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Anaġoptaŋ po! (Listen!) What We Can Learn About Our Own Stories by Accepting the Stories of Others: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Competing Narratives within the Dakota Access Pipeline Conflict

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What We Can Learn About

Our Own Stories by Accepting the Stories of Others:

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Competing Narratives

within the Dakota Access Pipeline Conflict

By

Scot Zellmer

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

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July 10, 2017

This thesis has been examined and approved by the following members of the student's committee.

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ABSTRACT

There have been over five-hundred years of interactions between European Colonizer-settlers and the Indigenous peoples of North America. Starting with the 1493 Doctrine of Discovery through the present, language embedded in documents, laws, policies and popular culture, have created damaging and misleading stereotypes and identities for these Indigenous Peoples, the American Indians. This study connects historical and contemporary perceptions constructing the dominant narrative that informs many people about American Indians. Narrative Paradigm Theory, Critical Race Theory and Indigenous Theories all serve as a lens to deconstruct the legitimacy of the dominant narrative and promote the salience of counter-narratives constructed by American Indians in their efforts to tell their own experience and declare their own identities. The construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline served as a flashpoint thrusting the narratives constructed by dominant culture, and American Indians, into the national and international consciousness. A critical discourse analysis of news reports of this event revealed the competing language, ideologies and worldviews held by those involved in the conflict, as well as consumers of the text and discourse.

KEY WORDS

American Indians, Colonization, Counter-Narrative, Dakota Access Pipeline, Identity, Doctrine of Discovery, Dominant Narrative, Red Pedagogy, Standing Rock, Stereotypes

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

There have been 524 years or more of interaction between Europeans who claim discovery of the North American continent and the estimated 50 million[1] Indigenous People occupying it when the Europeans arrived (Iverson, 1998; King, 2013; Newcomb, 2008). Most often, the interactions have been to the benefit of the European colonizer-settlers and to the detriment of the Indigenous Peoples. This research will examine 21st century conflicts between American Indians[1a] and corporate/government organizations involved in infrastructure development and resource extraction. The focus will be on the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota (standingrock.org).

Specifically, this research will examine how historical language, and mistaken beliefs about American Indians, affects how news about the DAPL conflict is reported. Winston Churchill is credited with saying "History is written by the victors" (Neukom, 2013). Fisher (1984) characterized this "victors" narrative of historical interactions between European colonizers/settlers and American Indians as the *Dominant Narrative*, purported to be an accurate accounting of United States history. This narrative obfuscates historical accuracy, contains misleading language defining American Indians, and continues to frame how they are understood and related to today (Iverson, 1998; King, 2013; Newcomb, 2008; Williams, 2005).

Apart from Winston Churchill's declaration, another reason for the primacy of the European colonizer-settlers', and ultimately the U.S. Government's, version(s) of historical events is that most American Indian Nations were primarily oral cultures. Consequently, without

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[1] Estimates of the population of Indigenous Peoples of North America vary from 10 million to 500 million. 50 million is a conservative, consensus number used by many sources.
[1a] Terms used to identify Indigenous Peoples of North America vary without a true consensus. "American Indian" is used in this research for the sake of clarity

the benefit of written accounts, the histories and stories recounted orally by American Indians are often discounted or discredited (Alfred, 1999; LaDuke, 1999; Mihesuah, 1998). Additionally, American Indians were often conceived of as primitive, savage or even subhuman and believed to be incapable of participating in rational discourse. Because of this, their stories and historical accounts were disbelieved and excluded (Churchill, 1997; Cote-Meek, 2014; Sleeper-Smith, et al. 2015). *Counter-stories* have been written and published by many journalists and scholars which report historical events differently than the dominant narrative (Churchill, 1997; Iverson, 1998; Mander, 1991; Nabokov, 1991). Unfortunately, these narratives are usually analyzed using western academic methodologies and so the content is often mythicized or considered to be inaccurate due to conflicts with content of dominant narratives (Alfred, 1999; Cote-Meek, 2014; Deloria, 1969; Smith, 2012).

Dominant Narratives as History

"I never knew."

