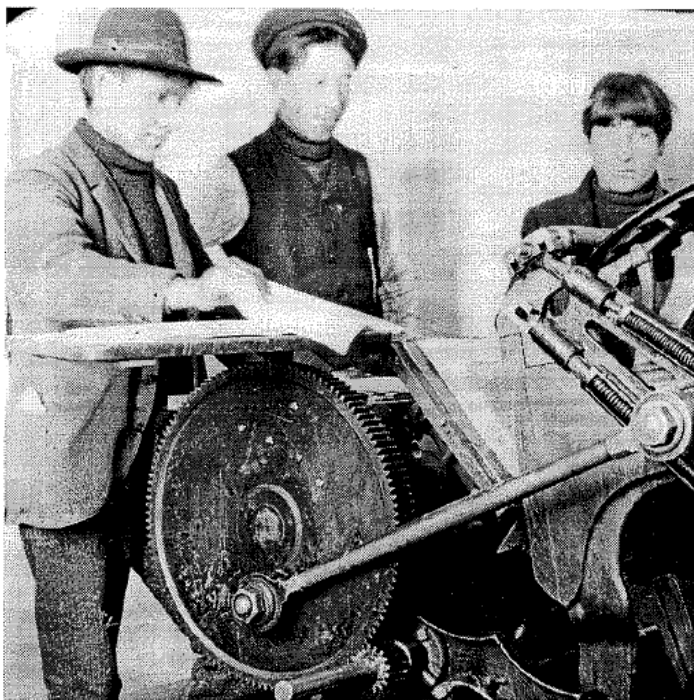


Figure 4: “Regina School Boys Operating Handpress”

1896: R-A2679, Saskatchewan Archives Board



Figure 5: "Geigaboa (Some Home Girls)"

*Na-Na-Kwa* 17.1: January 1902

BC Archives

18	OUR FOREST CHILDREN.
14. <i>I know</i> —Right-hand forefinger and thumb extended, other fingers closed, outward and downward motion with palm up.	39. <i>I am angry</i> —Closed hand in front of breast, several outward motions (anger getting up).
15. <i>Not</i> —Same motion, but with hand open.	40. <i>I understand you</i> —Right forefinger and thumb extended over right ear.
16. <i>A Chief</i> —Right hand forefinger extended, pointing inward and carried above the head as though touching the eagle feather head dress.	41. <i>I am full</i> —Forefinger of right hand held horizontally in front of stomach and raised gradually to the line of the mouth.
17. <i>Name</i> —Right hand closed, thumb to forehead.	42. <i>I am cold</i> —Both hands up in front of breast, fingers unclosed, elbows bent, shake as though with cold.
18. <i>Old person</i> —Both hands closed, thumbs upward, motion as though walking with two sticks.	43.— <i>Wolf</i> —Shake fingers of right hand outward and raise head as though scenting.
19. <i>Woman</i> —Both hands open, turned inward, motion as though stroking down the breast, beginning from above shoulders.	44. <i>I give you a horse</i> —Straighten right hand and bring right arm down on palm of left hand outward.
20. <i>Head</i> —Point forefinger to top of head.	45. <i>I give you a blanket</i> —Cross arms over breast as though cold, and then extend hands, palms inward, as though giving a present.
21. <i>Night</i> —Both hands extended together flat and palms down, move to and fro with a gentle brooding motion.	46. <i>Counting</i> —
22. <i>Morning</i> —Same as above, then open hands outward, turning the palms gently upward.	1—Show little finger of left hand ;
23. <i>Sunrise</i> —Forefinger of left hand crooked to imitate the rising sun, and move arm to represent the rising.	2—Show two last fingers of left hand.
24. <i>Sunset</i> —The same thing with right hand reversed.	3—Show three last fingers of left hand.
25. <i>Mid-day</i> —The same thing with the right hand, only straight in front and elevated.	4—Show four fingers of left hand.
26. <i>Strong</i> —Double the fists and wheel one over the other in front of the breast.	5—Show left hand open.
27. <i>Fighting</i> —Double the fists and hold in threatening attitude, one drawn up in front of each shoulder.	6—Thumb of right hand, fingers closed.
28. <i>Dancing</i> —Forefinger and thumb of each hand forming letter C, upward, and move up and down with a dancing motion.	7—Thumb and first finger of right hand.
	8—Thumb and two fingers of right hand.
	9—Thumb and three fingers of right hand.
	10—Both hands open.
	20—Open and close hands (downward) twice.
	30—Open and close hands (downward) three times.
	100—Open and close hands (downward) ten times.

