

Wilfrid Laurier University

Scholars Commons @ Laurier

Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive)

2019

The Examination of News Media Representation of Indigenous Murder Victims in Canada: A Case Study of Colten Boushie's Death

Latasha VanEvery
vane2670@mylaurier.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd>

 Part of the [Broadcast and Video Studies Commons](#), [Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Ethnicity in Communication Commons](#), [Indigenous Studies Commons](#), [Other Film and Media Studies Commons](#), and the [Television Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

VanEvery, Latasha, "The Examination of News Media Representation of Indigenous Murder Victims in Canada: A Case Study of Colten Boushie's Death" (2019). *Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive)*. 2158.

<https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd/2158>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive) by an authorized administrator of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

The Examination of News Media Representation of Indigenous Murder Victims in Canada:

A Case Study of Colten Boushie's Death

by

Latasha Megan VanEvery

Honours Criminology, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2015

THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Criminology

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

Master of Arts in Criminology

Wilfrid Laurier University

© Latasha Megan VanEvery 2019

Abstract

The power of media outlets such as newspaper and televised news coverage could shape public perception and influence our policies on issues addressed in the news. More specifically, the media representations of Indigenous people in Canada often include racism, stereotypical assumptions, power struggles, and inaccurate accounts of the event being captured (Johnson, 2011). As a result, the western dominant perspective of Indigenous people would not be challenged resulting in the public perceiving Indigenous people as a group to be overlooked upon. To date, existing research on the media representations of Indigenous murder victims in Canada has focused solely on missing and murdered Indigenous women and there is limited knowledge on Indigenous murdered men (Innes, 2015). My thesis addressed the gap in research through a critical race theory-informed case study analysis of media representations of Colten Boushie.

Using newspapers and televised news coverage specifically examining the first two weeks of media coverage, this thesis uncovers two competing narratives: 1) news coverage constructed Colten Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ and 2) news media supported shooter, Gerald Stanley. Additionally, my analysis found that some media coverage used a thematic framing approach to address racism in the province and nationally. These analyses led to several key findings in my research: the first was the sympathetic portrayal of Colten Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ as it challenges the common media representation of Indigenous people and victims. Secondly, the difference in the amount of newspaper and televised news coverage Colten Boushie received as certain televised news segments varied in their detail of reporting compared to newspapers sampled. Thirdly, selective media outlets ‘dehumanized’ Boushie through

narratives defending Stanley's actions as self-defence. Lastly, the media addressed the ongoing experiences of racism faced by Indigenous people in the province.

In this current study my research challenged the common stereotypes portrayed in the media regarding Indigenous people in Canada by analysing underlying assumptions. Most importantly, my study extended research in understanding how Colten Boushie was framed in news media.

Key words: Canadian Media Representation, Indigenous People, Colten Boushie, murder victims, critical race theory

Acknowledgements

I would like to recognize and acknowledge the personal harm and impact of this case that I have studied for my thesis.

I would like to take this moment to thank my thesis committee and friends/family in aiding my thesis completion.

First, I would like to thank the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for funding my research.

Dr. Welsh, thank you for your endless support and guidance throughout the thesis process as my supervisor. Your knowledge and insight on media and crime help guided my research and I am truly grateful.

Dr. Popham, a sincere thank you for being my second reader as I appreciated your insightful feedback and guidance at each writing stage. Your expertise aided in my research which allowed the enhancement of my critical thinking skills.

Lastly, thank you to my family and friends for your endless love and support throughout the years, I could have not done this without you. Your words of encouragement kept me going.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Chapter One- Introduction	1
Case overview.....	1
Overview of media representation and crime	1
Purpose of study	2
Chapter Two- Literature Review	4
Indigenous Peoples and the Canadian State	4
Theoretical approach	6
General Research on Media Coverage of Crime.....	13
Race and Crime in the Media.....	15
Indigenous People and Media Representation.....	18
Chapter Three- Methodology.....	22
Research Objective.....	22
Research Design.....	22
Data Source.....	24
Sample.....	25
Data Analysis.....	27
Chapter Four- Competing Narratives.....	29
Ideal Victim.....	30
Boushie’s Family and Friends as Claims-Makers.....	31
Thematic Framing of Stanley’s Actions.....	33

Humanization of Boushie.....	36
Media Support for Gerald Stanley.....	41
Claims-Makers and the Use of ‘Official Sources’.....	42
Media Construction of the Farm Interaction.....	44
High crime in the Area.....	47
Chapter Five- Thematic Framing.....	51
Thematic Framing: Racism in Saskatchewan.....	51
Racial Divide and Tension.....	55
Online Comments.....	60
Faulty Justice System Framing.....	63
Indigenous Lived Experiences.....	66
Media Calls for Policy Reform.....	69
Chapter Six- Discussion/Conclusion.....	74
Key Findings.....	75
Limitations and Future Directions.....	81
Conclusion.....	83
References.....	85

Chapter One: Introduction

On August 9, 2016 Colten Boushie, along with four friends, experienced car trouble and stopped in the driveway of Gerald Stanley's farm near Biggar, Saskatchewan. Following a confrontation between Stanley and the vehicle's occupants, Boushie, an Indigenous teen from Red Pheasant First Nation near North Battleford, SK, was shot dead. Public reaction to the shooting was divisive as many felt that Boushie's death was racially motivated. Stanley was subsequently arrested and charged with second degree murder, but later found not guilty of his charges. The trial lasted less than two weeks, and throughout it, Boushie's friends, family and supporters hosted peaceful rallies around the province demonstrating their support and calling for justice (CBC news, 2018). Boushie's death triggered significant media coverage throughout Canada, focussing on his background as well as his shooter's, the provincial and national protests that followed the shooting, and public reactions to the trial's details and conclusion.

The purpose of the study is to analyze news media framing of Boushie's case and thereby aid in challenging public perception regarding Indigenous issues depicted in news media. Traditional news media in the form of televised news segments and newspaper coverage are dominant channels of information-sharing. Research still consistently shows that public opinions on a range of subject matters are to some extent shaped by traditional news media (Nagy & Gillespie, 2015). Today the impact of media is increased by digital technology and the multiple sources of information at our finger tips. According to Beam and Kosicki (2014), people use print, televised, and online sources to develop knowledge about current events. The media plays an important role in disseminating information and consequently has a profound influence in our understanding of information by shaping public opinion (Nagy & Gillespie, 2015; Surette, 2011; Wilkes, Corrigan-Brown, & Myers, 2010). Similarly, media characterizations of distinctive

groups and events can impact public perceptions and potentially affect the government's implementation of policy regarding specific groups of people.

In many cases, media representations disproportionately emphasize certain stories. Crime stories, for instance, typically focus on random violent offences (Bjornstrom & Kaufman, 2010; Callanan, 2012; Chermak, 2007; Surette, 2015). According to Surette (2015), media representations of crime and justice issues adopt a “man-bites-dog” approach, focusing on rare or atypical events, subsequently influencing public perception of crime, victims and offenders (Callanan, 2012). As a result, media representations of victims of crime and offenders can reinforce negative stereotypes of certain social and racial groups (Hurley, Jensen, Weaver & Dixon, 2015). In particular, the media have continuously employed stereotypical narratives in their coverage and representations of Indigenous peoples, issues, and stories. These media narrative emphasize stereotypes of Indigenous peoples including their “dependency on welfare, alcohol and substance abuse, abusive violence toward one another...pervasive laziness and lack of ambition” (Fleras, 2011, p. 217). In contrast, Canadian news media contains limited discussion regarding the ongoing effects of colonization in Indigenous communities (Clark, 2014). Exclusions of this nature decontextualize Indigenous-colonial relations and contribute toward misinformed public perceptions.

For the purposes of the current study, I have adopted a case-study approach that extends research about the themes in media constructions of Indigenous justice issues found in newsprint and televised media. Specifically, the present study adds to the academic literature regarding the Canadian representation of Indigenous murdered men. Newspaper and televised coverage is a preferred resource due to the limited research material in this media. To reach these goals I pursued the following research questions:

- a) How are Indigenous murder victims constructed in the media?
- b) Are media portrayals or frames of Indigenous murder victims episodic or thematic in nature? That is, does the media attribute blame to victims or does the media account for historical and contemporary sociocultural factors?

In the following section I will begin by examining the patterns of victimization experienced by Indigenous people in Canada and briefly discussing the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Men inquiry (MMIWG). I will then outline my theoretical framework by providing an overview of Critical Race Theory (CRT) with a discussing of CRT's key themes and scholars. Thirdly, I will provide a general overview of the current literature on media representation of crime, from there I will provide a summary of the literature around how race and crime is represented in the media and finally the representation of Indigenous people and more specifically Indigenous men in the media.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Indigenous Peoples and the Canadian State – Crime and Victimization

In Canada, Indigenous people are disproportionately victims of crime as compared to other Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2014a). Additionally, differences in patterns of victimization are evident when contrasting Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Victimization rates, for example, are higher for Indigenous Canadians when the offender is a relative or someone they know compared to non-Indigenous people (Department of Justice, 2017). Indigenous people are three times more likely to become victims of violent crime compared to non-Indigenous people. Rates of victimization amongst Indigenous women are even greater compared to non-Indigenous women. For example, 24% of Indigenous women have been victimized by their spouse/partner compared to 7% of non-Indigenous women (Department of Justice, 2017). More specifically Indigenous people are 6 times more likely to be victims of homicide than non-Indigenous people in Canada. Indigenous men are 7 times more likely to be victims of homicide than non-Indigenous men and surprisingly Indigenous men are 3 times more likely to be victims of homicide compared to women (Statistics Canada, 2014a).

The rates of criminal victimization experienced by Indigenous women has led to numerous inquiries, including Amnesty International's (2004) report *Stolen Sisters*, which drew connections between Indigenous people's living and economic conditions and colonization. In 2005, the federal government acknowledged the violence experienced by Indigenous women, which led to the funding of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) and the development of the Sister's in Spirit campaign. Sisters in Spirit brought attention to the growing numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and called for change and recommendations (Kubik & Bourassa, 2016). Recently, in 2016 the Government of Canada

launched a national inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls as a result of numerous Indigenous communities and organizations urged the call for action (MMIWG, 2017). The launch of the national inquiry into the MMIW demonstrated the Canadian Government not only acknowledged the violence against Indigenous women and girls but also attempt to reconnect the relationships with Indigenous communities.

According to a Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) report released in May 2014, an estimated 164 Indigenous women and girls were known to be missing and an additional 1,017 murdered in the prior thirty years (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2014). These numbers continue to grow, with an additional 32 homicide cases and 11 missing in Canada in 2015 alone (MMIWG, 2017). Despite its social impact, much of the discussion surrounding missing and murdered Indigenous people had solely focused on women and lacked the attention and inclusion of Indigenous men. (Innes, 2015; Jones, 2015; Reeves & Stewart, 2017; Talaga, 2017). For instance, a doctoral student at the University of Ottawa has researched and found over 800 Indigenous men who have been missing or murdered since the 1950s (Innes, 2015). A similar research project conducted by Jen Mt. Pleasant who has compiled databases of information surrounding over 600 missing and murdered Indigenous men in Canada (Innes, 2015). Despite these studies there remains a dearth of research and knowledge about the issues surrounding missing and murdered Indigenous men, with few researchers exploring the subject.

The high volume of missing and murdered Indigenous men demonstrates that they are also susceptible to violence and victimization (Statistics Canada, 2014b). This is a trend that is often overlooked by the press in lieu of narratives of violence (Popham & VanEvery, 2018). A thorough examination of media coverage relating to the victimization patterns of Indigenous Canadians could significantly influence political and public discourses on this social problem,

providing a much-needed disruption of ‘traditional’ rhetoric. For example, in a CBC report, Angela Sterritt, an Indigenous reporter for CBC Vancouver and an award-winning journalist, explained that MMIW families have lost trust in the media reporting on MMIW as their stories are underreported and leaving out significant details about the family (CBC radio, 2017). More importantly, family members feel they have been used by the media and reports turn to stereotyping of the Indigenous women. A prime example is Stephen Harper’s comment on the seriousness of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada by stating it “isn’t really high on our radar, to be honest” which can be taken to indicate a connection between media attention and political/governmental action. (Innes, 2015).

A Critical Race Approach

This study is informed by the Critical Race Theory (CRT), which argues that “society is fundamentally racially stratified and unequal, where power processes systematically disenfranchise racially oppressed people” (Hylton, 2012, p. 1). CRT will aid in understanding the underlying themes in the media portrayal of Colten Boushie and Gerald Stanley, particularly CRT’s framing of relationships between races. To clarify, this framework focuses on identifying disparities between racial identities assumed to be *socially elite* and other races made socially invisible. This framework aids in unpacking the themes found in news coverage of the Boushie case and thus contributing toward a generalized understanding of these portrayals and their impacts. Specifically, a critical race lens develops insights about the interplay between social structure and racial hierarchy, aiming to bring about change through awareness (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). Thus through this lens, we are able to examine the relationships between dominant and racialized groups, specifically between white elites and racial minority groups like Indigenous people.

An interdisciplinary school of thought, CRT emerged in the mid-1970's as lawyers, activists and legal scholars came together in an attempt to not only study racial inequality but to also create social change. Much of early CRT is based on the work of Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman, both of whom believed the legal system had failed specifically because it neglected the discussion around race and racism. Following on the work of Bell and Freeman, other scholars emerged in the field including Kimberle Crenshaw, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia Williams (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006; Crenshaw, 2011; Yosso, 2005). Kimberle Crenshaw advocated for African American women in the legal system and argued they experience racism, sexism and are legally invisible without legal resources (Crenshaw, 2018). Mari Matsuda, an activist scholar who contributed to the discussion of racist speech in American law and urged for the victim's story of these harms to be told (Wound, 1993). Patricia Williams, interwove feminist theory and shed light on the cultural and legal representation of race and gender, particularly African American women in law. In addition, she advocated for an extension of legal writing to include personal narratives of experiences within the legal system (Mirza, 1999).

The major themes underlying CRT are built around identifying relationships between those who are in power and elite classes, either racially or socially, with those who are rendered as invisible or 'othered'. CRT scholars believe racism is an everyday lived experience for many people of colour, where races that are socially dominant can advance financially, and socially at the behest of others (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). Similarly, CRT scholars believe the term 'race' is constructed and manipulated to satisfy the interests of those in power to maintain the status quo by marginalizing specific people of colour. The implementation of news media

according to CRT is to maintain and enforce the status quo of controlling groups such as the Canadian government (Crenshaw, 2011).

The infamous 1969 white paper provides an illustrative example of application of structural power. In 1969 Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau attempted to implement a new Indian policy called the white paper to abolish the Indian problem in Canada. A white paper is issued by the government which is a policy document that can be implemented if approved by the majority (Parliament of Canada, 2017). In the eyes of the government, the white paper was a way to eliminate the classification of Indian status and Indian land by revoking their Indigenous citizenship and be classified as a Canadian citizen. However, backlash ensued against the white paper as Indigenous communities came together to overturn the policy as they felt it was another attempt of assimilation and violation of their rights as Indigenous people. As a result of numerous protest demonstrations by Indigenous groups, the government withdrew the policy in 1970 (Monchalin, 2016).

Using a CRT lens, the implementation of the white paper can be interpreted as not only an attempt to eliminate the so-called 'Indian problem,' but also a means to maintain racial dominance in Canada by taking away the rights and status of Indigenous people (Lawrence, 2003; Monchalin, 2016). The government's ability to revoke people's rights sends a message of control and power of authority, retrenching Canada's historically paternalistic approach to Indigenous peoples. Not only was the white paper about racial dominance but also it was about serving in the best interests of the government. For example, with the abolishment of Indian Affairs and other services geared toward Indigenous people, costs would be redistributed back to the government and Indigenous lands would become privatized (Monchalin, 2016). In other

words, the Canadian government would be profiting from Indigenous people through the taxation of their lands and minimizing costs as a means to sustain their superior status in society.

Another important theme underlying approach of CRT scholars is the argument that certain laws are created by the elite or politically-dominant social class. According to CRT, the political elite act to maintain economic and political control, which in turn serves their best interest (Crenshaw, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2006; Yosso, 2005). These interests often manifest as criminal laws are put forth to maintain their powerful status in society which results in problems we see in society today. To exemplify, Canadian prison populations are on the rise with much of this growth influenced by the high incarceration rates of Indigenous people, who are 10 times more likely to be accused of homicide than compared to non-Indigenous people in Canada. (Statistics Canada, 2014a). According to the Office of the Correctional Investigator Annual Report (2015-2016), as of 2016 Canada's federal correctional system is comprised of 25% of Indigenous people, contrasted against just 3 percent of the general Canadian population. Indigenous inmates are more likely to be segregated and serve most of their time behind bars compared to non-Indigenous inmates. These criminalized groups pose a threat to the control of the ruling elite class and as a solution to rid these issues are by putting these groups in prisons (Crenshaw, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2006) By using a CRT lens, we are able to understand why Indigenous people encompass a large percentage in the Canadian justice system and serve longer sentences which result from white elites maintaining social order and dominance.

The CRT framework aids in the critical deconstruction of western legal doctrine as mechanisms of control, empowering historic Canadian governments to ensure social control and order maintenance over Indigenous people who they felt disrupted and threatened the status quo (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). To this end, the 1876 *Indian Act* enacted certain laws that

prohibited specific social activities such as drinking alcohol and participating in cultural ceremonies. In fact, Indigenous people were banned from drinking, possessing alcohol and prevented entry in pool halls on and off reserves until the late 1970's (Monchalin, 2016), reflecting the threatening and violently dangerous assumptions of the 'drunken Indian' stereotype.