These words were spoken by John Biewen, Director of Documentary Studies at Duke University. Biewen, originally from Mankato, MN, spoke these words upon learning about horrific events that occurred prior to, and in the aftermath of, the 1862 Dakota war that is a part of the contentious history of the Mankato area and the state of Minnesota in general (Neill & Bryant, 1882; Schultz, 1992). Biewen's recollections were part of a radio show aired on National Public Radio on Thanksgiving 2012. This event was tinged with controversy due to the preponderant use of the dominant narrative and the continued omission of counter-stories (NPR, 2012). The dominant narrative of the Dakota War recounts how the Dakota (described as the

"Sioux"[2]) rose up and brutally massacred over four hundred white settlers without provocation (Neill & Bryant, 1882; Schultz, 1992). This story, known as the Sioux Massacre (Neill & Bryant, 1882), was the version taught in public schools up until the end of the twentieth century and still predominates (Churchill 1997; NPR, 2012; Westerman & White, 2012).

The antecedent events leading to the Dakota War were complex and implicate local and state government officials, federally appointed Indian Agents, traders, clergy, and White settlers. The Dakota were considered an obstacle to White settlement and progress. They were crowded out of their Minnesota homeland through official government policies and by the sheer number of settlers pouring into the region. They were lied to and coerced into signing treaties written in English that were never fully explained, and were unilaterally altered by the U.S. Government after they were signed. As events unfolded and the promises and stipulations of the treaties were not honored, Dakota leaders presented their grievances and attempted to gain relief, but were ignored and rebuffed. The Dakota were portrayed as dangerous and backward savages that were an obstacle to progress (Churchill, 1997; Nabokov, 1991; NPR, 2012; Schultz, 1992).
"I never knew."

Biewen didn't know that historical events in his hometown helped determine the fate of two cultures, White settlers of the Midwest and the Dakota (and by extension, American Indians in general) (Alfred, 1999; Deloria, 1969; King, 2013; Mack, 2015; Mihesuah, 1998; Reinhardt, 2015) He was taught a version of history that extolled the White, settler culture of the area and marginalized the Dakota. He learned very little of the actual historical events because a one-

[2] Most people identify American Indian Nations by the names assigned by the US Government. This research will use these assigned names for clarity, but when appropriate, indicate the actual names used by American Indian Nations to identify themselves

sided narrative served to further the purposes of the settler culture while disavowing the illegal and immoral treatment of the Dakota (NPR, 2012; Schultz, 1992; Westerman & White, 2012).

The dominant narrative of American Indians in U.S. history describes American Indians as uncivilized and unredeemable savages. The acquisition of American Indian lands and resources was rationalized on the premise they were not civilized Christians, and the belief of White settlers and the fledgling government of the U.S. that it was *Manifest Destiny* to drive out and conquer the "heathen Indian" (Deloria, 1969; Iverson, 1998; Mander, 1991; Newcomb, 2008; Sleeper-Smith et al., 2015; Smith, 2012). The creation of the United States was based on the idea of European supremacy, imagined superiority of Whites over American Indians, and literal/cultural genocide (Churchill, 1997 & 2004; Mander, 1991; Williams, 2005).

Historical Language and Discourse

"Human Dignity and Justice Under the Law" is a section in a book titled <u>My Own Words</u> written in 2016 by Ruth Bader-Ginsberg, a justice seated on the Supreme Court of the United States. It is based on an address she delivered in South Africa nine months after a ruling was made by the Supreme Court on the case *City of Sherill v. the Oneida Indian Nation* (Newcomb, 2016). In this ruling Bader-Ginsberg relied upon, and cited, language from the *Doctrine of Discovery*; language that is also used in Supreme Court rulings dating back to the Marshall Court in the early nineteenth century (Newcomb, 2008; Williams, 2005). The Doctrine of Discovery, issued by Pope Alexander in 1493, explicitly endowed European voyagers and "discoverers" rationale for seizing and claiming lands they traveled to, and the impetus to either convert or kill the Indigenous inhabitants if they resisted "discovery" (Newcomb, 2008). Nearly identical language was used in the Doctrine of Discovery, the rulings of the Marshall court, succeeding Supreme Court rulings, and is the basis for the concept of Manifest Destiny, which propelled