Figure 6: "Sign Language"

*Our Forest Children* 2.13:17-18: December 1888

Algoma University Archives



Certain particles, prefixed to the verb, indicate the mode in which the thing is done.

*Sosh* at the end of a noun signifies that the object is past, dead, or out of date.

## VOCABULARY.

Pronounce *a*, as in father; *e*, *é*, as in they, met; *i*, *í*, as in pique, pick; *o*, *ó*, as in note, not; *u*, as in rule; *ä*, *ü*, as in but; *ai*, as in aisle; *au*, as in bough, now; *tc*, as in church; *df*, as in judge; *j*, as in jamais (Fr.), pleasure; *â*, as in law; *h*, as in German *ich*; *g*, a guttural *gh* sound.

man, numak'.	thou seest him, dahe'ish.
woman, mi'he.	he sees him, he'ish.
boy, suk numak'	he sees it, he'ish.
house, ti'i.	if I see him, mahe'kin.
boat (or canoe), minaki.	thou seest me, ma'nahesh.
river, pat sak.	I see thee, mini he'ish.
water, mini.	he sees me, mahe'ish.
fire, ma'dade.	I see myself, mi'ki hesh.
tree, ma'na.	we see each other, no'kiki-hesh.
horse, mini'se.	do you see him? da he'isha?
dog, miniswe'dute.	he is asleep, ha'nadosh.
fish, po.	is he asleep? ha'nadosha?
town, miti'na.	axe, o'manate,
kettle, medeche.	little axe, o'manat ha'ma.
knife, ma'hi.	bad axe, o'manat hi'kos.
tobacco, mana'she.	big axe, o'manat ehte.
day, hanpe.	big tree, manah te'na.
night, ishtunhe.	black kettle, me'deh psi.
yes, hun.	

ten, pi'da kosh.	he does not sleep, mahana
twenty, nopa pidak.	ni'hisha.
hundred, suk ma'ha.	we two will sleep, nunha-
come here, u'ta.	naktos.
be quick, dit sa'ta	we sleep (excl.) nuhanado'
to-day, maha'pauk.	he desh.
to-morrow, mat'ki.	we sleep (incl.) nuha'na
good morning, mapsitashish.	ktos.
Indian, a'ki nu'makaki.	do not sleep, kadeha'nata.
call themselves, natseka'-	it is not cold, ma'shini ni-
da tos.	hosh.
my hand, mun'ke	he is a man, numakosh'.
your hand, nun'ke.	it is a house, ti'ish.
John's hand, John un'ke.	God, Maho pinite'.
my knife, pta ma'hi.	Devil, maho pinihiks.
I walk, mani nosh.	heaven, ha'de.
thou walkest, dani nosh.	white man, mashi'.
he walks, di dosh.	two men, nu'make nup.
we walk, no di'dosh.	three dogs, miniswe'dute
they walk, ni'ke desh.	na'mini.
I see him, mahe'ish.	four knives, ma'hin top.
Did John see the horse? John m'inishhe dahe'sha?	
I will see you to-morrow, Matki minihe' ktosh.	
What is your name? Dida'tse matewe hedo'sha?	
Where are you going? Tewe'ta dade'hosha?	
I do not see you, Ma'mini ha'hish.	
John saw a big canoe, John minakihte'ra heish.	
I shall not go if I see him, Mahe'kin maomda'hinihosh.	
If he goes he will see you, De'kin o'ni he ish.	

Figure 7: "Notes on Mandan"

*Our Forest Children*, 3.8:85: November 1889

Algoma University Archives



TAKING NOTES.

Figure 8: "Taking Notes"

*Our Forest Children* 3.5:42: August 1889

Algoma University Archives



GETTING INDIAN WORDS.

Figure 9: "Getting Indian Words"

*Our Forest Children* 3.4:27: July 1889

Algoma University Archives



TWO LITTLE FLATHEADS.