According to CRT scholars, victimization and violence revolves around those who are in power defining who is being victimized and what constitutes as violence (Collins, 1998; Yosso, 2005). Similarly, violence maintains racial and gender hierarchies in society which can be seen in the historical experiences of Indigenous men. The roots of ongoing violence experienced by Indigenous men, examined through a CRT lens, can be attributed to settler colonialism and European attempts to eradicate the 'Indian problem:' throughout colonization Indigenous people were subjected to European and Christian world views and ideologies which justified their mistreatment against Indigenous men and women (Comack & Bowness, 2010). Europeans dehumanized and demonized Indigenous people as 'beasts' and 'infidels' as a means to conquer and civilize them through stripping Indigenous peoples from their land and cultural identity. Europeans implemented their own government, legal systems and policies as a way to reign superior and racial dominance (Said, 1979).

The process and intergenerational effects of colonization continues to have a negative and traumatic impact on Indigenous men. Prior to colonization, Indigenous men had sustained their roles in their communities as caregivers, hunters, providers, spiritual teachers and healers. As a result of colonization, the social roles of Indigenous men were undermined through the implementation of social and gender norms of European customs (Reeves & Stewart, 2017). Traditional roles of Indigenous men were delegitimized as Europeans felt the masculinity of

Indigenous men threatened patriarchy and as a result, imposed degrading and negative stereotypes to Indigenous men as “savages” or “bloodthirsty warriors” (Levi-Strauss, 1966). Violence perpetuated on Indigenous men can be seen as maintaining racial and gender dominance in Western society, as white men distanced themselves from and degraded Indigenous men as a means to uphold their superior status and authority (Innes, 2015; Reeves & Stewart, 2017). Through the implementation of colonial views of Indigenous men, the role of masculinity has shifted toward a framing threatening and violent in modern society, affecting public perceptions. The common perception of Indigenous men as threatening and violent can be explained through hypermasculinity. For example, Comack, Deane, Silver and Morrissette (2013) investigated the lives of Indigenous street gangs in downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba. In their results they found Indigenous males were attracted to the lifestyle to achieve masculinity through power, domination and inflicting violence (Comack, Deane, Silver & Morrissette, 2013). More importantly, these behaviours result from the marginalization and legacy of colonialism that stripped Indigenous men of their masculinities (Innes & Anderson, 2015; Comack, Deane, Silver & Morrissette, 2013).

The lingering effects of colonization has led Government officials, police officers and other groups to silence and deny the legitimacy of victimization among Indigenous men. For instance, Indigenous people, especially men are excluded from positions of power in a white privileged society where their voices and experiences are silenced as they do not have the power in defining what constitutes victimization (Collins, 1998; Riel-Johns, 2016). Throughout the missing and murdered Indigenous women inquiry, Indigenous men were at the forefront of being blamed for their participation in the violence against Indigenous women (Innes, 2015). There were speculation Indigenous men were the majority of offenders involved in the investigation.

However, due to the negative and dehumanizing labels given to Indigenous men throughout colonization, stereotypes were a driving force to focus attention on them and not violence inflicted on Indigenous women by white men (Innes, 2015; Jones, 2015).

In the case of Indigenous people, the media serves as a tool used by those of authority to contain a certain political agenda to portray Indigenous people as a significant threat to social order. To illustrate, Harding (2005) noted that there is evidence demonstrating media agencies who work closely with the government fail to challenge or present contradicting views on Indigenous issues such as protest demonstrations. CRT therefore challenges the dominant ideology of white privilege and those in power through alternative research methodologies that transform, empower and draw on the lived experiences of minority groups. The implementation of narratives or storytelling according to CRT is to challenge and reduce the dominant western perspective of minority groups who have traditionally been excluded (Crenshaw, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2006; Yosso, 2005).

For the purposes of the present study, media portrayals of Indigenous people in crime stories have been assessed through a CRT perspective similar to that outlined above. Specifically, this perspective was adopted to better understand the nature of underlying racialized narratives in how the victimization experiences of Indigenous people are represented. The injustices Indigenous people receive in the media demonstrate the degraded racialized status of marginalized and minority racialized people within a white society. In addition, CRT allows for an examination of the media and its powerful role in controlling and disseminating this discourse (Hylton, 2012; Perez-Torres, 2016). In other words, for those in power it is about maintaining that control in determining what is communicated and not communicated to audiences. With regards to the media representations of Indigenous people, the media elite and in this case white

elite can silence and isolate the voices that seek justice who are considered inferior, minority, and marginalized (Callanan, 2012; Perez-Torres, 2016).

Media Coverage of Crime – General Research Findings

There is extensive research on media coverage and framing of crime and justice issues. To date, research shows that media impact the public perception of crime and victimization (Bjornstrom & Kaufman, 2010; Callanan, 2012; Chermak, 2007; Surette, 2015). Researchers have outlined key factors in determining what kind of crime stories receive significant media coverage. The first is the seriousness of the offence such as the rarity and violent nature of the offence, second is the characteristics of the offender and victim such as age (younger), gender of the victim (female) and offender (male) and occupation status such as politicians or justice officials, thirdly the increased number of victims and finally the salience of the event is dependant on the location (Chermak, 2007; Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2009). When certain acts of violence are continuously emphasised in the media, the public perception will soon believe violent crime is on the rise. For instance, this may influence the creation of certain policies or legislation in an attempt to reduce or deter criminal activity (Ambrey, Fleming, Manning, 2014; Lin & Phillips, 2014; Malinen, Willis & Johnston, 2014).

Similarly, Ambrey, Fleming and Manning (2014) studied the media's influence on public perception of crime and its impact on life satisfaction. They found evidence supporting their hypothesis, noting that the disparities between perceived and real rates of crime in one's area reduced their level of self-reported life satisfaction. A similar study conducted by Malinen, Willis and Johnston (2014) examined the media's influence on the public perception of sex offenders. Generally, when the media portrays sex offenders in the news they tend to focus on exceptional cases and fear inducing narratives such as "incurable predators" which may

influence public opinion and belief regarding sex offenders (p. 535). However, Malinen et al. (2014) demonstrated that more informative presentations of sex offenders could be influential in changing the audience's belief system and challenging the common myths about sex offenders (Malinen, Willis & Johnston, 2014).

Researchers have also looked at how news stories are framed in media and have outlined both episodic or thematic types of frameworks for news presentations. An episodic framework formatting approach treats stories as discrete events, providing little to no context, and encouraging viewers to attribute responsibility to the individual while ignoring social issues. In contrast, a thematic framing or formatting approach focuses on trends, persistent problems, and broader social factors (Callanan, 2012; Iyengar, 1996). Research has shown crime stories comprise "10 to 50 percent" of news programming which tend to episodically emphasize violent and graphic crimes (Grunewald, Pizarro & Chermak, 2009, p. 262). In a study conducted by Poindexter, Smith and Heider (2003), local television news stations were analyzed to determine how stories were presented. They found 28% of the reports were delivered by a reporter and 73% of reporters were white. In addition, they found the number of sources used in a story averaged around two that commonly used private and expert sources.

Another simultaneous consideration in the presentation of news relates to its characterization of victims and perpetrators. Generally, media research suggests that particular characteristics make certain victims more newsworthy than others (Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Jiwani, 2006; Lin & Phillips, 2014). Von Hentig originally coined the term 'ideal victim' to refer to victims that held certain characteristics which removed the label of blame in their victimization (Strobl, 2004). In following this framework, Nils Christie added to the term 'ideal victim' to encompass a more humanized portrayal to obtain a sympathetic

response from the public (Welsh, Fleming, & Dowler, 2011). For example, newsworthy victims are deemed “good” or underserving of their victimization, and are depicted in the media as innocent for being at the wrong place at the wrong time and usually attacked by a stranger (Collins, 2014; Lin & Phillips, 2014). Ideal victims commonly generate a sympathetic response as these victims, usually white female is relatable to the general public. ‘Unworthy’ or ‘deserving victims’ of crime are usually blamed for their victimization (Collins, 2014). For example, victims of sexual assault or sexual homicide are often blamed for their victimization when they engage in risky behaviours such as “drinking, using drugs, dressing provocatively or not conservatively, and especially if she engages in sex for money” (Gilchrist, 2010, p. 376).

As mentioned previously, media continuously emphasise unique and violent crimes where the victim is either blamed or sympathised for their victimization. However, in relation to the media coverage of Indigenous victims, their voices are silenced and are blamed for their victimization. Indigenous victim’s stories are unrecognized by news media because their cases do not fit or adhere to the categorization of important or newsworthy (Monchalin, 2016). As a result, their neglected stories are unheard or unpublicised which ultimately signifies their insignificance and invisibility to the public. As Indigenous victims receive inadequate media attention of their stories, the public’s knowledge of the historical and contemporary socio-cultural issues will continue to be ignored.

Race and Crime in the Media

In general, researchers have argued that different racial and ethnic groups are overrepresented in media coverage of crime in comparison to their actual participation in crime (Bjornstorm & Kaufman, 2010; Collins, 2014; Dixon & Williams, 2014; Eastman, 2015; Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Hurley, Jensen, Weaver & Dixon,

2015; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011). Studies have consistently shown African Americans are more likely to be labelled as offenders in news media (Bjornstorm & Kaufman, 2010; Collins, 2014; Dixon & Williams, 2014; Eastman, 2015; Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Hurley, Jensen, Weaver & Dixon, 2015). For instance Dixon and Williams (2014), concluded that African Americans were underrepresented as victims in media coverage.

Not only are African Americans overrepresented in media crime coverage, they are also represented as threatening compared to white suspects (Bjornstorm & Kaufman, 2010).

Conversely, media coverage that *does* address racial and ethnic groups is deemed inaccurate and cast negatively (Bjornstorm & Kaufman, 2010). To this end, Collins (2014) argues the media portrays visible minority groups as the other, subsequently classifying them as good or bad. The general public then comes to fear a specific group of people rather than a fear a crime (Collins, 2014). There have also been studies conducted on Hispanics, Latino, Asian, and Indigenous people, although this research is very limited. Indigenous people have similarly been depicted in news media as initiating social problems and disrupting social order. This common framing can be illustrated with protest demonstrations as Indigenous people were viewed and labelled as threatening to social order (Miller, 2008; Wilkes, Corrigall-Brown, & Myers, 2010). In addition, research has shown Indigenous people have been framed as “criminals” as they defy the legal system and social norms emplaced in society (Wilkes, Corrigall-Brown, & Ricard, 2010).

A notable theme within this literature is the identification of the ideal victim along gender and racial characteristics, and their influences on the accuracy, quality and sympathetic depiction in media coverage of crime (Bjornstorm & Kaufman, 2010; Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015). For instance, white people are primarily portrayed as victims in comparison to African Americans, Hispanics or Latino’s

(Bjornstrom and Kaufman, 2010; Collins, 2014; Dixon & Williams, 2014; Eastman, 2015; Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Hurley, Jensen, Weaver & Dixon, 2015). Media depictions of minority victims are continuously neglected and devalued of their victimization status. The horrific experiences of minority female victims are silenced and news coverage continues to de-emphasise the significance of the victim's story whereas victims who are of majority racial status receive significant media attention and public support who urge for justice (Bjornstrom & Kaufman, 2010). The example illustrated above can be argued through a white or racial privilege framework in understanding why one race may receive more support than another.

Bjornstrom and Kaufman (2010) found context plays a role in defining racial victimization. For instance, if there is a female victim involved in the media coverage, this impacts the possibility of not identifying the victim's race or even portraying the victim as black (Bjornstrom & Kaufman, 2010). In other words, crime news stories refer to identify the victim as white which reinforces racial privilege. Not only are researchers examining who is portrayed as the victim, but also how they are portrayed as the victim in news media (Collins, 2014).

Previous research has demonstrated non-white racial groups, such as African Americans and Hispanics, are more likely to be portrayed as the perpetrator than victim in visual forms of media coverage (Bjornstrom & Kaufman, 2010; Callanan, 2012; Collins, 2014; Dixon & Williams, 2014; Eastman, 2015; Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Hurley, Jensen, Weaver & Dixon, 2015; Yardley, Wilson, & Kennedy, 2017). Conversely, Collins (2014) found that white offender's engagement in criminal activity was generally rationalized by the media, emphasizing concepts related to intelligence, status, and welfare state failure.

Indigenous People and Media Representation

To date, very little research has focused specifically on media representations of Indigenous crime and justice issues; however existing research does show that the media has adopted an unsympathetic portrayal of Indigenous peoples and issues. Clark (2014) explains Indigenous people have continuously been framed and portrayed in news through a “Eurocentric discourse founded in Canadian colonialism” (p. 44). Examples of this Eurocentric discourse in media coverage include a focus on how stereotypical, racial and discriminatory narratives are attributed (Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015). For instance, researchers suggest the media frames Indigenous people through a historic or negative lens that emphasizes poverty, lack of education, and addiction issues (Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015). In addition, researchers have noted that Indigenous people who do not align with expected narratives – such as those with modern occupations – often remain invisible within the media and dominant stereotypes remain unchallenged (Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015).

Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, and Fryberg (2015) make a compelling argument regarding the impacts of Indigenous people receiving limited media attention, arguing that this lack of attention sends the message that Indigenous people do not belong in society (Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015). Consequently, serious psychological and emotional effects may encompass Indigenous communities through their lack of recognition in news media, in addition to the cumulative effect of historically disinterested colonial inaction.

A comparative study conducted by Clark (2014) extended research on the media representations of Indigenous people by examining the reporting practices presented by three

mainstream televised news stations (Global news, CTV national and CBC), contrasted with those on an Indigenous televised network (APTN). The results of his study indicated mainstream television news segments (Global news, CTV and CBC) have a Eurocentric framework and provide limited historical context when presenting stories about Indigenous people and communities (Clark, 2014). In comparison, APTN provided more historical context and challenged common stereotypes regarding news stories involving Indigenous people in news media (Clark, 2014). In one case, Clark (2014) noted that the shooting of a young woman in an Indigenous community was portrayed by the mainstream television stations as “gang related,” implying that Indigenous people were “problem people” who could not improve their community (p. 51).

In addition to the exclusion of their experiences from mainstream media outlets, researchers have also demonstrated that stereotypical narratives are attributed when Indigenous women are portrayed in media coverage (Monchalin, 2016). The continuous portrayal of Indigenous women in derogatory and degrading terms will impact the public’s perception of how to treat and engage in issues regarding Indigenous women. There are serious repercussions to how media frames Indigenous women as they increasingly become targets of victimization as they are viewed as sexual objects. In addition, Indigenous women are subjected to increased violence in their communities and their voices are silenced and often ignored in investigations (Doenmez, 2016; Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015).

As discussed previously much of the discussion around Indigenous people and media has focused on Indigenous women with limited inclusion and discussion of Indigenous men. Indigenous men are rendered invisible when it comes to the discussion of violence and

victimization of Indigenous people in the media. By failing to address the large numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous men, government officials, police and the public will continue to ignore the call for action and not consider this a pressing issue (Forrest, 2017; Kuokkanen, 2015; Macdonald, 2017). Media representations of Indigenous men is limited; however, when they are portrayed in media there are negative stereotypes continuously reinforced by being portrayed as inferior, savage, criminal and threatening. For instance, these stereotypes are present in in media depictions of Indigenous men during protest demonstrations such as the Oka crisis and Ipperwash disputes where Indigenous men were regarded as disrupting social order and faced calls for their isolation from society, casting them as being ‘dangerous’, ‘criminals’ and threatening beings (Miller, 2008; Wilkes, Corrigan-Brown, & Myers, 2010). This framing casts Indigenous men as risks, compelling the public to defend and protect themselves and their loved ones from the presence of Indigenous men and may resort to violence themselves (Innes, 2015; Reeves & Stewart, 2017).

There has been extensive research on the media coverage of crime and race, however usually focusing on African American victims or offenders. Likewise, the majority of research conducted on the subject has been focused within the United States. Consequently, due to the emphasis on US conducted research, findings and results neglect the experiences or awareness of Indigenous people. More specifically, there is limited research examining the construction of Indigenous men who are victims in news media and therefore, it is essential to extend research focusing on Indigenous victims in Canada. The purpose of my research will extend information on the victimization of Indigenous men depicted in Canadian news media. As discussed previously, the analysis of different forms of media consist of news print, televised news casts or online communities. However, to the best of my knowledge, there is a limited supply of

contemporary research using a combination of newsprint and televised news casts together. Therefore, my research will extend knowledge on the topic by incorporating both forms of news media, print and televised. My research will incorporate a thematic and episodic framework when analyzing the media representation of the murder of Colten Boushie. For instance, my research will examine whether or not media coverage focuses solely on individual circumstances, criminal backgrounds (episodic) or larger social problems such as issues involving colonization or poverty.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In this chapter I will provide an overview of the major methodology adopted in my study. First, I will outline the major research objectives and questions of the study. Second, I will describe my research design followed by defining my sample. Lastly, I will describe the data analysis and coding process used to identify the major themes.

Research Objective

The general objective of this study is to examine how the murder of Colten Boushie was framed in the first two weeks of initial media coverage by comparing various newspapers and televised news segments. The present study analyzed the discourse and potential differences in framing of Colten Boushie's death across different media sources. Lastly, my research provides insight into what type of information is generated and presented to audiences on Indigenous murder victims in the media, and more importantly Indigenous issues in Canada. Specifically, the following research questions were addressed in the current study:

- a) How are Indigenous murder victims constructed in the media?
- b) Are media portrayals or frames of Indigenous murder victims episodic or thematic in nature? That is, does the media attribute blame to victims or does the media account for historical and contemporary sociocultural factors?