western expansion of the United States. According to Newcomb (2016), Bader-Ginsberg relied upon exact language from a ruling made in 1954 from the case, *Tee-Hit-Ton Indians v. the United States*. That ruling decided the Tee-Hit-Ton Indians were not entitled to compensation for timber removed from their lands by outsiders because " 'the Christian Nations of Europe acquired jurisdiction over the lands of heathens and infidels' " (Newcomb, 2016, para. 6). Newcomb, an American Indian scholar, revealed that the Tee-Hit-Ton ruling was predicated upon a "…racist and religiously bigoted doctrine that dominates our nations and dehumanizes our peoples" (Newcomb, 2016, para. 6). The Supreme Court rendered this ruling the same year as the pivotal civil rights decision, *Brown v. the Board of Education.* The Brown ruling gave impetus to ending racial discrimination in the United States both legally and culturally, as evidenced by subsequent changes in laws, cultural norms and language. Bader-Ginsberg reflected on the Brown decision to wit, "[this decision] has done much to advance 'respect' and 'human dignity'" (Newcomb, 2016, para. 7). The irony, of course, is making this statement while she is complicit in jurisprudence that perpetuates dehumanizing language which leads to a falsely constructed identity of American Indians (Nelson, 2001). From 1493 forward to Bader-Ginsberg's ruling on City of Sherill v. the Oneida Indian Nation in 2016, the only justification to define American Indians, and how they are treated legally and culturally, is predicated upon a "…European-Colonial doctrine of White-racial superiority" (Williams, 2005).

Overview and Background Information

With the steady advancement of White settlers throughout the 1800's, conflict over land ownership and resource use became extremely problematic for American Indians. Perhaps one of the most contentious acts that had devastating consequences on the Plains Indians of North America was the construction of the Trans-Continental Railroad. The railway disrupted the

migration patterns of the buffalo herds which were the major resource of food and materials for the tribes that lived on the central plains. In addition, the railway provided access for the US Army and hunters who indiscriminately killed off large portions of the herds. Due to this action, by the end of the nineteenth century only 300 wild buffalo remained of the estimated thirty to sixty million that had once inhabited the plains. This destruction was part of General Sheridan's strategy to subdue and conquer the Plains Indians and force them onto reservations (King, 2012).

These conflicts spilled over into the 20th century and affected nearly every American Indian tribe. More than half of the uranium deposits in the continental United States are on Indian reservation land. Starting the in the 1940's, mining companies began extracting the uranium, leaving behind radioactive tailings and contaminated ground water. This has affected American Indian communities in Arizona, New Mexico, South Dakota and Utah where abandoned mines dot the landscape often unmarked with no warning signs about radioactive contamination of the soil or water (LeBoutillier 2015). In 1969 at the Black Mesa area in northern Arizona, the Peabody coalmine was developed. In four decades of extraction, the Navajo and Hopi tribes that occupy the area have contended with air and water quality issues, massive environmental destruction of their historical homelands, and disruption of tribal life (Nies, n.d.). In 1944, the Pick-Sloan Plan that created dams on certain portions of the Missouri River, flooded historical homelands of several different American Indian tribes, including the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (SRST) requiring them to abandon family lands and relocate (Lawson, 2009).

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

In the 1860's, it became the policy of the U.S. Government to confine the members of the various plains tribes on reservations. In the Fort Laramie Treaties of 1851 and 1868, the US

government stipulated that 25 million acres, encompassing parts of present day North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska, would be granted for the sole use of the Great Sioux Nation (Avalon Project, 2008; North Dakota Studies, 2016a). The Great Sioux Nation was comprised of seven distinct groups, which included the Hunkpapa Lakota, who the U.S. government referred to as the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (SRST) (North Dakota Studies, 2016a).