Figure 10: "Two Little Flatheads"

*Canadian Indian* 1.7:208: April 1891

Early Canadiana Online Archives

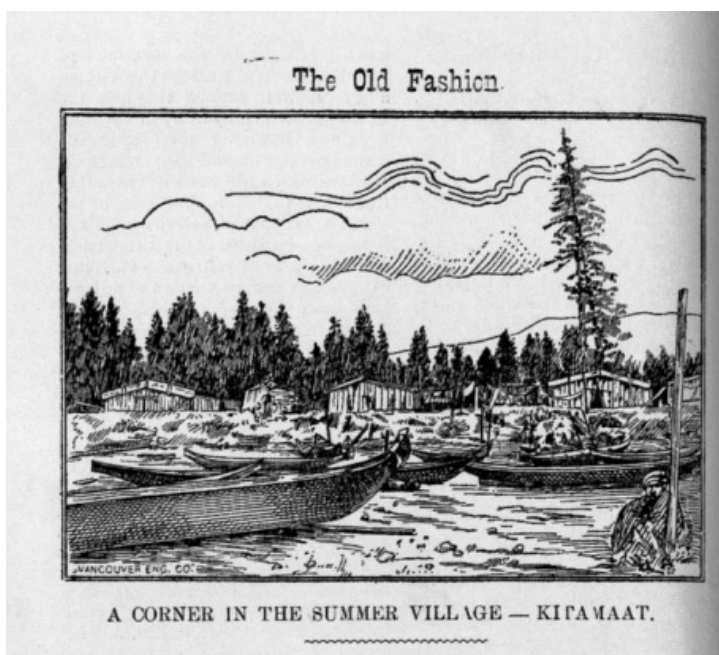


Figure 11: “The Old Fashion”

*Na-Na-Kwa* 16.6: October 1901

BC Archives

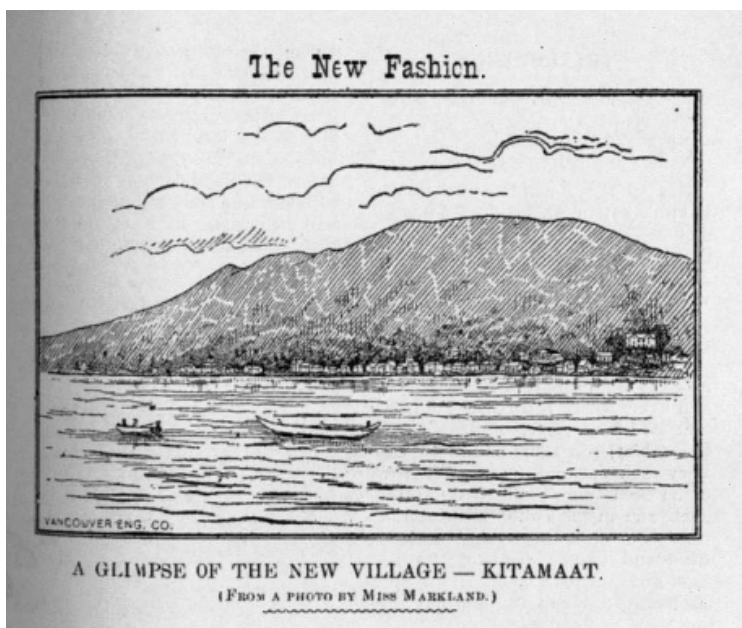


Figure 12: “The New Fashion”

*Na-Na-Kwa* 16.7: October 1901

BC Archives



Figure 13: "Kitamaat Boys at Play"

*Na-Na-Kwa* 26.1: April 1904

BC Archives

a tour through Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, and have now gone with him for a few weeks' visit to England. The eldest boy is named William Soney.

He is 12 years old, and is a Pottawatomi, from Walpole land. He has been only 2 years and a-half at the Shingwauk, and when he first came could only read very little and knew not more than a word or two of English. Now he has made such good progress that he can read in the Bird Book. He writes an excellent hand, has advanced arithmetic as far as reduction and compound multiplication, and also learns English grammar and geography. His Indian name is Pah-se-wah, which means "Coming's Way." The younger boy is named



TWO LITTLE INDIAN BOYS.

William Dosum, he is about 8 years old, and is an Ojibwa Indian, from the north shore of Lake Superior. When he first came to the Shingwauk, a year and a-

half, he was dressed in a coat of dark serge. Both the boys repeat texts of Scripture from memory, and know where to find them in their Bibles. The elder boy sings very nicely and

one or two lines at each meeting. Then they repeat a dialogue, the younger one asking the elder one where he comes from. In reply to the question, "How do you like being here?" the younger one answers, "Very much, like coming here very much." Zosie replies, "You like being here very much, like coming here very much." Later on in the proceedings the boys dress up in the costume shown in the illustration — and, by citing another dialogue, explain to the audience the

meaning of their various articles of apparel and accessories. The rattle in Zosie's hand comes from the Territory. It was made by the Cheyenne Indian

Figure 14: "Two Little Indian Boys"