Research Design

To examine the framing of Boushie's murder and the discourse used in this framing, the present study adopted a qualitative content analysis approach. Generally, content analysis examines print and media sources, such as the wording or images used to develop themes, through qualitative and quantitative analysis (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). Quantitative content

analysis examines the frequency or the number of times a certain word or image is used in the data (i.e., manifest content analysis); whereas qualitative content analysis examines more latent content, or the underlying meanings of certain words or images that are used to communicate (i.e. latent content analysis) (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). In the context of my research questions listed above, a qualitative analysis would enable a thorough examination of print and televised news media to unpack the underlying meanings behind the portrayal of Colten Boushie and Gerald Stanley.

This study adopted an approach referred to as an ethnographic content analysis (ECA). ECA in combination with qualitative content analysis entails a more rigorous approach interpreting media coverage, identifying how Boushie was constructed and the media framed the case. Briefly, ECA is used to “understand the communication of meaning” when analyzing various forms of documentation (Altheide, 1987, p. 68). ECA allows the researcher to continuously engage in constant comparison of identifying emerging patterns and themes in an analysis of documents. In other words, the process of ECA is very repetitive in moving back and forth from data collection, coding, analysis and interpretation of one’s data as seen in **Figure 1**, (Altheide, 1987).

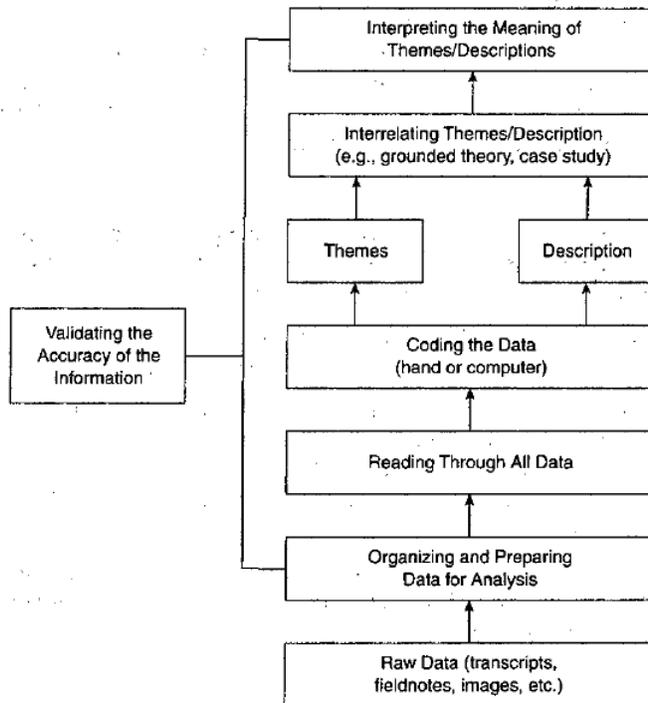


Figure 1. An example of ECA processing of data (Creswell, 2009).

Data Sources

Data was collected from eight major Canadian newspapers: The *Canadian Press*, *Post-media breaking news*, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, the *Regina Leader Post*, the *National Post*, the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Globe and Mail*, and the *Winnipeg Press*. Televised news coverage was collected from three major Canadian news stations: Global News, CTV News, and Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN). Newspapers and televised news stations were chosen based on distribution and access for the researcher. The *Canadian Press*, the *Globe and Mail*, and the *National Post* hold a national distribution market and therefore greater number of audiences would have access to these news stories. More importantly, the details of the Boushie case would reach a larger audience due to the national distribution. Whereas, the *Montreal Gazette*, *Reginal Leader-Post*, *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and *Winnipeg Press* have a local market

within their province and distribution would only be to those audiences in the area. However, newspaper companies in close proximity to the Boushie murder such as the Saskatoon Star Phoenix and Regina Leader-Post would obtain more detailed news coverage in comparison to more distant news markets.

Newspapers were accessed using the Factiva search engine from the Wilfrid Laurier University library website. In combination of utilizing both televised and newspaper coverage, a two-week period would amount to sufficient data for analysis to ensure the completion of the thesis. Newspapers within the two-week period of the case were downloaded on researcher's laptop and newspapers were selected after the completion of sample reduction outlined below. Televised networks were accessed using their online websites and news clips were saved under file in accordance to their network name. The selected networks used in this study were based on audience's accessibility to these networks. Specifically, these networks are prevalent news sources of retrieving information in Canada and majority of Canadians have access to these networks (MacDonald, 2006; PR Newswire, 2012)

Sample

This study employed a purposive sampling technique to identify my sample of relevant print media articles and televised news segments. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to “deliberately [select] cases that are most likely to provide insight into the phenomenon being investigated due to their position, experience, and or identity markers [such as] demographics, gender, race/ethnicity” (Saldana & Omasta, 2018, p. 96). Purposive sampling was used to identify Canadian newspaper articles published from August 11, 2016 to August 24, 2016 using the Factiva search engine using a key word search. The rationale behind the chosen timeframe for this study, was August 11, 2016 televised news media (CTV news) began news coverage of

the shooting and August 24, 2016 was the end of a two-week time frame of the case presented in news media. These dates were chosen to ensure enough data for sampling of both newspaper and televised media coverage of the case and to complete program requirements by a specific deadline. More specifically, these dates were chosen to analyse the stories and news coverage of Boushie and Stanley in the initial stages of the investigation and shooting.

The following key words were used to filter the news articles: ‘Colten Boushie’, and ‘Gerald Stanley’ which resulted in an initial search of 268 news articles found. To narrow down my sample a selection criterion was implemented: each newspaper article needed to contain details of the events leading up to Boushie’s death, commentary describing personal characteristics of Boushie and Stanley and discussion surrounding the aftermath of the shooting. The sample was further reduced by removing news articles that were duplicates and news articles that provided only short sentences about the Boushie case. A total of ($n = 57$) news articles were used for an in-depth qualitative content analysis: The *Canadian Press* ($n = 16$), *Post media breaking news* ($n = 7$), the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* ($n = 20$), the *Regina Leader Post* ($n = 3$), the *National Post* ($n = 6$), the *Montreal Gazette* ($n = 1$), the *Globe and Mail* ($n = 3$), the *Winnipeg Press* ($n = 1$).

Purposive sampling was also used in selecting Canadian televised news segments that aired from August 11, 2016 to August 24, 2016 using the televised news stations online websites using a key word search. The same key words were used as newspaper selection: ‘Colten Boushie’ and ‘Gerald Stanley’ which produced a search result of 26 news videos found. To reduce my sample size duplicate videos were excluded and news stories not adhering to the selection criteria as mentioned above were also excluded in the sample. A total of ($n = 13$)

televised news videos were used for data analysis: APTN ($n = 5$), Global News ($n = 2$) and CTV News ($n = 6$).

Data Analysis and Coding

I examined the text of news articles and transcriptions of news videos, focussing on the discourse around the events leading up to the shooting, the perpetrator (Stanley), the victim (Boushie), and the aftermath of the shooting. Data analysis was conducted through identifying coding categories and themes as described with initial coding that involved reading the news articles and watching the televised news videos. Codes were initially identified through general descriptions of the copied statements from newspaper and televised news video transcriptions. The transcriptions from newspaper and televised news video were copied into a word document and organized thematically based on similar descriptions and accounts. For example, when newspapers and televised video discussed the high rate of property crimes in the area following the shooting, a code was labelled 'high crime' to summarize the similar statements that discussed the increase in crime in the area. This process was carried out until all transcriptions from newspaper and televised news video were coded. From initial coding, analytic memoing was conducted about characteristics of Boushie, Stanley and broader social issues that were addressed related to the shooting. Prior to identifying coding categories, there were certain codes that were dropped due to a limited supply of data and irrelevancy to the research. Codes were then categorized by reviewing only the codes that were retained for research and grouping the codes together that shared an overall meaning. To illustrate, the codes entitled 'characteristics of Boushie', 'Needing assistance', 'Family of Boushie comments' all encompass a pattern of comparable codes that demonstrate a sympathetic portrayal of Boushie which resulted in a categorized code. The second stage involved transcribing the news videos and memoing the

visual components in news coverage. This stage of the coding process generated coding categories that identified common themes from newspaper and televised news videos as illustrated in **Figure 2**.

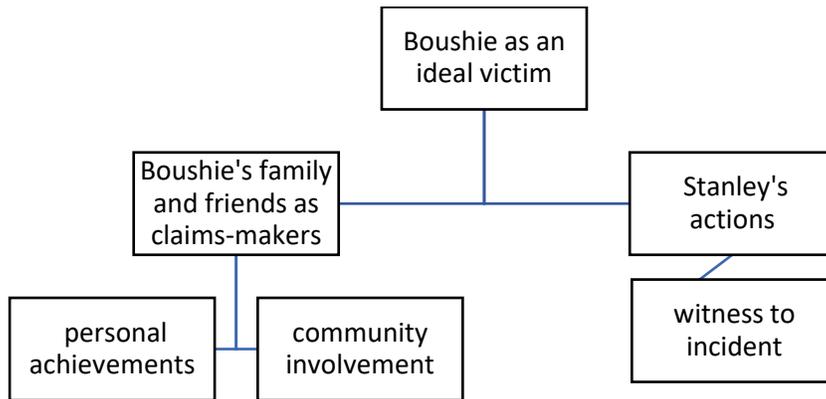


Figure 2. An example of coding process of Boushie as an ideal victim.

Chapter Four: Competing Narratives

In this chapter, I will discuss the first competing narrative that emerged in news media coverage of the Colten Boushie case. More specifically, newspapers and televised news coverage presented a competing narrative surrounding the events leading up to the shooting of Boushie. In one narrative, the media highlighted Boushie supporters' claims that the shooting was racially-motivated. According to this claim, Boushie and his friends were innocent of having a flat tire and Stanley shot Boushie out of a racially-driven fear. In comparison, in the second narrative found in the current sample, news media presented Stanley as a respectable family man who justifiably defended his property from criminals. The competing part of the narrative is in the position on whether Stanley acted in self-defence or out of fear and prejudice that was motivated by racial discrimination.

According to Capers (2014), individuals engage in “suspicion heuristics” (p. 30), which are informed by implicit biases against stigmatized racial groups. A CRT lens will be implemented to understand, question and challenge the disparities found in media discourse. For example, a CRT perspective believes laws are structured around maintaining white privilege and formal laws often serve to marginalize and obscure political, social and economic inequality (Capers, 2014; Moore et al., 2018). More specifically, CRT challenges self-defence laws and argues these laws maintain racial imbalance through the use of colour dependant standards as reasonable action (Capers, 2014).

The first narrative depicted in media coverage constructed Colten Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ by emphasizing claims-makers who supported his innocence through sympathetic comments. Claims-makers are individuals or groups who make statements on a particular issue either by professionals/experts, victims, interest groups, social movements or politicians (Cohen,

2011; Luedecke & Boykoff, 2017). News media use claims-makers as sources of information to help shape the media narrative. Claims made by claims-makers are evaluated based on their level of authority, reliability and accuracy of their statements which ultimately could persuade audiences perception (Cohen, 2011; Luedecke & Boykoff, 2017). Consequently, claims-makers used in the news media coverage could incriminate or support Colten Boushie. Specifically, these claims-maker accounts indicated that Boushie and his friends were on their way home from a day of swimming when they experienced car trouble.

The second narrative depicted in news media portrayed the shooter, Gerald Stanley sympathetically by framing Boushie and his friends as ‘criminals’ who arrived on the farm to steal which will be discussed in the next chapter. As such, this chapter will be divided into two sections: the first narrative will be examined through the use of newspapers and televised news segments separately. The following section will address the first narrative discussed in news media regarding the portrayal of the Colten Boushie.

Boushie as an “Ideal Victim”

As stated at the outset of this chapter, media coverage identified two competing narratives of the events leading up to the shooting prior to the trial. However, based on an analysis of newspaper and television coverage, one of those narratives was more common as news media emphasized a largely sympathetic portrayal of Colten Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’. News media often construct victims as either ‘ideal’ or ‘blameworthy’ in their coverage of crime (Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Jiwani, 2006; Lin & Phillips, 2014). Victims who are labelled as ideal, are more likely to be constructed as ‘innocent’, sympathetic, and relatable victimization through several means (Collins, 2014). For example, media accounts of ‘ideal victims’ may describe the individual as ‘being at the wrong place at the wrong time’. The

relatability of ‘ideal victims’ may also be accomplished by selectively reporting on positive aspects of the individuals that are outside of their victim experience or interviewing claims-makers who emphasize the humanity of the victim. Based on analyses of newspaper and television media coverage, Boushie was constructed as an ‘ideal victim’ in several ways: (1) the media focused on Boushie’s family and friends as claims-makers, (2) the media emphasis on Stanley as ‘out of control’ and Boushie as a ‘blameless’ victim, and (3) the media’s use of thematic framing by placing emphasis on the emotional impact on the family and Indigenous community.

Boushie’s Family and Friends as Claims-makers

One of the major ways in which Boushie was constructed as an ‘ideal victim’ was through a reliance on family members and friends as the primary claims-makers in the construction of events leading up to the shooting.

In the newspaper accounts included in the study’s sample, Boushie’s cousin, Eric Meechance, was one of the frequently quoted witnesses in the vehicle. In one account, he was quoted as stating “they had a flat tire and pulled into the yard for help” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A1, p. 37). A cousin, also in the car, said they were heading home after an afternoon of swimming when they got a flat tire and were looking for help (The Globe and Mail, 2016, A1, p. 9). Other claims-makers from the Indigenous community in Saskatchewan were similarly quote in sampled articles. Clint Wuttunee, a chief of the Red Pheasant First Nation, was quoted as saying, “They just had a flat tire” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A1, p. 37)

These claims-makers’ perspectives were largely integrated into media constructions of the events leading up to the shooting. A Montreal Gazette article, for example, reported:

Earlier this month, 22-year-old Boushie was returning from a swimming excursion in rural Saskatchewan when the car he was travelling in with friends pulled on to a farm near Biggar, west of Saskatoon. His family says the group was seeking help for a flat tire. Farmer Gerald Stanley approached the visitors with a weapon. Words were exchanged and a shot was fired. (2016, A1, p. 3)

Similarly, televised news coverage portrayed Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ by reporting Boushie and his friends were on the Stanley farm seeking help with a flat tire. According to an APTN report one of the witnesses stated, “Boushie was one of five people in a vehicle were reportedly got a flat tire and pulled up to this farm for help about 5:30 on August 9th” (2016, V4). Similar reports also addressed Boushie and his friends experienced problems with a flat tire as stated in a Global News report, “Many say that a vehicle had approached the Stanley farm last Tuesday had a flat tire and the people inside needed help” (2016, V1). As previously mentioned, Boushie’s family was a primary claims-maker in stating they experienced car trouble as illustrated in a quote from CTV news who reported, “Family of the victim previously told CTV news he was shot when the car he was in drove onto a farm yard looking for help with a flat tire” (2016, V6).

In summary, much of the media coverage included in this study’s sample constructed Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ through a reliance on friends and family as primary claims-makers. The narrative from these claim-makers constructed a sympathetic picture of Boushie and his friends as young adults “needing assistance”. The accounts of a ‘flat tire’ and “bad luck” serves to imply that there was an element of chance or fate that led to the shooting incident, thereby increasing Boushie’s relatability to readers and viewers. Most readers could arguably relate to this experience of having car trouble such as a flat tire and therefore the need to seek help. When the news media incorporates the flat tire story in connection to the shooting it portrays Boushie

sympathetically as an underserving murder victim. This portrayal of Boushie as ideal challenges the common representations of Indigenous people in media through the emphasis placed on a sympathetic construction (e.g. Collins, 2014).

Thematic Framing of Stanley's Actions

A second way in which sampled media sources constructed Boushie as an 'ideal victim' was through a critical examination of Stanley himself and his actions. Specifically, several media accounts of the shooting denied Stanley's 'self-defence' narrative. Instead, the media framed Stanley's behaviour in reference to widespread systemic racism against Indigenous people prevalent in the area. As such, a strong narrative emerging from media accounts was that Stanley acted out of exaggerated fear rooted in prejudice rather than in self-defence. In addition, thematic framing may help audiences better comprehend Stanley's actions and place his behaviour in relation to historical and sociological context. More specifically, media coverage relied on claims-makers statements which constructed Boushie as relatively "blameless" while simultaneously constructing Stanley as "out of control".

In several articles included in the study's sample, the perspectives of claims-makers in the car with Boushie emphasized Stanley was acting "out of control". For example, Post Media (2016) reported that Boushie's cousin:

"Eric Meechance who was in the car, told Saskatoon's CKOM that the driver tried to back out and collided with another vehicle. Meechance says he and the driver were already fleeing on foot when Stanley fired several shots. Boushie was apparently killed while still in the vehicle" (A2, p. 63).

Similarly, the Saskatoon Star Phoenix (2016) reported:

“The panicked driver - not Boushie - tried to drive away, but the flat tire and broken front window resulted in the vehicle colliding with an unoccupied parked car. At that point, Meechance said he became even more fearful of the armed man, who was yelling, "Get the f--k out of here." (A1, p.36)

Another account from Meechance’s perspective in the Canadian Press (2016) reported that:

“That guy just come out of nowhere and he just smashed our window. Running is probably what saved all of our lives, you know, because if he's going to shoot one, he's probably would have shot us all. He wasn't shooting to scare us. He was shooting to kill”. (A1, p. 143)

Consistent with this narrative, televised news coverage also constructed Stanley as “out of control” through the reliance of claims-makers and the language emphasized in the brief moments on the Stanley farm. For example, in a CTV news report, Boushie’s cousin talked about the events leading up to the shooting:

“Boushie’s cousin who was with him when he was killed has told CTV news that a group was driving home to the Red Pheasant First Nation when a tire blew and that they pulled over to a farm yard in Glenside looking for help, he said a man came out of no where and smashed the cars windshield and when the group tried to drive away they ended up hitting a parked car, his cousin told CTV when he tried to run away that’s when he heard gun shots.” (2016, V3).