Starting in the early 1870's and especially after the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of South Dakota in 1874, the U.S. government and White settlers openly violated the Treaties to the detriment of the Sioux and to the benefit of the government and the settlers (Deloria, 1969; Iverson, 1998; Laduke, 1999; North Dakota Studies, 2016a). By 1889, the original contiguous reserved area guaranteed by the 1868 Treaty was segmented into six smaller areas of which only two million acres were left for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (Akta Lakota Museum & Cultural Center, n.d.; North Dakota Studies, 2016b; Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, 2016). The present-day location of the Standing Rock Reservation straddles the North Dakota and South Dakota state line and is situated near Lake Oahe, a reservoir formed by the damming of the Missouri River in the 1960's (Lawson, 2009). Lake Oahe supplies water to the Standing Rock Reservation as well as three other reservations and several rural counties in South Dakota, serving over 52,000 people (40,000 on the reservations) as indicated by the 1998 Census Bureau (United States Publishing Office, 2002; United States Department of Agriculture, 2015). In addition, downstream of Lake Oahe, the Missouri river supplies water throughout the Missouri River Hydrologic unit, the largest hydrologic unit in the contiguous states including parts of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Illinois (United States Geological Survey, 2014).

Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL)

In April 1951 near the town of Williston, ND, Amerada Petroleum Corporation discovered oil in what is now known as the Bakken Oil field. By May of the same year, several major oil companies leased over 30 million acres of the state of North Dakota, a total area of 44.8 million acres (Williston economic development, 2016). According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), there are 7.4 billion barrels of oil (BBO) that are "technically recoverable" (United States Geological Survey, 2013). The Bakken Oil field was considered to be a marginal, to sub-marginal, resource due to the difficulty of extraction and the high price of oil and by 2008, only a few wells had been drilled. But due to advances in methods of extraction (fracking and horizontal extraction) and high oil prices, by 2012, the amount of oil extracted positioned the state of North Dakota as the second largest oil producing area in the United States (Geology.com, 2016). At the peak of production in September 2014, there were 196 reported active wells in operation, but due to wells running dry and a decrease in oil prices, this number has steadily declined. By September 2016, the number of wells predicted to still be in operation is listed at only thirty-three (Current Active Drilling Rig List, 2016).

On January 7, 2014, Energy Transfer Partners (ETP) announced it would construct the DAPL, originating at the Bakken Oil fields, to move the extracted oil to refineries four states away in Illinois (RBN Energy, 2014; Energy Transfer, 2016). On January 26, 2016, ETP reported that it had secured all necessary permits to start constructing the DAPL and the pipeline would be in service by the end of 2016 (Miller, 2016). The pipeline would follow a route from the Bakken Oil fields in North Dakota through portions of South Dakota and Iowa and connect with existing pipelines in Illinois where the oil will be delivered to existing refineries (Energy

Transfer, 2015). Start dates for the construction varied across the different states but in North Dakota construction commenced in the middle of May 2016.

DAPL Opposition and Conflict

Starting in January 2014, when ETP announced its plans to construct the pipeline, members of the SRST voiced their opposition to the route of the pipeline. On April 1, 2016, tribal members set up and occupied the Sacred Stone Camp adjacent to the proposed route to protest and block the construction site (Camp of the Sacred Stones, n.d.). The pipeline is not routed across present day SRST Reservation land (it is one-half mile north of the Reservation boundary), but it does cross lands guaranteed to them in the 1851 and 1868 Treaties. The U.S. government unilaterally altered these treaties without the required consent of members of the Tribe (Avalon Project, 2008; Plummer, 2016).

Because the route is within proximity of the Reservation, it was required that the SRST be consulted about the construction and its possible impacts. This consultation never occurred *as was required* and the SRST was informed that construction would commence after all necessary surveys had been completed (Plummer, 2016). After construction had been under way for three months, Tim Mentz, a tribal historic preservation officer from the SRST, was given a chance to conduct a survey of the land affected by the route of the pipeline. Mentz identified eighty-two significant historical and cultural sites along the proposed pipeline route (Midwestern Scout, 2016). The opinions of 1,281 archeologists, professors and museum curators supported that the land designated for the route of the DAPL has historical and cultural significance. The Natural History Museum initiated an action and composed a letter with this group as signatories, and sent it to President Obama stating their opposition to the project (The Natural History Museum, 2016).