*Our Forest Children* 4.4:21: July 1890

Algoma University Archives



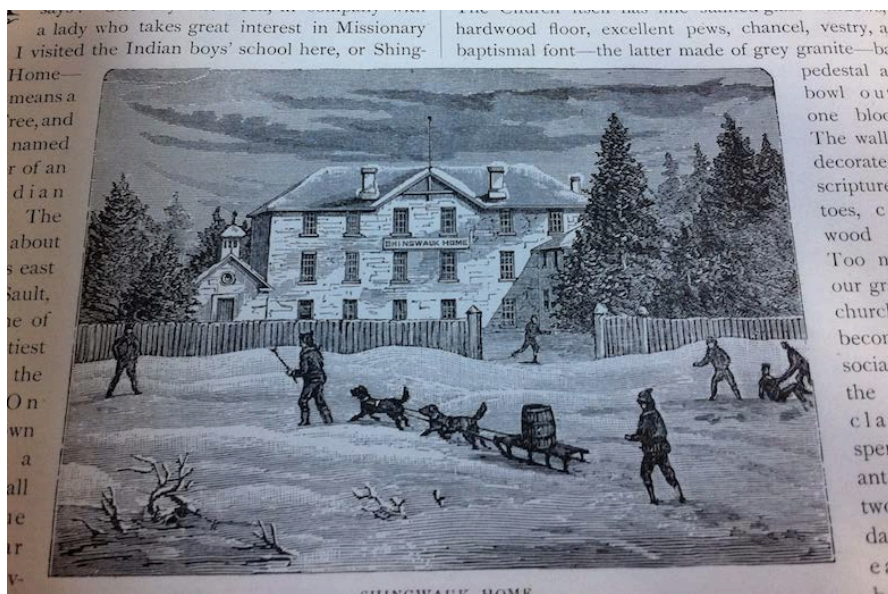


Figure 15: “Shingwauk Home”

*Our Forest Children* 1.10:1: December 1887

Algoma University Archives



Figure 16: “SHINGWAUK, CHAPEL and a General View of the Shingwauk Buildings from the river”

1880: Edward F. Wilson Fonds, Shingwauk Indian Residential School Photograph Series, 2011-016-001 (001), Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, Algoma University.

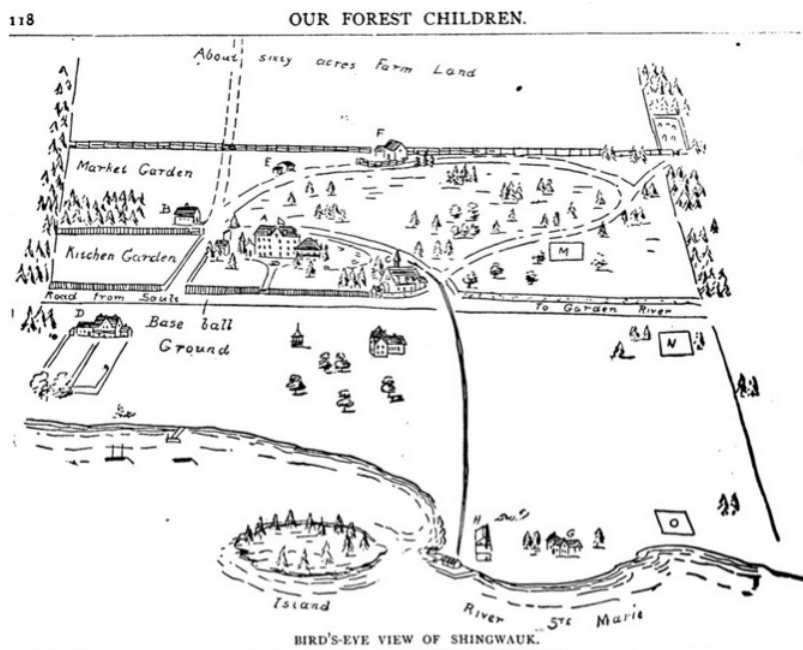


Figure 17: "Bird's-Eye View of Shingwauk"