A witness who was in the vehicle at the time of the shooting was also quoted in an APTN news report stated “we were just trying to get help with a flat tire when Stanley came out and smashed the window before firing the gun” (2016, V5).

Claims-makers' statements also emphasized that Boushie and his friends were not a threat to the man who smashed their windshield. For example, Boushie's uncle Alvin Baptiste stated, "... his nephew and four others were unarmed when he was killed, allegedly shot in the head by the landowner on property near Biggar" (Regina Leader Post, 2016, A1, p. 33). Similarly, Boushie's cousin Eric Meechance also stated they, "were unarmed and neither attacked nor threatened the man" (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A1, p. 36). In other words, the media is implying Boushie and his friends were at the wrong place at the wrong time when Stanley came out of nowhere. In support of constructing Boushie as an innocent bystander, major claims-makers informed the news media that Boushie and his friends were not a threat.

The description of Stanley out of control was not emphasized in every news source: The Saskatoon Star, Canadian Press, National Post, Post Media, APTN and CTV addressed this narrative. In every news source that did address Stanley's behaviour that evening was consistent in portraying him as threatening and violent. The divisions in news sources capturing this portrayal of Stanley illustrates media outlets defining what is newsworthy and non. Specifically, by not including the description of Stanley as out of control in other news sources aids in shaping the narrative around blaming Boushie. Thereby excluding alternative or opposing accounts regarding that evening reinforces one narrative which impacts audience's perception of Indigenous groups.

In summary, through the use of televised news coverage and newspaper reports, Colten Boushie was constructed as an 'ideal victim' through the thematic framework portraying Stanley as "out of control". News reports would emphasize the language of claims-makers and thematically provided context of Stanley's actions which resulted from his racist ideologies of stereotypical behaviors of Indigenous groups. When media coverage portray Colten Boushie as

an innocent victim challenges the common stereotypical depictions of Indigenous people in media. By emphasizing Boushie's blameless actions in the events upon the arrival to the farm challenges the depiction of Indigenous men as blameworthy.

Humanization of Boushie

A third way in which Boushie was constructed as an 'ideal victim' was through a thematic framework that focused on claims-makers' accounts that humanized Colten Boushie. Thematic framing examines societal forces and changes in society which allow the public to understand what social factors were involved in a criminal case (Surette, 2015). In relation to the Boushie case, a thematic approach would allow news media to focus on systemic factors such as colonization and racism. Through this framework the media may have humanized Boushie by placing his victimization in context of Stanley's behaviour who faced racial prejudice. To support this thematic approach, much of the news coverage sampled in the current study focused on the emotional impact of Boushie's death on friends, family and community through quotes in the aftermath of the shooting.

Newspapers provided emotional and personal statements made by Boushie's friends and family regarding the aftermath of Boushie's death. One comment in the Globe and Mail made by Boushie's mother Ms. Baptiste quoted below expressed her shock and ultimately her denial of accepting the news of her son's tragic death:

When RCMP told Ms. Baptiste that her son was dead, she begged her family to come with her, to drive to look for Coco. Mr. Boushie's older brothers called him Coco when they were too young to pronounce his first name. "She kept saying: 'Let's drive around. Maybe somebody dropped off Coco out there and we'll find him and bring him home,' " Linda Baptiste, one of Mr. Boushie's

aunts, said in an interview outside Red Pheasant's community centre this week.

"She wouldn't believe that he was gone. So they drove her around." (2016, A2, p. 5)

Similar statements included heartfelt and expressed emotions of the family's grief and personal heartache surrounding Boushie's death. For example, a family member was quoted stating, "We are devastated. We are hurt. We are all in shock," Baptiste said. (Regina Leader Post, 2016, A1, p. 33). The feeling of emotional loss can be seen in the grandmother's statement, "I have so many questions." Boushie's kokum (grandmother), Verna Denny, sat at a table frequently weeping, yelling and shaking her head throughout the afternoon. "I will never forget my grandson," Denny said (Regina Leader Post, 2016, A1, p. 34).

Similarly, there were comments and statements made by Boushie's brother William Boushie as he expressed his anger, sadness and grief surrounding his brother's death. In one statement outlined in the Canadian Press William says:

"[he]took the light from my eyes." "He went to have a good time at the lake. He promised me he was going to come home. Instead he comes home in a casket. Racism plays a part in this," he said. "I hope I can find forgiveness in my heart in the long run but, right now, I'm grieving. I'm hurt ... I'll never get him back."

(2016, A4, p. 79)

Boushie's family and friends have expressed their sadness and loss; however, the Red Pheasant First Nation Chief Clint Wuttunee also commented about how Boushie's death has impacted the native community, stating "Red Pheasant Chief Clint Wuttunee said the past two weeks have been difficult for his community and everyone is still hurt." (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016 A19, p. 2).

Televised news coverage also addressed the mourning and sadness of Boushie friends, family and supporters through interviews. For example, a CTV news report depicted Jackie Crowe, a rally organizer, sharing her grief and struggling to hold back tears while talking about what Boushie's mother is going through. This imagery was paired with her powerful statement that "I was thinking of her and her pain and what she must be going through, her family, the cousins, the aunts, the uncles, the grandmother- the grandmother broke my heart" (CTV, 2016, V6).

Visual media coverage often constructed Boushie as an 'ideal victim' through the use of emotional impact statements from claims- makers in the aftermath of the shooting, focussing on the emotionality of claims- makers who expressed their grief, loss and sadness as a result of the death of Boushie. Through the emphasis of claims- makers statements, the media strategically incorporates quotes from Boushie's friends, family and supporters who discuss their emotional pain and the impact of the shooting has had on them. Consequently, by narrowing in on claims- makers statements, news media projects a relatable situation of losing a loved one. Furthermore, it allows audiences to obtain a sympathetic understanding towards Boushie's friends and family which reinforces Boushie as an ideal victim.

In addition, the visual depiction of emotional statements from friends and family urged empathy from audiences. Specifically, exposing viewers to heartfelt and sympathetic interviews connects claims- makers with notions of sincerity. Media coverage also focused on claims- makers' personal statements that humanized Boushie through details of his positive characteristics and contributions to the community. In a Regina Leader Post article, a description given by Boushie's mother Ms. Baptiste provides readers with a brief overview of Boushie's accomplishments and strong work ethic in his community:

Baptiste said Boushie was a hard worker who volunteered his time for elders, cutting wood, doing yard work and more. Boushie had taken training in firefighting, First Aid, CPR and short-order cooking. He wanted to be a firefighter or work in a northern camp, Baptiste said. "He knew he had these things he wanted to do. He knew he had to train for it," Baptiste said. "He was a hard-working young man." (2016, A1, p. 33)

Similarly, televised news coverage also incorporated claims-makers who described Boushie's positive attributes as a good, respected person of his community. For example, in an APTN interview Boushie's cousin, Jade Tootosis stated he will be, "remembered as someone who was a role model for other youth...My cousin was a hard-working person and he loved his family, he loved his community, he was an active member of the Native American church, he loved his culture and he was proud of who he was and where he came from, and we are going to miss him" (2016, V5). Similarly, Boushie's aunt Christine Denny stated, "Colten [Boushie] didn't deserve this he was a very young man who was good, he was a good boy he didn't, he didn't deserve to die like this." (APTN, 2016, V2).

News coverage constructed Boushie as an 'ideal victim' by selectively depicting claims-makers and their statements about the positive characteristics of Boushie. News reports would highlight Boushie's accomplishments to show audiences he was a hard worker within his community. When news media incorporated the positive attributes of Boushie in relation to the aftermath of the shooting, it demonstrated to audiences that Boushie was a good person who did not deserve to die. The media highlighted Boushie's character to show he was incapable to commit or engage in deviant behaviour. In combination of a thematic frame involving the emotional impact of Boushie supporters and highlighting the respectable characteristics of Boushie, the media reinforced the underlying narrative of racism. In other words, the media

placed emphasis on these positive descriptions of Boushie to show he was another victim of systemic racism in the province. Furthermore, it allows audiences to develop a sympathetic understanding of the family and community's loss through the humanization of Boushie.

This process was also evident in media use of imagery depicting Boushie. In particular, a family photo consisting of a close-up photo of Boushie wearing eye glasses, a baseball cap, and a t-shirt, in which he was slightly smiling at the camera with his hand slightly covering his mouth or rested on his face would often be depicted while claims- makers spoke about his personal accomplishments, characteristics and the emotional impact the shooting has had on the family a photo would be displayed on screen. This form of coverage reinforces the humanization of Boushie and visually demonstrating he was a good person. More specifically, when news media would address the claims- makers statements about Boushie either with a photo of Boushie or not, overshadows the thought of Boushie's criminal behaviour. In other words, by having the media focus in on the positive characteristics of Boushie, there is no discussion or implied gesture to think Boushie was involved in criminal activities. More importantly, the media's portrayal of Boushie challenges common depictions of Indigenous men as violent and criminal, as news coverage shed light on the humanizing qualities of a community leader.

Summary

Media coverage often places labels onto victims who are characterized as ideal or blameworthy depending on their experiences. An 'ideal victim' is considered when their victimization is innocent and relatable through sympathetic portrayals. News media emphasizes certain positive characteristics of the individual through claims- makers as a way to humanize the victim. In accordance to the case study of Colten Boushie, the media implemented these

approaches to construct Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’. Through analysis of newspaper and televised news coverage of the case, the media constructed Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ by emphasizing major claims- makers who argued Boushie and his friends experienced car trouble, secondly the media focused on the language of claims- makers who described the arrival onto the Stanley farm and lastly media coverage emphasized emotional impact statements and positive attributes of Boushie through friends and family.

However, according to research on the media portrayal of Indigenous victims they are commonly blamed for their victimization (Fidan & Doenmez, 2016; Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015). In relation to the Colten Boushie case, the media portrayal has challenged the common depiction of Indigenous victims. Specifically, the media is constructing Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ through emphasizing sympathetic statements to support Boushie as an innocent victim. The discussion of how the portrayal of Boushie challenges the common stereotype will be addressed more in-depth in the discussions chapter.

Media Support for Gerald Stanley

Based on analyses of sampled media coverage, a second competing narrative that emerged can be generally characterized as a sympathetic frame of coverage for the shooter, Gerald Stanley. Specifically, in this narrative, Boushie and his friends were constructed as “criminals” who arrived on the Stanley farm to steal. The media’s sympathetic portrayal of Stanley is consistent with traditional media coverage of employing an episodic framework. When news media use episodic framing it places responsibility on individuals and ignores possible societal factors (Surette, 2015). News media supported this narrative in several ways including: relying on ‘official sources’ of information, secondly the language used to describe

the brief moments upon the arrival to the Stanley farm and lastly the media referring to high crime in the area. Through the use of an episodic framework, media coverage portrayed Stanley sympathetically and place blame onto Boushie and his friends. The media's sympathetic portrayal of Stanley can be explained using CRT as the discussion of media accounts reinforce traditional power imbalances. The media narrative of 'self-defence' is continued, however emphasis is placed on defending one's property and is align with the U.S. 'Stand your ground' laws which allows the use of lethal force in situations where an individual perceives a threat of harm (Humphreys, Gasparini & Wiebe, 2017). According to CRT, laws are generated in aims of creating and maintaining racial order which keeps minorities/Indigenous people under control to achieve the interests of white supremist and preserve the status quo (Moore et al., 2018).

Claims-Makers and the Use of 'Official Sources'

One of the ways in which the media constructed Gerald Stanley himself as an 'ideal victim' was through relying on 'official sources', such as official statements from the RCMP. That is, some media coverage gave more legitimacy to official sources as claim-makers. 'Official sources' cited in this media coverage suggested that there was a pending investigation into Boushie and his friends, thereby characterizing Boushie as at fault. Media outlets relied on and emphasized the RCMP's initial press release following the shooting and neglected to incorporate alternative sources of information.

Newspapers would frequently refer to the RCMP's official media release for quotes as illustrated in a Regina Leader Post report outlining the occupants in the vehicle were taken into custody for a related theft investigation:

...three occupants of the vehicle - one woman, one girl and one man - were taken into custody as part of a related theft investigation, police said. Police later identified and located a fourth boy who was in the vehicle. All of them have

since been released ...charges are still being considered with respect to some property-related offences pending further investigation. (2016, A1, p. 33)

In a similar report, the Saskatoon Star Phoenix reported the occupants were under investigation for theft and taken into custody: “The news release issued by RCMP after the shooting said the people in the vehicle were under investigation for theft and were taken into custody” (2016, A2, p. 34). A National Post (2016) article, included a statement from police who stated, "charges are still being considered with respect to some property-related offences pending further investigation” (A1, p. 6). However, in comparison televised news coverage briefly reported the vehicle occupants were taken into custody for a theft related investigation, however they were released and not charged. In a Global News report they stated, “police initially took them into custody for quote, a related theft investigation ” (2016, V1).

Media coverage constructed Stanley as “another” victim of property theft by referring to ‘official sources’ such as the RCMP to gather information about the shooting. News outlets would integrate the rise in property crime and theft in the area when reporting the details of the events leading up to the shooting. Media reports would emphasize certain quotes from the RCMP that implied Boushie and his friends were on the Stanley farm to steal. This reliance on the RCMP and “official statements” as a primary claims-maker served to construct Stanley as a victim rather than the offender That is, media constructions of Boushie and his friends as potential criminals who were in the process of committing a crime infers that was a victim defending his property.

The media’s portrayal of Boushie and his friends as potential thieves in the investigation reinforces the common stereotypical depictions of Indigenous people in media. Through the use of episodic references, news media would emphasize responsibility onto the individual while

ignoring larger societal factors when it comes to the coverage of crime stories (Surette, 2015). In connection with episodic framing, the media formatted the news coverage to place blame onto Boushie and his friends as potential thieves rather than examining contextual issues that may have influenced Stanley's interactions with them. The use of the RCMP's media reports supports the common media narratives of Indigenous men as blameworthy rather than an ideal victim media. Through the media's emphasis placed on Stanley as a victim of potential property theft reinforces the stereotype of Indigenous people as criminal beings.

The media's over-reliance on the RCMP's initial press release, and subsequent distribution of these comments as fact, may have misinformed the public: official sources such as the RCMP carry a level of authority that audiences may believe trumps other accounts, particularly in criminal investigations (Cohen, 2011; Luedecke & Boykoff, 2017). More importantly, using the RCMP lends itself to be a credible source and using outside sources either to discredit or oppose the information will be difficult. The use of official sources was prevalent and consistent among newspapers and televised news coverage. In newspapers, the authors would introduce the report made by RCMP or state 'police/RCMP said' regarding the moments shortly after the shooting. Similarly, televised news segments would also introduce the report or state police released information following the shooting. In addition, while the anchors were speaking on the report, visual footage would show police vehicles and officers standing on the roadside near the incident.

Media Construction of the Farm Interaction

A second way the media constructed Gerald Stanley as an 'ideal victim' was through the language used to describe the brief interaction between Boushie and Stanley prior to the shooting. Some media coverage focusing on a verbal altercation between Boushie and Stanley,

using language that insinuated Boushie was trespassing. Specifically, while some media accounts emphasized the needing assistance, other accounts emphasized a heated exchange. When examining the narratives of ‘needing assistance’ as compared to a ‘heated exchange’, some print and televised news coverage chose to emphasize heated exchange. For example, there were three newspaper companies that did not address the heated exchange entirely (Saskatoon Star, Canadian Press and Winnipeg Press). Whereas, televised news coverage briefly addressed the heated exchange narrative in comparison to needing assistance.

Newspaper articles would describe the interaction between Stanley and Boushie as heated when the group was confronted on Stanley’s property as reported in a National Post article:

Twenty-two-year-old Colten Boushie was killed on the afternoon of Aug. 9 after a group of young natives returning home from a swim outing pulled their car into the driveway of a farm near Biggar and were confronted by the owner.

Following a heated argument, Boushie was shot while still in the car (2016, A3, p. 1)

Here the author’s use of the term ‘natives’ provides a telling example of the insinuations that accompany representations of Indigenous peoples in the media. Historically, the word ‘native’ has been associated with negative imagery including ideas of being savage, violent in the views of the colonizers (Henderson & Romeo, 2015). Furthermore, the referencing of Boushie and his friends as ‘natives’ is disrespectful and insulting to the Indigenous community as it degrades their status, othering them as lesser beings (Monchalin, 2016).

The media’s framing of Boushie and his friends as trespassers on private property offers a justification for the verbal altercation that occurred. For example, a Globe and Mail report explained:

The RCMP said Mr. Boushie and others drove to the Stanley property and the landowners did not know them. RCMP said there was then a verbal confrontation. A gun was discharged and Mr. Boushie was killed (2016, A1, p. 8)

Televised news coverage similarly emphasized a verbal confrontation between Stanley and the vehicle's occupants. For example, a Global News report described the interaction as confrontational and stated that "when he and three friends allegedly drove onto a farm and an altercation ensued" (2016, V3). Similarly, according to APTN "there was a so-called verbal exchange a weapon was fired, Colten Boushie died at the scene by a gun shot wound" (2016, V5). Much of this coverage also constructed Stanley's behaviour as justified through the language used to describe that they were on private property: In one case, CTV News emphasized that Boushie and the vehicle's other occupants were unwelcome on Stanley's farm, stating that "a car entered a private yard near Biggar, Saskatchewan about 20 kilometers north of the town, that's when a confrontation broke out and had a fatal end" (2016, V1). In a Global news report, they also described the events leading up to shooting however, emphasized he was on private property (2016, V3). In accordance with CRT, this framing implies a sense of absolute land ownership necessitating the violent actions of Stanley in the name of defense.

The presentation 'fact' in news media offers a compelling mechanism by which elite interests can influence the public ideologies (Henry & Tator, 2009). One of the ways the media can influence public opinion is by shaping it through emphasizing and excluding certain information. In the case study of Colten Boushie, some media outlets neglected to address Boushie and his friends had car trouble and constructed the interaction between Stanley and the vehicle occupants as violent. Through this type of media coverage, audiences may be only

receiving one side of the perspective and alternative sources excluded which ultimately shapes their opinion in believing a blaming narrative regarding Boushie. When media coverage emphasizes Boushie and his friends were trespassing on private property which resulted in a heated altercation with Stanley reinforces the narrative of Indigenous people as violent criminal beings. For news coverage to rely and resort to the stereotypical narratives of Indigenous men in media, audiences will become accustomed to these portrayals in real life.

High Crime in the Area

A third way in which the media constructed Gerald Stanley as an ‘ideal victim’ was through references to the prevalence of crime in the community. Numerous media reports emphasized examples of farmers’ experiences with theft and trespassing. Referrals to existing crime rates in coverage of the shooting could serve to link characterize Boushie as a potential offender, thereby justifying Stanley’s use of force as a form of self-defence. The use of personal accounts from farmers in the area of the murder implicitly attributes criminality to Indigenous peoples. Newspapers would emphasize this point by discussing high crime rates in nearby communities; for example, one report in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* stated observed of the Battlefords region of Saskatchewan that “even before the Boushie killing, the region had one of Canada's highest crime rates” (2016, A8, p. 24). Similarly, a *Canadian Press* article quoting local counsellor Brian Fornwald indicated that “many farmers have been victims of theft, and it gets their "dander up." (2016, A7, p. 23). For the media to include statements of farmers past experiences of property theft in the area may imply Indigenous communities are connected to these incidents. In other words, the media is subtly stating Indigenous communities maybe to blame for the rise in property thefts in the area.

In support of Stanley, media coverage provided descriptions of the setting which would support and imply Stanley's act of self-defence from the resulting increase of theft and violence in the area. To illustrate, an article published in the Saskatoon Star Phoenix describes the setting as violent and criminal, stating that "The context of life in rural Saskatchewan will be considered, where increasingly vandalism, thefts and occasionally grotesque acts of violence befall some farm families that are alone and living miles away from help." (2016, A12, p. 19). In many cases, local incidents of victimization were directly attributed to Indigenous people as the primary offenders. For example, a Globe and Mail article quoted a local resident who blamed Indigenous groups for the recent number of thefts and break-ins by stating:

"The First Nations come on to our property and they steal," he said. "They don't work, they are always looking for handouts." Asked for evidence to back up the claim indigenous people are responsible for waves of thefts, Mr. Nездoly said: "The stolen property is usually found on a First Nations reserve, trashed. Ninety-nine times out of 100, that's usually the case. The perception that they got, they earned. (2016, A2, p. 6).

Adding to these sentiments, televised news coverage frequently constructed Gerald Stanley as an 'ideal victim,' framing his actions as another victim of property theft. News coverage however briefly mentioned, nonetheless the prevalence of high crime in the area of where the shooting took place. For example, in a CTV news report it addresses past occurrences of theft related instances by stating, "Now we have heard from property owners in the area saying that crime has been an ongoing issue" (2016, V3).

Televised news coverage depicted similar opinions coming from local residents, particularly the self-defence narrative as a justified response to the high crime rates in the area. For instance, a farmer interviewed during a CTV newscast stated "someone comes onto my land

and they have the intent of stealing something or hurting me, I'm going to protect myself however I can;" and in another interview one man added, "I don't believe you should you know randomly take the law in your own hands but if you're afraid you've got to look after yourself too and your family" (CTV, 2016, V2). In this particular statement they implied a justification of violence as a measure to reduce revictimization. To have the media justify this sort of behaviour sends a negative message of retaliation in supporting violence inflicted upon those who steal.

By connecting the shooting with crime occurrences in rural Saskatchewan, the media effectively portrays Stanley as another victim and Boushie and his friends as thieving criminals. This is emphasized by the propagation of self-defence discussions, which in effect justify Stanley's actions. The media framed Stanley living in a crime ridden area of theft and violence and used force as the only means necessary to rid the threatening people off his property. In justifying Stanley's actions, he was just another victim of potential property theft and resorted to violence to defend his property and himself. Furthermore, by having claims-makers incorporated into the discussion of self-defence, the victim narrative reinforces the construction of Stanley as an innocent farmer defending his property. The implementation of claims-makers in news media could strengthen the argument of self-defence as politicians, past victims of property related theft and professionals (RCMP) made similar reports to the media. Consequently, these groups hold authority and reliability of their statements which would shape the narrative of self-defence.

In addition to reports referring to high crime in the area, there were also reports of local residents blaming the Indigenous community for these crimes. When media coverage includes opinions from local residents who claim the Indigenous community is to blame for the majority of property related crimes, it not only supports but reinforces the construction of Boushie and his friends as criminals. In addition, this narrative can be placed in the larger frame of systemic

racism and the prolonged effects of colonialism regarding Indigenous people. That is, local claims-makers citing these stereotypical and degrading opinions of Indigenous people demonstrates a dominant colonial view (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006; Crenshaw, 2011; Yosso, 2005). The justification of Stanley's actions according to a CRT perspective illustrate a white male defending his property from a perceived threat both physically and socially. In other words, Stanley believed his property and his personal body was in danger from a threatening group of Indigenous youth.

Summary

Through the analysis of media coverage, a second competing narrative emerged which described the shooter Gerald Stanley as an 'ideal victim'. Consequently, Colten Boushie and his friends were characterized as criminals who arrived on the Stanley farm to steal. News reports relied on official sources, emphasis on the language that claimed a heated argument between Boushie and Stanley, and emphasizing property crime as an ongoing issue. News coverage would resort to stereotypical depictions of Indigenous people such as criminal, violent and threatening which blamed Boushie and his friends on the Stanley farm. In theory, media coverage emphasized the portrayal of Stanley as sympathetic in comparison to Boushie as a way to maintain racial hierarchies in the province. In other words, the media degraded Boushie as a victim to retain the portrayal of Indigenous people as inferior.

Chapter Five: Thematic Framing

According to Iyengar (1996) and Callanan (2012), news stories are framed in media as episodic or thematic. Briefly, an episodic framework portrays stories as discrete events, providing little to no context. Episodic framing encourages readers and viewers to attribute responsibility to the individual while ignoring broader social issues. In contrast, a thematic framing or formatting approach focuses on broader social factors and issues (Callanan, 2012; Iyengar, 1996). The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how much of the media coverage adopted a principally thematic framing of Colten Boushie's death. In many cases, for example, newspaper and televised media coverage included conversations about systemic racism in relation to the shooting of Colten Boushie. The media accomplished this framing technique by citing claims- makers emphasizing the issue of systemic racism in the province, addressing racial tensions in the province, racial online comments, faulty justice system, the lived experiences of Indigenous people and lastly a call for change in public policy.

The following section will discuss how claims- makers addressed the issue of racism in the province as one way the media thematically framed the case. News coverage put into context the shooting of Colten Boushie in relation to an ongoing social issue of systemic racism. Through the use of implementing a thematic framing technique, the media would allow historical, social and political understandings of Indigenous people to showcase Boushie died as a result of Stanley's racial prejudice.

Thematic Framing and Systemic Racism in Saskatchewan

Much of the media coverage sampled in the current study used a thematic framing technique by emphasizing claims- makers who openly addressed systemic racism in the province. Following the shooting of Colten Boushie, several media reports highlighted racism in

the province as an ongoing issue experienced by Indigenous people. For example, in one article, the Saskatoon Star Phoenix (2016) defined racism as:

“At its core, racism is the belief that members of each race have certain innate or inborn moral and social traits, qualities and abilities specific to their race and these biologically possessed characteristics make that race inferior or superior to others. Within this is prejudice based on negative stereotypes and a resulting discrimination that is often humiliating, belittling and disadvantages the victims of racism.” (A12, p.18).

In a second Saskatoon Star Phoenix report, author Jordon Cooper states that racism is a lived experience of most Indigenous people in the country, writing “Racism has always been a part of our story. It's not just Saskatchewan. Whatever the dominant culture is in this world, it has looked down at what it saw as lesser races, cultures, and different skin colours.” (2016, A18, p. 6). It is important to note that Jordon Cooper was a vocal community member in Saskatoon who recently passed and often published critical pieces in the Star Phoenix (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2018). In a Post media report, Indigenous leaders also addressed racism in the province. For instance, chief Bobby Cameron of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) stated "It is important to point out that racism is a reality in the daily life for Indigenous peoples in Saskatchewan." (2016, A7, p. 3).

Of particular interest, the Saskatoon reporter generalized the issue of racism as a national, rather than a provincial problem. Cooper was critical in his reporting about Saskatoon, as he felt the city was misrepresented in the coverage of high crime in the area. Cooper may have been deflecting the significance of ‘local’ racism in the area by saying it is not just us, everyone is racist. On the contrary, FSIN chief Bobby Cameron explicitly states Indigenous peoples continuously face racism by residing in Saskatchewan. Cameron is implying that the specific

experiences of racism that Indigenous people face are far greater than any other province in the country and should be treated as such. The public debate regarding the prevalence of racism demonstrates the power media has in controlling the narrative of racism against Indigenous people. This particular example demonstrates the media's disregard of the specific experiences of Indigenous people in the province: which may result in the voices of Indigenous leaders to be over looked upon and become silenced.

Similarly, in the Canadian Press Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall also commented on racism in the province, saying "some of the racism that has come to light since the shooting death of a 22-year-old Cree man is a national problem...racism is not unique to Saskatchewan, nor is it somehow more prevalent in the province as some have suggested." (2016, A8, p. 5). Also, in other newspaper accounts, they include Wall commenting on the issue of racism in the province as the articles talked about racism, the aftermath of the shooting and online commentary. In a Saskatoon Star Phoenix article, Wall similarly comments on racism by stating, "there is no room for racism in Saskatchewan" (2016, A20, 1). Walls comments regarding racism in the country illustrates the reinforcement of the issue and generate social progression in education of Indigenous history. The use of thematic framing was accomplished by citing claims-makers from a variety of different positions as it was not just Indigenous people being quoted about racism. The Premier of Saskatchewan has also acknowledged it is a contributed factor. The fact that different groups of claims-makers have been quoted in the media and are saying the same thing increases the power of the argument.

Televised news media similarly addressed systemic racism through thematic framing techniques. In a CTV news interview, the Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde addressed racism in the province who stated, "Racism isn't isolated from

Saskatchewan it's right across Canada and that's uh something that a lot of our people face everyday and in the era of reconciliation, the spirit of reconciliation it shows you how much work we have to do together, collectively in this country to get rid of racism and discrimination” (2016, V4). The frequent referencing of racism in reporting of the Boushie shooting is consistent with a thematic framing approach to news stories. Thematic framing in news coverage consist of formatting the story to address persistent and broader social factors and or problems (Callanan, 2012; Iyengar, 1996). Therefore having the news coverage highlight racism as an ongoing issue in the province and country illustrates a thematic framework to gain audiences attention on the matter.

Following the shooting, media coverage emphasized claims-makers statements to highlight racism as an ongoing issue across the country. More importantly, when news coverage incorporates the views of Indigenous leaders on the lived experiences of Indigenous people, it demonstrates how important these issues need to be brought forward to audience's attention. Furthermore, coverage of Bouhsie's shooting that simultaneously placed the event within a larger social issue of systemic racism services to stress that his death was not an isolated incident. Rather the thematic coverage adopted by several media sources attributes broader social factors as playing a causal role. Consequently, by having the media discuss and incorporate the issues of racism in the province and in the country generates awareness to audiences. For media reports to address racism in the province through the use of claims-makers illustrates one of the primary goals of critical race theory. For example, the CRT aims to bring awareness of social and racial inequalities in the province which is demonstrated through Indigenous leaders generating awareness of the continued issues with racism in the country (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006).

Racial Divide and Tensions

In several articles, journalists described race relations as tense and heightened between the Indigenous community and local residents of Biggar, Saskatoon. Prior to the shooting, non-Indigenous residents in the area have been on edge due to ongoing experiences of vandalism and was reported being one of the highest crime ridden areas in Canada (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016). In addition, Indigenous lawyer Eleanore Sunchild commented on the Battleford area and stated it has a history of “more than 100 years of stereotypes and racism building” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A2, p. 4). The tension between the Indigenous community, who feels that Boushie’s death was a result of racism and is seeking justice, and the non-Indigenous community that is blaming Indigenous people for theft in the area and thus jeopardizing their sense of security. For example, one Saskatoon Star article stated that the “shooting death of Red Pheasant Cree Nation member Colten Boushie is exposing growing tensions between some First Nations, rural residents and the RCMP” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A2, p. 34). Another article published in the Globe and Mail not only referenced racial tensions emerging from the shooting, but contextualized those tensions as existing prior to Boushie’s death:

“The death of a young man, allegedly shot by Gerald Stanley, has exposed the tensions between the First Nations communities and their neighbours in the province. But to the indigenous population, who have faced racism for years, his death comes as no surprise”. (The Globe and Mail, 2016, A2, p. 5)

Similar to the media’s focus on systemic racism discussed in the previous section, media reports referencing the shooting and its aftermath in a broader context of ongoing racial tensions illustrates a thematic framing approach. Specifically, several media reports in the sample focused on these broader racial tensions rather than discussing the interaction between Stanley and

Boushie or their individual characteristics. For example, statements that “racial tensions have flared since Boushie was killed” (Canadian Press, 2016, A3, p. 119) or “The death has sparked outrage, highlighting racial tensions in Saskatchewan” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A10, p. 22) develop focus on broader sociological issues such as substance abuse, health problems, housing and education.

Televised news coverage similarly incorporated a thematic framing approach to discuss racism in the province. For example, an APTN report addressed racial tensions in the community from the resulting charge against Stanley, stated “That charge has caused simmering racial tensions in Saskatchewan to boil over” (2016, V4). Similarly, in a Global news report they address racial tensions in the community however referencing fear as stated, “Some officials fear intensifying racial tensions” (2016, V1). The statements surrounding racial tensions highlight a potential threat of social disruption and violence between Indigenous groups and non-Indigenous groups. When reports associate racial tensions with fear, it implies Boushie and Stanley supporters may get out of hand and inflict violence on each other. As a result, this anticipation of violence was seen in community leaders advocating for community safety. Consequently, media reports are subtly referring to racial stereotypes of Indigenous groups as inferior, disruptive and violent by referencing fear of racial tensions. News reports also included discussions of a social divide between local residents. For example, an article by the National Post states that, “the incident became symbolic of a deep social divide” (2016, A1, p.5). Similarly, the Globe and Mail addressed a racial divide between local residents following the shooting of Boushie as stated, “the details leading up to Mr. Boushie's death on Aug. 9 are part of a second-degree murder case that has exposed Saskatchewan's racial divide and heightened the distrust between the province's indigenous citizens and their neighbours” (2016, A2, p. 5).

The media's persistent framing of a social divide between local residents and the Indigenous community aligns with CRT critiques of media, particularly as a means of showcasing ideologies of the powerful. Media outlets are predominately owned and directed by white elites whose interests lie in maintaining social divides, thus benefiting from the construction of blame – such as the implication that Indigenous people as a whole, and Colton Boushie specifically are to the primary instigators in these conflicts. Similarly, a CRT lens identifies how these reports of social conflict implicate Indigenous groups as problem people who threaten non-Indigenous communities and their ways of life. Consequently, audiences may interpret Indigenous peoples as troublemakers, reifying longstanding stereotypes.

In an interview, Robert Innes commented on the racial divide in the area and stated, “the situation shows the community divide. You can see that the racial tension is basically a tinder box in Saskatchewan,” (The Canadian Press, 2016, A1, p. 144). He goes on to explain that “the racial divide isn't going to be solved any time soon. When people are celebrating the death of an indigenous man and calling for the killing of more indigenous men, we have to acknowledge that there is racism in this province.” (The Canadian Press, 2016, A3, p. 120). In support of a thematic framework, the media relied on Indigenous claims-makers from a variety of backgrounds such as a University professor to strengthen the narrative. Consequently, by including the variety of claims-makers it showcases the importance and credibility of what they are talking about in regards to systemic racism in the province. These claims-makers have either experienced or know someone who had encountered racial prejudice within the Indigenous community and thus, their reliability is credible.

When media coverage includes an expert opinion on an issue, it connects these opinions with a high degree of knowledge and background on the subject matter, thus insinuating a sense

of authority. Similarly, it showed audiences that the media had a credible source to support and strengthen their narrative. The media coverage involved a discussion of how the crime not only occurred among systemic racism but that racism fuelled the crime. Through this framework the media adopted a thematic framing technique that was frequently giving space to claims-makers who discussed race and racism as a causal factor. In one article, for example, community members were not surprised a crime like this happened as racial tensions were always present and felt racism played a major factor in the shooting (The Globe and Mail, 2016). Similarly, FSIN commented on the shooting and felt it was, “a crime based on race and needs to be prosecuted in that manner” (Post Media Breaking News, 2016, A1, p. 76).