*Our Forest Children* 3.10:118, January 1890

Algoma University Archives

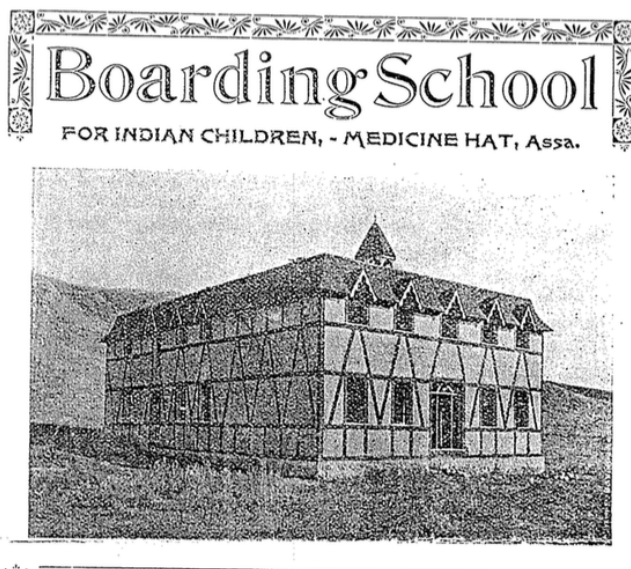


Figure 18: "Boarding School for Indian Children"

Date unknown: M69-126-23, Esplanade Archives.





Figure 19: "Site of the Proposed Home at Medicine Hat, North-West Territory"

*Our Forest Children* 3.11:130: February 1890

Algoma University Archives

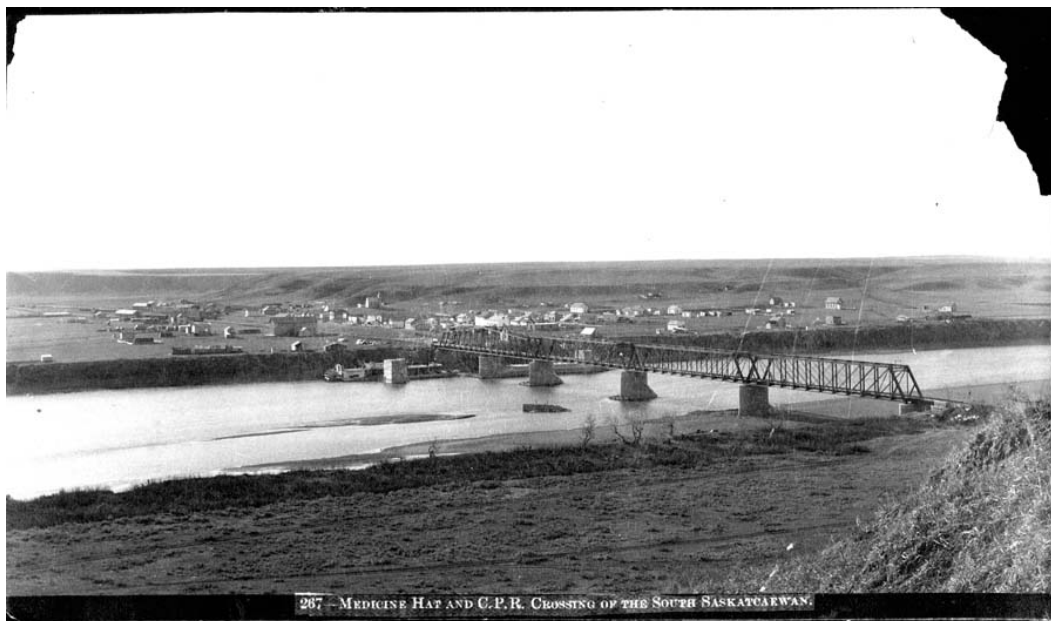


Figure 20: "Medicine Hat and CPR"

1886: 0071-0001, Esplanade Archives



Figure 21: “A View from Medicine Hat Proper, Looking South”  
Wilson’s school is visible in the far background, across the river.

Circa 1890: 0061-0001, Esplanade Archives.



Figure 22: “The Greatest Chiefess”

*Na-Na-Kwa* 14.1, April 1901

BC Archives



Figure 23: “The Secret of England’s Greatness”

Queen Victoria presenting a Bible in the Audience Chamber at Windsor. Thomas Jones Barker c. 1863. Asset number 4969: National Portrait Gallery, London



Figure 24: “A Beautiful Photograph of the SHINGWAUK PUPILS who went with Mr. Wilson to Montreal and Ottawa”

1887: Edward F. Wilson Fonds, Shingwauk Indian Residential School Photograph Series, 2011-016-001 (021), Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, Algoma University.



Figure 25: “York University Graffiti”

Author’s photograph: 2014



Figure 26: “Wilson’s Cairn”

Shingwauk Home (now Algoma University) in the background. Author’s photograph:

2015.



Figure 27: “Survivors’ Side”

Opposite side of the cairn, with a plaque and garden for survivors and the Seven Grandfather Teachings in both English and Anishinaabemowin. Author’s photograph: 2015.

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Tribes of Indians at Beren's River and Norway House with Adhesions

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River with Adhesions.

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