According to CRT, the media is a tool used by those in authority to maintain their political agenda in portraying certain minority groups as a threat to social order (Crenshaw, 2011). However, one of the goals of CRT are to challenge the dominant ideologies of those in power through personal narratives from the perspectives of minority groups (Crenshaw, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2006; Yosso, 2005). In relation to the Boushie case, Indigenous supporters of Boushie urging the media to frame the case around systemic racism illustrates the primary goals of CRT. Indigenous leaders and advocates are implementing their personal experiences of systemic racism in the community to challenge the dominate western perspective which traditionally frame Indigenous people as problem people. As Indigenous leaders speak out about the lived experiences of racism, this implies Boushie was another prime example of racism that ultimately turned violent which led to his death. In other words, Indigenous leaders are advocating the case to not be prosecuted as self-defence but rather a case of systemic racism. Another illustration of media focus on racial tensions emerged from criticisms of the initial RCMP press release. That is, Indigenous leaders felt the report was biased. For example, FSIN

Chief Bobby Cameron commented that the RCMP "provided just enough prejudicial information [about Boushie] for the average reader to draw their own conclusions that the shooting was somehow justified "(Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A2, p. 35).

Media coverage further contextualized the RCMP press release within a broader scope of ongoing racial divides and tension within the community. In one newspaper interview, University of Saskatchewan professor Robert Innes argued that farmers in the community have blamed Indigenous groups for theft in the area in the past:

"their mentality is to protect their property...so there's this real fear and contempt towards indigenous men by many white people, to the point where they will shoot before asking questions." (The Canadian Press, 2016, A1, p. 144).

Consequently, by having Indigenous groups and allies bring attention to the shooting of Boushie as a race-based crime instigates conversation about race and racism in the country. As one reporter wrote, "racism happens when someone becomes a target not for what they did but for what they look like, or, in this case, where they live" (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A12, p. 19). However, televised media coverage did not include discussions of the shooting as a crime based on race specifically. Only one televised segment, aired on the APTN news, provided a thematic context when William Boushie (Boushie's brother) statement that "racism plays a part in this" was aired (2016, V2) The lack of conversation about the racialized context of Boushie's death raises important questions about the television media's presentation of events.

Media coverage used thematic framing techniques to describe racial tensions in the province following the shooting of Colten Boushie, primarily by reporting on a social or racial divide between local non-Indigenous residents and the Indigenous community following the shooting. This was achieved through the use of claims-makers who framed Boushie's death as a

raced-based crime, insinuating that the shooting was not an isolated incident. For the media to include reports like this illustrates a critical race perspective in understanding relationships between racialized groups such as Indigenous peoples. According to Fleras (2011), the representation of Indigenous people and their relations with non-Indigenous groups are usually dysfunctional. In addition, Fleras (2011) goes on to state, the media frames the relationship as a “conflict of interest...[and] Indigenous peoples are framed as troublesome constituents who have problems or who are problems” (p. 215). In relation to the Boushie case, the framing of racial tensions in the community supports the continued portrayal of Indigenous groups as problem people. Consequently, the continuation of framing Indigenous people as a problem to society could have serious implications. As Fleras (2011) outlined, “the framing of indigenous peoples and issues by mainstream media will profoundly influence and shape public discourse, political debates and policy developments” (p. 215).

Online Commentary

In many cases, media reports described and included social media comments following the shooting of Colten Boushie to contextualize conversations about race and racism. The following section will examine media reports about social media commentary following the shooting of Colten Boushie. To include the examination of media commentary will allow us to understand the opinions and beliefs of non-Indigenous people regarding the case of Colten Boushie. In addition, the views and opinions of non-Indigenous people will be situated against systemic and racist ideologies.

Several newspapers reported on social media postings following the shooting of Colten Boushie, which frequently attributed blame to Boushie while calling upon stereotypical archetypes. For instance, a Post Media report described the online comments as indicative of

beneath-the-surface racism, writing that “the fatal shooting of Red Pheasant Cree Nation man Colten Boushie has exposed the substantial ugliness that remains. In what can only be described as hate and racism, hundreds of online comments have inflamed an already tense and tragic situation” (2016, A4, p. 56). Similarly, the Saskatoon Star Phoenix reported on dominant messages of hate occurring online, noting that “...the posting on another Facebook page entitled "Saskatchewan Farmers Group" (since shut down) that saw Ku Klux Klan-like racist comments, including "shoot them, breed like rabbits anyways" and "He should have shot all five of them (and) given a medal" and "his only mistake was leaving three witnesses." (2016, A16, p. 10). In addition to threatening and racial stereotypes of Indigenous people commented on social media, newspapers also heavily emphasized the language used by Ben Kautz, a second-term councillor, for the Rural Municipality of Browning who posted “In my mind, his only mistake was leaving witnesses” (Regina Leader Post, 2016, A3, p. 2).

Vitriolic online campaigns led Premier Brad Wall of Saskatchewan to condemn this commentary and urge local residents to rise above intolerance. As presented in a National Post article, Wall evoked legal means when considering the provinces’ response:

“This must stop," he said. "These comments are not only unacceptable, intolerant and a betrayal of the very values and character of Saskatchewan, they are dangerous. There are laws that protect citizens from what this kind of hate may foment. They will be enforced." (National Post, 2016, A1, p. 5).

The Premier’s response to this language the media exemplifies the impact of claims-makers in affecting public discourse. To reiterate claims-makers are individuals or groups who provide commentary on certain issues and their statements are evaluated by their authority and accuracy

which could persuade and shape the media narrative (Cohen, 2011; Luedecke & Boykoff, 2017). Wall's threat of use legal means in response to online comments following Boushie's death, illustrates his authority and severity of the issue, as well as the urgency of this matter. Additionally, a Canadian Press article provides National Chief [of the Assembly of First Nations] Perry Bellegarde's reaction to what he called "racist, derogatory comments" about the incident. It's a stark reminder of "how much work we have to do to eliminate racism and discrimination," (2016, A1, p. 144).

Televised news coverage similarly addressed the racial online comments posted on social media following the shooting of Colten Boushie. Televised news segments would also include examples of racist online comments as illustrated in an APTN report which refers to Boushie as, "is he (the young man killed) one of the chugs that was in the car?" and in a similar comment Boushie's death is referenced as, "Whatever he's brown bread now" (2016, V4). Supt. Rob Cameron of the RCMP addressed the media regarding the racial online comments, stating, "it's understandable during a situation like this, emotions run high but it's important to let the court process run its course, therefore I ask everybody to remain respectful in their online communication" (APTN, 2016, V4).

News reports would emphasize racialized comments posted on social media following the shooting of Colten Boushie, taking a thematic approach to unpacking racism in the province. The media's attention to racist commentary online in this case was demonstrative of the continued social issues faced by Indigenous people like Colton Boushie in Saskatchewan and across Canada. The degrading and stereotypical narratives described in reports illustrates and supports literature regarding Indigenous peoples and critical race perspectives. For instance, research has continuously addressed the stereotypical and racialized comments that have been

directed at Indigenous groups (Fleras, 2011). Consequently, the online racialized may be further legitimized through media coverage, continuing the cycle of degradation, dehumanization, and the social and racial barriers experienced by Indigenous communities (Hylton, 2012). These concerns notwithstanding, the condemnation of racism present throughout the sampled media may provide opportunities for the audience to develop a broader perspective of social issues rather than focusing on one individual.

Faulty Justice System Framing

A third way in which coverage of the Boushie shooting was presented as thematic framing was reflected in the numerous references to a ‘faulty’ criminal justice system in Canada. Drawing on Surette (2011), one of the five explanations of crime employed by the media is the ‘faulty criminal justice system frame’. This concept draws on popular sentiment that crime results from a lack of “law and order,” marking the justice system as lenient and inefficient (Surette, 2011, p. 38). The ‘faulty justice system’ concept was frequently presented by Indigenous supporters who argued continuously throughout the period under observation that the justice system is biased and unfair when it comes to the treatment of Indigenous people in Canada. For example, North Battleford lawyer Eleanore Sunchild drew attention to the fact that Boushie’s family was not notified by RCMP of Stanley’s court appearances, or the presiding judge’s decision to grant Stanley bail. Sunchild goes on to say these notifications are standard practice and that she felt “the system is already showing its bias... this is the way the system is - the system doesn't work for indigenous people” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A15, p. 12).

In a similar interview, University of Alberta professor of Native Studies and Political Science, Dr. Adam Gaudry, also referenced Indigenous people’s lack the confidence in the justice system, noting:

“I fear this is only the beginning of a justice system that will give Gerald Stanley the benefit of the doubt and put the victim on trial, Gerald Stanley gets bail because the courts treat white folks as rational and redeemable.” (The Canadian Press, 2016, A5, p. 49)

In relation to the lived experiences with the justice system, newspapers also referred to experiences with policing in Indigenous communities. Indigenous leaders have addressed the increase in police presence in the Red Pheasant community and FSIN youth representative Andre Bear feels, “the release of Stanley has sent the wrong message to First Nations in the area. Since then, there has been a strong police presence in North Battleford, particularly in and around Red Pheasant. (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A19, p. 2). Similarly, Red Pheasant chief Clint Wuttunee commented on the police presence and feels “it disheartening because it sends out the wrong message (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A19, p. 2).

Similarly, televised news coverage included discussions of lived experiences of racism by emphasising racial profiling and harassment from police within the Indigenous community. Local residents from the Red Pheasant reservation spoke about their experiences with police as Sabrina Peeaychew (Colten Boushie’s aunt) says “they have been patrolling out here I guess and stopping at peoples yards, uh flashing their spot lights at their homes um pulling into yards um as well as peaking into windows you know um I’m not too sure why they were doing that?” (APTN, 2016, V1). In a similar interview, Tash Baptiste also spoke about harassment at the hands of the RCMP, stating that she was “getting stopped, um for no cause just like last night they asked why they were driving up and down townsight um this is a reserve we have relatives at every house and you know it’s not a crime to go jump in your vehicle and go visit somebody” (APTN, 2016, V1). Red Pheasant First Nations Chief Clint Wuttunee also commented on the

police presence in the area and stated “community members don’t feel safe...there’s a large paranoia that their just here to uh hassle us, to hassle the community members” (Global News, 2016, V3). Even FSIN youth representative Andre Bear commented on the atmosphere with police around, “a lot of us are being very scared to uh even travel around” (Global News, 2016, V3). FSIN chief Bobby Cameron also commented on the justice system as called for “equal justice for equal crime” as “There’s been many instances and cases out there where a First Nations was charged with a lesser offence but remained in custody until sentencing” (Global News, 2016, V3)

The inclusion of Indigenous advocates and supporters demonstrates its potential for affective change, as the issues pertaining to Indigenous people were from advocates and Indigenous groups whereas non-Indigenous sources were absent in both types of media coverage. Indigenous groups voiced their messages of change to pertinent social issues that continuously affect Indigenous communities. Media coverage empowers Indigenous groups and advocates to communicate the lingering effects of colonialism and systemic racism to future generations. As previously mentioned, media coverage did not include non-Indigenous claims-makers to speak about the intergenerational effects of colonialism and current issues faced by Indigenous communities. In contrast, the exclusion of non-Indigenous claims-makers may demonstrate their lack of education and/or media outlets chose not to include non-Indigenous sources. More importantly, these omissions may exemplify the intrinsic value of their ‘newsworthiness.’

From there the conversation can start at the beginning of colonization and the historical experiences of Indigenous people and thereby open discussion residential schools, discriminatory legislation, and the harmful legacies that were imposed upon Indigenous people in Canada.

Media coverage implemented a thematic framing approach to address problems with the Canadian Justice System. For news coverage to include claims-makers statements regarding the justice system as biased and unfair allows audiences to become aware of the larger social issues they are faced with. Similarly, it educates the audience by acknowledging Indigenous people continuously face injustice when involved with the Canadian justice system. Thereby having the news media include statements of injustice shows audiences there are larger social justice issues that need to be addressed and considered with regards to the shooting of Colten Boushie.

When news coverage discussed Indigenous leaders and supporters called the Canadian justice system as faulty and unequal supports past literature and a critical race approach. For example, research has addressed Indigenous people have continuously faced injustice and inequality within the justice system such as incarceration rates in Canadian prisons (Crenshaw, 2011). Similarly, the experience of racial inequality and injustice supports the CRT perspective of maintaining racial hierarchy by a white superior group (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). For the media to include the personal lived experiences of Indigenous people supports one of the goals of CRT. The inclusion of personal narratives of minority groups such as Indigenous people challenges the white dominant perspective. Through the implementation of Indigenous voices in media coverage sheds light on these experiences but also an attempt to change the narrative regarding Indigenous people.

Indigenous Lived Experiences

In addition to focusing on Racial Divides and Tension, media coverage of the Boushie shooting frequently focused on the broader lived experiences of Canadian Indigenous peoples and its relationship to racism and racial tensions. According to FSIN chief Bobby Cameron, "It is important to point out that racism is a reality in the daily life for Indigenous peoples in

Saskatchewan." (Post media Breaking News, 2016, A7, p. 3). Indigenous supporter Paulete Poitras similarly addressed racism in the one media article, stating:

"It's 2016 and these types of things are still happening. And the ignorance of it all is everyone just believes if you don't talk about it, it's going to go away, and I don't think it's going to go away by just silencing it. You have to be able to give it a voice." (Post Media Breaking News, 2016, A5, p. 39).

With this in mind, Indigenous leaders have addressed the news media regarding the negative experiences of Indigenous youth in the province. For example, FSIN youth representative Andre Bear said, "there is a growing concern that First Nation youth will travel in fear and be targeted because of the colour of their skin. Our young people should not have to live in a state of fear because of hate" (Post Media Breaking News, 2016, A1, p. 76). Bear was further quoted as stating, "it's not easy being a young First Nations male in this province. It's always a hostile environment when we are walking in our own lands" (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A19, p. 2). Consistent with these comments, Red Pheasant Chief Clint Wuttunee similarly states, "We're scared it's open season on us." (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A1, p. 37). To have Indigenous leaders speak about real and potential violence inflicted upon themselves and the rest of the Indigenous community demonstrates the harsh experiences Indigenous people have to live through to readers.

Indigenous lived experiences and the relationship to the Boushie shooting was also referenced in media through a focus on socio-economic issues. For example, a Montreal Gazette (2016) article stated that "there are too many unsettled land claims, too many reserves without clean water or safe homes, too few opportunities for youth, too many homeless. And too many racist attitudes" (A1, p. 3). In addition to the discussion surrounding the lived experiences of

Indigenous people in Canada, The Globe and Mail (2016) included a brief summary from Statistics Canada's 2011 National Household Survey and outlined,

“43 per cent of Red Pheasant residents were unemployed, compared with 6.7 per cent in its entire census division; household income on the reserve in 2010 was \$19,091, compared with \$60,434 everywhere else; and a large swath of the reserve's residents lack education. Saskatchewan has the highest rate of aboriginals in correctional services, at about 74 per cent, despite representing only 12 per cent of the adult population.” (A2, p. 6)

Televised news coverage also addressed the lived experience of Indigenous people, albeit briefly. There was only one televised news segment from Global News that described the experiences of Indigenous youth and members of authority as outlined in an interview from Andre Bear FSIN Youth Representative who stated, “I'll still get followed around in the malls, uh people think that I'm stealing stuff like that, um you get treated differently the moment when people see that you're First Nations” (2016, V3). The majority of televised news coverage stressed the experiences of Indigenous people particularly with the criminal justice system and police, however there were limited to absent discussions of the pertinent social issues facing Indigenous communities such as poverty, housing, education, health and substance abuse. It is important to note, APTN did not address the lived experiences of Indigenous people as maybe the audiences hold prior knowledge of these issues.

Overall, news reports would discuss the larger socio-economic issues facing Indigenous communities such as housing rather than focusing on individualistic traits of Boushie or Stanley illustrating a thematic approach. Similarly, media coverage would address Indigenous communities experiencing threat of violence and fear of safety, thereby illustrating ongoing

social issues in the country. For instance, rather than specifically discussing the lived experience of Boushie, news media addresses a broader social framework in connection to the shooting. By having the media address these experiences supports critical race theory understanding of inequality and social problems (Hylton, 2012). Alternatively, the continued presentation of Indigenous people as impoverished, subjugated, and colonized may have had a detrimental impact on public perception and may have been withheld for that reason.

Media Calls for Policy Reform

In addition to focusing on systematic racism and racial divides in the province, there are several examples of media coverage calling for broader policy reform shooting of Colten Boushie. In one Saskatoon Star Phoenix article, Sweetgrass First Nation Chief Lorie Whitecalf criticized current government policy, stating that “words are just words” and “the attitude toward First Nations people has not changed in 150 years and wanted to know what the province was going to do about it” (2016, A19, p. 2).

Following the shooting of Colten Boushie there were numerous rallies and demonstrations calling on justice for Boushie and an end to racism. The messages behind the rallies were generating awareness of Indigenous issues in the province but also the country (APTN, CTV, Global News, 2016). By having Indigenous groups voice their issues at public rallies signifies the importance to bring these issues to public and government attention. Specifically, the inclusion of public rallies for Boushie may generate more awareness of current and ongoing issues of injustice in relation to missing and murdered Indigenous men in Canada. Through a thematic framework, the rallies help shape the narrative in the context of systemic racism and consequently, audiences would understand the importance of these issues.

As illustrated one rally organizer interviewed called upon the government to address racism and the devastating effects of it on Indigenous people in Canada. She is quoted stating she wants the government to:

“address and respond to the serious and deadly force of racism, verbal or otherwise towards our people." "There needs to be changes to our laws that does not allow racist words or actions to exist in this country," the letter reads, calling for those who make racist comments to be held accountable” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A13, p. 17).

Similarly, FSIN youth representative Andrew Bear used the response to Boushie’s murder as an opportunity to call for change, stating “racism is systemic and that is reflected in how the government treats First Nations people and that attitude trickles down into the rest of society and the only way things will change is when racism is recognized in this province and in this country” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A19, p. 2). These sentiments have been expressed by a multitude of Indigenous people, advocates, and their supporters. For instance, an opinion article leveraged the recent apologies from government leaders with regards to the residential school system and the Truth and Reconciliation report and go to say the government needs to step up and take action. In a Winnipeg Free Press opinion article, the author (unknown) states, “Formal apologies can go a long way in restoring trust in government institutions, but they need to be more than just performance. They need to go beyond economic redress to a firm commitment such behaviour will not continue” (2016, A1, p. 1).

Similarly, Indigenous leadership such as the FSIN addressed the media called for change in the RCMP and its processes. FSIN vice-chief Kimberly Jonathan urged changes be

implemented and addressed within the RCMP as she felt the investigation of the shooting of Boushie was biased and unjust:

“The people of this province and this country deserve an immediate strategy to be put in place by all levels of leaders in order to feel safe, including the assurance that this tragedy will be investigated for what it is, a crime based on race...Colten Boushie deserves justice and anything less is unacceptable.” (Post media Breaking News, 2016, A1, p. 76)

In the aftermath of violent racial comments on social media regarding the shooting of Colten Boushie, FSIN leaders expressed a need for change in relation to laws and penalties on hate crimes. They feel, “serious changes need to happen nationally, provincially and locally, and those changes need to include the RCMP” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, 2016, A19, p. 3)

In relation to calling for change, Indigenous leaders and advocates also expressed frustration with the government and political leaders for their delayed and lack of responses addressing racism. For instance, the FSIN issued a public letter to Premier Brad Wall asking him to address racism in the province (The Canadian Press, 2016, A8, p. 5). While the Premier responded that the Province had already been working toward improving these relations, it largely amounted to furthering education on treaties. In other words, the Premier is stating there is not much they can do besides education in the school system which exemplifies the reluctance of political leaders to address change.

Televised news coverage also included statements from claims-makers calling for change in the province. Specifically, Indigenous leaders and authoritative figures commented on policy change and implementation of laws following the shooting of Colten Boushie. For example, the FSIN released a statement in connection of a RCMP press release which blamed Boushie and his

friends and “called upon the RCMP to review its communication policies and guidelines” (APTN, 2016, V5). Following the FSIN’s call to action, the RCMP “has since set up a meeting to manage relations with the FSIN” which illustrates the reluctance of authoritative agencies to generate change (APTN, 2016, V4). Overall, Indigenous leaders and supporters “not only calling for justice but also calling for action to create a more peaceful Saskatchewan” (CTV, 2016, V4).

The heightened public attention towards Boushie’s murder proved a catalyzing event for advocating change. Public attention on Boushie’s case may have empowered claims-makers to advocate change and generate awareness of Indigenous issues. Furthermore, this allowed Indigenous leaders, supporters and advocates voice their opinion, urging responses and changes from the government. In other words, Indigenous groups will continue fighting and voicing their opinions in attempts to aid change from the government and other political parties. In addition, it shows readers the resiliency and determination Indigenous groups have in making their voices heard in their attempts in making change happen. Similarly it shows a different side to what commonly is portrayed in news media of Indigenous people as troublesome, criminal and historical archetypes of the past. Readers are now able to see the strength and truth behind the voices who call for change as they are now aware of the historical injustices Indigenous people have experienced in this country.

News media included statements from claims-makers addressing a call for change in policy reform following the shooting of Colten Boushie. Media reports called upon the government and authoritative agencies to take action regarding racism in the province. The inclusion of Indigenous leaders and supporters to call on change demonstrated the social problems and issues experienced by Indigenous communities. Similarly, following Indigenous groups call to action authoritative agencies were reluctant to address and follow through with

changes in policies. These examples illustrate the continued social problems encountered by Indigenous communities when dealing with government agencies: media reports frame Indigenous calls to action through racialized lived experiences. Media coverage in response to the murder of Colten Boushie allows audiences to have a wider understanding of those experiences. For instance, CRT argues social and racial change begins through awareness, thus by having Indigenous leaders call for changes in policy generates awareness of these important issues (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). However, when media discusses authoritative agencies reluctant to address changes demonstrates the dominant racial group to maintain the status quo.

Summary

Following the shooting of Colten Boushie, newspapers and televised news coverage would frame the stories using a thematic approach. News media implemented a thematic framework by talking about systemic racism, racial tensions and divide between local residents and the Indigenous community, lived experiences of Indigenous people, claims-makers stating the Canadian justice system is faulty and lastly Indigenous leaders and supporters calling for changes in policy. Thereby having the media address these broader social problems facing Indigenous people allows the public to have a better and rounded understanding of Indigenous issues. In addition, for newspapers and televised news coverage to discuss and include these numerous topics related to systemic racism, it gives the reader a clearer perspective in the shooting aftermath.

Chapter Six: Discussion/Conclusion

Research has consistently demonstrated that news media plays a key role in disseminating information while influencing public perceptions on social issues (Nagy & Gillespie, 2015; Surette, 2011; Wilkes, Corrigan-Brown, & Myers, 2010). However, in relation to the media representation of victims and offenders, news media can generate or reinforce stereotypes of certain racial groups, which subsequently distorts public opinion (Hurley, Jensen, Weaver & Dixon, 2015). Specifically, news coverage of Indigenous issues and people have attributed negative and racial stereotypes that degrade and ultimately blame Indigenous groups for their actions (Fleras, 2011; Innes, 2015; Reeves & Stewart, 2017). In addition, the media representation of Indigenous murder victims has been isolated and rendered invisible when having their stories published in news media (Fidan & Doenmez, 2016; Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015).

The purpose of the current study was to gain a better understanding of how Canadian media socially construct Indigenous peoples as victims of crime through a case study analysis of the Colten Boushie shooting. Specifically, this study examined how the media framed and constructed Colten Boushie and the shooter, Gerald Stanley, in both newspaper and televised news coverage. Specifically, the study focused on media coverage that emerged in the first two weeks of the case. In addition, this study also examined how the media framed the case of Boushie using a thematic framework to address racism in the province. This study used a critical race approach to analyze the news coverage to uncover how Indigenous murder victims were represented in media. The research questions that guided this study was:

A) How are Indigenous murder victims constructed in the media?

- B) Are media portrayals or frames of Indigenous murder victims episodic or thematic in nature? That is, does the media attribute blame to victims or does the media account for historical and contemporary sociocultural factors?

This study adopted an ECA method and therefore, I was able to understand how the media framed Colten Boushie and Gerald Stanley through an analysis of specific narratives in print and televised news coverage. ECA allowed me to capture the underlying meanings behind the representations of victims and offenders in the media. For instance, if the media continuously referred to drug and/or alcohol use as a causal factor without highlighting the impacts of colonization, this would reinforce the negative stereotype of Indigenous people as the ‘drunken Indian’. In addition, ECA allowed me not to take the information that I have gathered at face value by analysing into the underlying and embedded meanings in news media

Key Findings

Several major findings emerged from analyses in the current study. One of the more unexpected findings to emerge from analyses of the media sample was the positive and sympathetic portrayal of Colten Boushie. Specifically, Boushie’s representation in the media sources was consistent with the concept of the ‘ideal victim’ (Collins, 2014; Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Jiwani, 2006; Lin & Phillips, 2014). ‘Ideal victims’ in news media are depicted innocently of their victimization and generate a sympathetic response through relatable experiences (Collins, 2014; Lin & Phillips, 2014). Research has shown ‘ideal victims’ in media display certain characteristics such as being in a vulnerable situation, white, mostly female who are usually from an upstanding social status and commonly attacked by a stranger (Collins, 2014; Lin & Phillips, 2014).

This finding was unique as it challenges the common media portrayal of Indigenous people and victims as news media predominately infer a blameworthy narrative and stereotypical

characteristics (Collins, 2014). Similarly, the results of this study contrasts some of the general findings on ‘ideal victims’ in news media by highlighting a case who the victim was an Indigenous male who came from a low social status background. The case study of Colten Boushie is unique as it aligns while simultaneously contrasts with other media theories. The media coverage of Boushie’s case emphasized pressing issues facing Indigenous communities; particularly the province and generally the country. In other words, the shooting and death of Colten Boushie may have been a catalyst in addressing the pertinent social issues of the province. In relation to theories of Indigenous issues in news coverage, Colten Boushie’s case contrasts with the idea of Indigenous issues that are usually silenced or go unheard of in media (Collins, 2014; Gilchrist, 2010; Johnson, 2011).

In addition, the observed media emphasis on family, friends, and community as claim-makers, along with their positive framing of Boushie, contrasts with media theories that have highlighted the traditionally negative characterization of Indigenous victims (Collins, 2014; Gilchrist, 2010; Monchalin, 2016). Contrary to expectations, media accounts relied heavily on emotional responses from Boushie’s loved ones that served to construct him as an ‘ideal victims’ (Collins, 2014; Gruenewald, Pizarro, & Chermak, 2013; Jiwani, 2006; Lin & Phillips, 2014). In this regard, the study’s findings support existing literature on ideal victims in news media.

The media’s employment of a positive and sympathetic portrayal of Boushie also supports the ‘change through awareness’ framework of critical race theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). The casting Boushie in a sympathetic light supports this goal of CRT to change the representation of Indigenous victims in media. In addition, the media’s portrayal Boushie as an ‘ideal victim’ may have an impact on the audience’s perception and understanding of how Indigenous victims are portrayed and thus challenge the common stereotypes. Consequently, the

audience's perception is then influenced through the reliance on news media. In the case of Colten Boushie, by having Indigenous leaders and advocates voicing and urging social change in relation to preventing systemic racism and bringing Boushie justice may be one mechanism whereby change is affected through awareness. More importantly, by having media coverage portray Boushie sympathetically through the use of emotional impact statements and claiming innocence regarding the events on the Stanley farm challenges the common depiction of Indigenous victims as blameworthy. As a result, audiences will be receiving narratives and portrayals of Indigenous people that are accurate in which their perception of Indigenous people may alter for the better.

A second key finding in the study was observed differences between print and televised news coverage. There were instances where newspaper coverage would discuss topics related to the Boushie case, however televised news segments either briefly mentioned the same topic or neglected the topic all together. From a critical race lens perspective, some of these observed differences may stem for racial inequalities and hierarchies. Indeed, we cannot overlook the role of news media as a tool, used by those in power, to convey their personal beliefs and ideologies onto audiences (Henry & Tator, 2009). According to CRT theorists, news media is a powerful tool in constructing lesser races such as Indigenous people as problem people in efforts to maintaining their superior status in society (Henry & Tator, 2009). As a result, races who are non-white descendants are classified as lower-class citizens and labelled criminals who pose a threat in disrupting their social order. In the case of Colten Boushie, the inadequate media coverage he received illustrates the superiority of the media maintaining the discourse regarding Indigenous people and victims as troublesome. Reduced coverage surrounding the details of the Boushie case demonstrates the undervalued newsworthiness of Indigenous issues.

The contrasts between newspaper and televised media coverage presented in this study illustrates the media's power over dialogue, exhibited through frequent omission of certain issues pertinent to the Boushie case. According to current literature, Indigenous victims do not receive adequate media coverage of their stories compared to non-Indigenous victims which usually go unheard (Fidan & Doenmez, 2016; Garcia-Del Moral, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015). In relation to the Boushie case, the selection of news stories and televised coverage addressed supports this line of research. In particular, televised news coverage generally neglected to address certain details of information regarding the events leading up to the shooting and the lived experiences of Indigenous people. The limited televised news coverage describing the events leading up the shooting included the description of Stanley's threatening behaviour as waving around a weapon and yelling at the vehicle's occupants were omitted. Similarly, statements from the occupants of being fearful at that moment were also omitted in televised news coverage. The exclusion of these pertinent details of the events leading up to the shooting may impact audience's understanding of what happened on the Stanley farm. Similarly, the lived experiences of Indigenous people such as education, health issues, socio-economic issues and the history of residential schools were also omitted in televised news coverage. Consequently, audiences may not have a full comprehensive understanding and therefore become uninformed of how these issues relate to rallies and support behind Boushie. More importantly, the information being covered and omitted in news media demonstrates the authority of media outlets in defining what information is not important to address to audiences and therefore underlying their true beliefs and values embedded in the distribution to audiences.

As mentioned previously, Colten Boushie was constructed and framed as an 'ideal victim' in news media; however, many this progress was often undermined by actions that dehumanized

him. Media sources would emphasize support for the shooter Gerald Stanley by defending his actions as self-defence, and referring to stereotypical depictions of Boushie and his friends on social media and through authoritative sources like the RCMP press release. These observations again draw attention to the importance of claims-makers: sources like the RCMP, Stanley supporters, and sympathetic journalists constructed Boushie and his friends as potential thieves. These actions degrade Boushie as a victim and ultimately ‘dehumanize’ his status as an ‘ideal victim’. There was a general pattern on the type of sources that degraded the status of Boushie as non-newsworthy such as newspapers. For instance, the Saskatoon Star Phoenix heavily addressed a victim blaming narrative that insinuated Boushie and his friends were on the Stanley farm to steal whereas other newspaper sources did mention a victim blaming narrative however briefly.

These acts of degradation align with existing literature on the media representations of Indigenous victims (Collins, 2014; Jiwani, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leavitt, Covarrubias Perez, & Fryberg, 2015). Generally, Indigenous victims are blamed for their victimization which is demonstrated in Boushie’s case through the media’s frequent reference to crime rates in rural Saskatchewan, as well as specific comments about the arrest and intention of the vehicle’s occupants. This type of reporting tends to reinforce common stereotype of Indigenous people are criminals and a threat to social order, and demonstrates the continued misrepresentation and victim blaming of Indigenous people which remains largely unchallenged in the media. Consequently, when audiences are shown and read this type of depictions reinforces these degrading stereotypes of Indigenous people and victims. Furthermore, audiences will then continue to see Indigenous people and particularly men as threatening and criminal within society.

In accordance with critical race theory, the dehumanization of Boushie and undermining of his victim status reflects Hylton's (2012) perspective that "power processes systematically disenfranchise racially oppressed people" (p. 1). Similarly, the media's portrayal of Boushie and his friends as criminals and a threat to Stanley's safety reinforces stereotypical depiction as a means to maintain the status quo. However, by having the media degrade Boushie's victim-worthiness, the underlying message it presents to audiences that Indigenous victims are not important and their livelihood are not of interest.

Another key finding from the study extends from media discussions about current and ongoing experiences of racism and social problems faced by Indigenous people in the province and country. This finding was interesting as the media coverage included discussions surrounding racism in conjunction with the Boushie case as research has shown Indigenous issues are often stereotypical and exclude historical information to contextualize the information (Clark, 2014). By having the media address racism, injustice and socio-economic issues faced by Indigenous people today, audiences will have a clearer understanding as to why these issues are of concern.

Furthermore, the critical race perspective provides insight about the media's presentation of racialized social problems facing Indigenous communities in reference to the Boushie case. For example, one of the themes of CRT is addressing social and racial inequalities in hopes to bring about social change (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). As illustrated, news coverage emphasized the lived experiences of Indigenous communities to provide a cultural and historical context in the shooting of Colten Boushie. This allows the narrative to change with regards to implementing the views of Indigenous communities, as seen with public demonstrations and social movements regarding Indigenous peoples and other racially oppressed issues presented in

media. For example, media attention directed toward the ‘Black Lives Matter’, ‘Idle No More’, and MMIWG inquiry empowers counternarratives to issues that have historically been silenced and hidden from society. Thus, the heightened media coverage of the shooting of Colten Boushie exemplifies the need to address the continued racialized issues facing Indigenous communities today.

In recent years the Canadian Government has made great strides in making connections with Indigenous communities. For example, on May 10, 2016 Canada became a supporter of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, supporting the national inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and has made an investment of \$8.4 billion over five years pertaining to Indigenous issues such as education, water and housing (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2016). These examples illustrate the shift in the government’s acknowledgement of Indigenous issues which could influence news media reporting. When news media addressed the lived experiences of Indigenous people, the media could have been responding to the government’s investment and therefore emphasized these pertinent issues.

Limitations and Future Directions

Two distinct limitations characterized the current study: (1) the current data sample and sampling approach, and (2) the data sources.

First, this study implemented a case study approach to understand the news media representation of Indigenous murder victims in Canada. By purposively sampling one case this limits the results as the findings may not be applicable to other cases involving Indigenous victims in Canada. Similarly, by examining only one case we are unable to gather a nuanced understanding of how Indigenous victims either men or women are constructed in news media.

Second, the use of major newspapers and televised news stations included in the current sample were selected for their national dissemination and extensive readership geographically. The intended purpose of the selected sources was to have a broad sample of coverage given to the Boushie case. However, the varying news coverage reported above may have been a symptom of the selection criteria. In other words, news sources that were geographically closer to the coverage of the case such as the Saskatoon Star Phoenix carried extensive coverage compared to other news outlets located in outer and distant regions. Consequently, this resulted in newspapers repeating the same news story which limited the data sample of newspapers. Similarly, televised news outlets varied in their amount of news coverage of the Boushie case compared to one another. Through the limited amount of news coverage of the case, this results in fewer news sources to analyze within the sample.

Second, the current study's data included televised and newspaper coverage of the Boushie case from the first two weeks of initial media coverage. By focusing on these news sources within the specified time frame, this limited the scope of news coverage of the case to gain valuable knowledge and insight regarding how Boushie and Stanley were framed. Similarly, by limiting the data sample to only newspaper and televised news segments, this prevented alternative media forms and outlets to be excluded. More specifically, this study excluded the analysis of social media websites or online comments surrounding the Boushie case which limited the discussion in how this type of media influenced public perception. Consequently, this does not provide a nuanced understanding of how the case of Colten Boushie was framed.

Based on some of the interesting findings that emerged from the current study, there are several suggested recommendations for future research focusing on media representations of Indigenous murder victims in Canada. Given the limitations previously discussed, one of the

suggested recommendations is to extend research to examine online and social media comments to uncover what general perception regarding the case or Indigenous justice issues more generally. Similarly, there should be interviews conducted involving Indigenous leaders from local communities to understand how they view the media representations of their people. In addition, there should be further research involving the sentencing of Gerald Stanley to see if the narrative and frame of the case changes. Thereby incorporating these types of research suggestions will aid in further understanding how Indigenous peoples are portrayed in news media and other media sources. Furthermore, it will allow Indigenous communities to voice their opinions and views of how Indigenous peoples are and should be portrayed in news media.

Conclusion

This study has made a unique contribution within the academic community by addressing the gap in literature regarding the media representation of Indigenous murder victims in Canada. Previous literature lacked the inclusion of combining both newspaper and televised news coverage of Indigenous murder victims. From this study we are able to see how the media framed Colten Boushie and Gerald Stanley leading up the trial and narratives of blame, self-defence and sympathetic remarks surrounded media coverage. Furthermore, my study addressed the continued experiences of systemic racism in the country through stereotypical narratives and voices of the lived experiences from Indigenous leaders and supporters. Most importantly, my study sheds light into what the next steps are in research regarding the media portrayals of Indigenous victims.

As previously addressed, the increase of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in the country led Indigenous advocates and supporters to address and create awareness of this pertinent issue. As a result, this awareness generated research and government response of

developing the inquiry into the issue (MMIWG, 2017). However, with the attention focused on Indigenous women, there lacked the acknowledgment and attention towards missing and murdered Indigenous men. Consequently, there is limited knowledge, research and awareness of murdered Indigenous men in the country which illustrates their invisibility and degraded status as a victim (Innes, 2015). Through the examination of newsprint and televised news media on the Colten Boushie case, my study lends itself to help aid in introducing the conversation surrounding Indigenous men as victims. More importantly, my study sheds light on the lack of awareness and discussion on Indigenous men and therefore will generate attention to this issue.

References

- Ambrey, C. L., Fleming, C. M., & Manning, M. (2014). Perception or reality, what matters most when it comes to crime in your neighbourhood?. *Social indicators research*, 119(2), 877-896.
- Amnesty International. (2004). Stolen Sisters. Retrieved from <https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/amr200032004enstolensisters.pdf>
- Beam, M. A. (2014). Automating the News: How Personalized News Recommender System Design Choices Impact News Reception. *Communication Research*, 8(41) 1019– 1041. DOI: 10.1177/0093650213497979
- Beam, M. A. and Kosicki, G. M. (2014). Personalized News Portals: Filtering Systems and Increased News Exposure. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 91(1) 59–77. DOI: 10.1177/1077699013514411
- Bjornstrom, E. S. & Kaufman, R. L. (2010). Race and Ethnic Representations Of Lawbreakers And Victims In Crime News: A National Study Of Television Coverage. *Journal of Social Problems*, 57(2), p. 269-293.
- Broersma, M, and Graham, T. (2013). Twitter as a News Source: How Dutch and British newspapers used tweets in their news coverage, 2007-2011. *Journalism Practice*, 7 (4), p. 446-464.
- Capers, B. (2014). Critical race theory. *The Oxford Handbook of Criminal Law*, 2.
- CBC News. (February, 11, 2018). Reaction to verdict in Colten Boushie shooting death. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1159010371895>

- CBC radio. (February 2, 2017). Family often feel 'used by media,' says Indigenous reports of MMIW coverage. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-february-1-2017-vancouver-public-forum-1.3959929/family-often-feel-used-by-media-says-indigenous-reporter-of-mmiw-coverage-1.3960117>
- Callanan, V. J. (2012). Media Consumption, Perceptions of Crime Risk and Fear of Crime: Examining Race/Ethnic Differences. *Sociological Perspectives*, 55 (1), p. 93-115.
- Chermak, S. (2007). Predicting crime story salience: A replication. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, (35), p. 351-363. DOI: 10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2007.05.001
- Clark, B. (2014). Framing Canada's Aboriginal Peoples: A Comparative Analysis of Indigenous and Mainstream Television News. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 34 (2), 41-64.
- Cohen, S. (2011). *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The creation of Mods and Rockers*. New York, NY; Routledge Classics.
- Collins, P. H. (1998). The tie that binds: Race, gender and US violence. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21(5), 917-938.
- Collins, R. E. (2014). The construction of race and crime in Canadian print media: A 30-year analysis. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 14(1), p. 77–99.
- Comack, E., & Bowness, E. (2010). Dealing the Race Card: Public Discourse on the Policing Winnipeg's inner-city Communities. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 1(19), p.34-50.
- Comack, E., Deane, L., Silver, J, and Morrissette, L. (2013). *Indians Wear Red: Colonialism, Resistance and Aboriginal Street Gangs*. Fernwood Publishing

- Crenshaw, K. W. (2011). Twenty years of critical race theory: looking back to move forward. (Critical Race Theory: A Commemoration). *Connecticut Law Review*, 5(43), p. 1253-1352.
- Crenshaw, K. (2018). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics [1989]. In *Feminist legal theory* (pp. 55-80). Routledge
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). Qualitative procedures. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 2, 173-201.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2012). Critical race theory: An introduction. NYU Press
- Department of Justice. (2017). *Aboriginal Victimization in Canada: A Summary of the Literature*. Retrieved from Victims of Crime Research Digest No. 3 website <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/victim/rd3-rr3/p3.html>
- Dixon, T. L. & Williams, L. W. (2014). The Changing Misrepresentation of Race and Crime on Network and Cable News. *Journal of Communication*, 65, p. 24-39.
- Eastman, J. T. (2015). The wild (white) ones: comparing frames of white and black deviance. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 18 (2), p. 231–247.
- Ferrell, J., Hayward, K., Morrison, W., & Presdee, M. (2004). Fragments of a Manifesto: Introducing Cultural Criminology Unleashed. In *Cultural Criminology Unleashed* (pp. 143-152). London: Glasshouse Press, pp. 1-9.
- Doenmez, C.F.T. (2016). The Unmournable Body of Cindy Gladue: On Corporeal Integrity and Grievability. In D. M. Lavell-Harvard, & J. Brant, *Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crises of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada* (pp. 111-127). Brantford, ON: Demeter Press.

Fleras, A. (2011). *The Media Gaze: Representations of Diversities in Canada*. UBC Press: Toronto.

Forrest, M. (2017, November 1). Federal government to blame for slow progress, says inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women. *National Post*. Retrieved from <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/missing-and-murdered-inquiry-blames-slow-progress-on-federal-government-in-interim-report>

Garcia-Del Moral, P. (2011). Representation As A Technology Of Violence: On The Representation Of The Murders And Disappearances Of Aboriginal Women In Canada And Women In Ciudad Juarez. *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 72(36), p. 33—62.

Gilchrist, K. (2010). Newsworthy Victims: Exploring differences in Canadian local press coverage of missing/murdered Aboriginal and White women. *Feminist Media Studies*, 10(4), p. 373-390.

GoFundMe. (2018). What is Crowdfunding? Retrieved from <https://ca.gofundme.com/c/crowdfunding>

Gruenewald , J., Pizarro, J. M. & Chermak, S. M. (2013). Covering Victims in the News: What Makes Minority Homicides Newsworthy? *Justice Quarterly*, 30(5), p. 755–783.

Gruenewald, J., Pizarro, J. M., and Chermak, S. (2009). Race, gender, and the newsworthiness of homicide incidents. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 3(37), p. 262-272. DOI: 10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2009.04.006

Gulliksson, P. (2017). What Crowdfunding Platforms Do People Know?.

Harding, R. (2005). The Media, Aboriginal People, and Common Sense. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 1(25), pp. 311-335.

<http://www.oci-bec.gc.ca/cnt/rpt/annrpt/annrpt20152016-eng.aspx#s7>

Harding, R. (2006). Historical representations of Aboriginal people in the Canadian news media. *Discourse & Society*, 17(2), 205-235.

Henderson, M., & Romeo, G. (2015). Digital narratives and other myths. In *Teaching and Digital Technologies: Big Issues and Critical Questions*. Cambridge University Press.

Henry, F., & Tator, C. (2009). Contribution and Challenges of Addressing Discursive Racism in the Canadian Media. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 34(4).

Humphreys, D. K., Gasparrini, A., & Wiebe, D. J. (2017). Evaluating the impact of Florida's "stand your ground" self-defense law on homicide and suicide by firearm: an interrupted time series study. *JAMA internal medicine*, 177(1), 44-50.

Hurley, R., Jensen, J., Weaver, A., & Dixon, T. (2015). Viewer Ethnicity Matters: Black Crime in TV News and Its Impact on Decisions Regarding Public Policy. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(1), p. 155-170.

Hylton, K. (2012). Talk the talk, walk the walk: defining Critical Race Theory in research. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 15(1), 23-41.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. (2016). 2015-2016 Departmental Performance Report. Retrieved from https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ-AI/STAGING/texte-text/2015-16-DPR-fr-pdf_1478177371568_eng.pdf

- Innes, R. A. (2015). Moose on the Loose: Indigenous Men, Violence, and the Colonial Excuse. *Aboriginal Policy Studies*, 1(4), pp. 46-56.
- Innes, R. A., & Anderson, K. (2015). *Indigenous Men and Masculinities: Legacies, Identities, Regeneration*. University of Manitoba Press.
- Iyengar, S. (1996). Framing Responsibility for Political Issues. *American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 546, p. 59-70.
- Jiwani, Y. (2006). Missing and murdered women: Reproducing marginality in news discourse. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 31, p. 895-917 .
- Johnson, D. M. (2011). From the tomahawk chop to the road block: Discourses of savagism in whitestream media. *The American Indian Quarterly*, 35(1), 104-134.
- Jones, A. (2015, April 27). The uncounted victims; Aboriginal men are murdered and go missing far more often than aboriginal women. A proper inquiry would explore the causes of both together. *The National Post*. Retrieved from <https://libproxy.wlu.ca/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1676032310?accountid=15090>
- Kubik, W., & Bourassa, C. (2016). Stolen Sisters: The Politics, Policies, and Travesty of Missing and Murdered Women in Canada. In D. M. Lavell-Harvard, & J. Brant, *Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crises of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada* (pp. 17-33). Brantford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Kuokkanen, R. (2015). Gendered Violence and Politics in Indigenous Communities. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 2(17), 271-288.
- Lawrence, B. (2003). Gender, Race and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview. *Hypatia*, 2(18), 3-31.

- Leavitt, P. A., Covarrubias, R., Perez, Y. A., & Fryberg, S. A. (2015). "Frozen in Time": The Impact of Native American Media Representations on Identity and Self-Understanding. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(1), p. 39-53.
- Levi-Strauss, C. (1966). *The Savage Mind*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press
- Lin, J., & Phillips, S. (2014). Media Coverage of Capital Murder: Exceptions Sustain the Rule. *Justice Quarterly*, 31(5), p. 934–959.
- Luedecke, G., & Boykoff, M. T. (2017). Environment and the media. *The International Encyclopedia of Geography*, pp. 1-8. DOI: 10.1002/9781118786352.wbieg0464
- Macdonald, N. (2017, May 20). Commission on missing, murdered Indigenous women has become a fortress of bureaucratic incompetence. CBC News. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/opinion/mmiwg-inquiry-1.4124403>
- MacDonald, N. (2006, October 2). An anchor weighs in on the details. *MacLean's*. 119(39). Retrieved from <https://libproxy.wlu.ca/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/218582279?accountid=15090>
- Malinen, S., Willis, G. M., and Johnston, L. (2014). Might informative media reporting of sexual offending influence community members' attitudes towards sex offenders? *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 6(20), p. 535-552.
- Miller, J. (2008). Ipperwash and the Media: Case Study of How an Aboriginal Confrontation was Covered. *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities & Nations*, 8(3).
- Mirza, Q. (1999). Patricia Williams: Inflecting critical race theory. *Feminist Legal Studies*, 7(2), 111-132. DOI: 10.1023/A:1009216000956

- Monchalin, L. (2016). *The Colonial Problem: An Indigenous Perspective on Crime and Injustice in Canada*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Moore, S.E., Robinson, M.A., Clayton, D.M., Adedoyin, A.C., Boamah, D.A., Kyere, E. & Harmon, D.K. (2018). A Critical Race Perspective of Police Shooting of Unharmed Black Males in the United States: Implications for Social Work. *Urban Social Work*, 2(1), p.33-47
- Nagy, R., & Gillespie, E. (2015). Representing Reconciliation: A news frame analysis of print media coverage of Indian residential schools. *Transitional Justice Review*, 3(1), 1-40.
- National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*. (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>
- O'Grady, W., Parnaby, P.F., & Schikschnit, J. (2010). Guns, Gangs, and the Underclass: A Constructionist Analysis of Gun Violence in a Toronto High School. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 52(1), 55-77.
- Office of the Correctional Investigator (2016). Annual Report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator 2015-2016. Retrieved from
- Parliament of Canada. (2017). White Paper, Retrieved from Parlinfo, <https://lop.parl.ca/ParlInfo/Pages/WhitePapersAppendix.aspx>
- Perez-Torres, I. (2016). The Duty of the Canadian Media in Relation to the Violence against Native Women. In D. M. Lavell-Harvard, & J. Brant, *Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crises of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada* (pp. 160-174). Brantford, ON: Demeter Press.

- Poindexter, P. M., Smith, L., and Heider, D. (2003). Race and Ethnicity in Local Television News: Framing, Story Assignments, and Source Selections. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 4(47), p. 524-536.
- Popham, J. & VanEvery, L. (2018). Representing Indigenous Protest on Twitter: Examining the Social Media Dialogue that Accompanied a Single Image of the DAPL Protests at Standing Rock. *The Annual Review of Interdisciplinary Justice Research*, 7
- PR Newswire. (2012, October 29). CTV's CANADA AM Welcomes 40th Season with Big Party and Big Numbers, Reaching 1.4 Million Viewers. New York. Retrieved from <https://libproxy.wlu.ca/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1115573249?accountid=15090>
- Reeves, A., & Stewart, S. (2017). Healing the Spirit: Exploring Sexualized Trauma and Recovery Among Indigenous Men in Toronto. *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research* 1(24), pp. 30-61.
- Riel-Johns, J. (2016). Understanding Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada. In D. M. Lavell-Harvard, & J. Brant, *Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crises of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada* (pp. 34-46). Brantford, ON: Demeter Press.
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police. (2014). Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview. Government of Canada
- Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Saldana, J., & Omasta, M. (2018). *Qualitative Research Analyzing Life*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Saskatoon Star Phoenix. (March 27, 2018). Remembering Jordon Cooper's passion and wit.

Retrieved from <https://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/remembering-jordon-coopers-passion-and-wit>

Statistics Canada. (2014a). Homicide in Canada 2014. Retrieved from

<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2015001/article/14244-eng.htm#a13>

Statistics Canada. (2014b). Victimization of Aboriginal people in Canada 2014. Retrieved from

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2016001/article/14631-eng.htm>

Strobl, R. (2004). Constructing the victim: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Examples.

International Review of Victimology, 11, p. 295-311.

Surette, R. (2011). *Media, Crime and Criminal Justice; Images, Realities and Politics*. Belmont,

CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Surette, R. (2015). Performance Crime and Justice. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 2(27), p.

195-217.

Talaga, T. (2017, February 3). Is there space for men in missing women inquiry? *The Toronto*

Star. Retrieved from

<https://libproxy.wlu.ca/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1864065317>

?accountid=15090

Tukachinsky, R. (2015). Where We Have Been and Where We Can Go From Here: Looking to

the Future in Research on Media, Race, and Ethnicity. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(1), p.

186-199.

Welsh, A., Fleming, T., & Dowler, K. (2011). Constructing crime and justice on film: meaning

and message in cinema. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 14(4), p. 457-476.

DOI:10.1080/10282580.2011.616376

- Wilkes, R., Corrigan-Brown, C., & Myers, D. (2010). Packaging Protest: Media Coverage of Indigenous People's Collective Action. *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 327-357.
- Wilkes, R., Corrigan-Brown, C., & Ricard, D. (2010). Nationalism and Media Coverage of Indigenous People's Collective Action in Canada. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 34(4), 41-59.
- Wound, W. T. (1993). *Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech and the First Amendment*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Yardley, E., Wilson, D., & Kennedy, M. (2017). "TO ME ITS [SIC] REAL LIFE": Secondary Victims of Homicide in Newer Media. *Victims & Offenders*, 12, p. 467-496.
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), p. 69-91. DOI: 10.1080/1361332052000341006