The SRST had three main complaints. First, the route of the pipeline encroaches upon Treaty Lands, second, construction would destroy historical, culturally significant sites including burial places; and third, it would cross under Lake Oahe, the sole source of water for the Standing Rock Reservation. The SRST contends that despite assurances of pipeline safety, the history of pipeline failures with catastrophic consequences are well documented (Kelso, 2013; Reported Environmental Incidents in North Dakota's Oil Industry, 2014; Starbuck, 2015). Originally, the proposed route for the pipeline would have crossed the Missouri river north of the city of Bismarck, North Dakota[3], but documents show that route was rejected due to the potential threat of contamination to the city's water supply (Dalrymple, 2016a).

On August 3, 2016, the SRST received a forty-eight-hour construction notice from ETP to which members of the tribe rallied and began in earnest an occupation of the Sacred Stone Camp. Sacred Stone camp became a rallying point for the SRST, members of over 280 North American Indian tribes, Indigenous Peoples from Central and South American, and environmentalists (Healy, 2016a). As of the end of September 2016, the number of protestors in the camp numbered between four and seven thousand people making it the fourteenth largest "city" in North Dakota. The community provided resources to include a central kitchen serving thousands of meals each day, a school, and a radio station. Offers of help and tangible resources arrived constantly from individuals and groups from across the country, and those occupying the camp worked to establish themselves for a long-term stay (Gunderson, 2016; Pipeline Protest Site, 2016).

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[3] The population demographic of Bismarck is predominately White.

Related 21st Century Conflicts

Conflict between American Indians and corporate and government organizations involved in infrastructure development and resource extraction is well-documented in the first two decades of the 21st century (Dokoupil 2015; Gies, 2016; "Indigenous Activists Shut Down", 2016; Kennedy, 2016; Moe, 2013; Rhodes, 2016). Specifically, there are three other conflicts involving pipeline construction that have occurred within the last five years and in geographical proximity to the DAPL conflict.

In 2011, TransCanada Corporation started construction on the Keystone XL pipeline to move tar sands oil from Canadian oil fields to the Gulf of Mexico for refinement and shipping to global markets (TransCanada, 2016a; TransCanada, 2016b). The pipeline was contested by a coalition of American Indians and White Ranchers from South Dakota and Nebraska for several reasons (Somodevilla, 2016). The Rosebud Sioux Tribe (RST) opposed the pipeline because it violated historical treaty rights, crossed culturally sensitive areas of their homeland, and posed potential for oil spills that would contaminate the Ogallala Aquifer, the main source of water for household and agricultural use in the region (rosebudsiouxtribe-nsn.gov). The ranchers' opposition was based on possible contamination of the aquifer as well as the misuse of eminent domain to acquire their land for use by a private company (Moyers and Company, 2015; Kleeb, 2014; Lakotavoice.com, 2014; Ray, 2014). In March 2014, the RST along with various representatives from other Sioux tribes, BOLD Nebraska (boldalliance.org), and environmentalists, established an encampment known as Spirit Camp to block the route of the pipeline (Eagle, 2014). In November 2014, a bill to authorize ongoing construction of the pipeline failed in the U.S. Senate (Ray, 2014). The bill was reintroduced and passed in Congress

in February 2015 but was later vetoed by President Obama effectively halting construction (Korte, 2015).

In March 2013, Canadian energy company Enbridge announced that it was constructing the Sandpiper pipeline to move tar sands oil from the Bakken region of North Dakota across northern Minnesota to Lake Superior area refineries. The route of the pipeline bisected land, lakes and wild-rice harvest areas owned and occupied by the several Ojibwe Nations of Minnesota, in particular, the White Earth Band of Ojibwe. White Earth member and environmental activist, Winona LaDuke, led opposition to this pipeline on the same grounds as the opposition to DAPL. Namely, lack of consultation with the tribes, lack of environmental considerations, disproportionate impacts on American Indians, and violation of historical treaties (Tello, 2015). On September 2, 2016, Enbridge announced it was discontinuing construction due to burdensome regulatory oversight and instead was shifting its focus to partnering with ETP on the construction of the DAPL (Aronson, 2015; Hughlett, 2016; ICTMN Staff, 2016).

In January 2016, Paradigm Energy Partners (Paradigm Energy Partners, n.d.) announced it would construct the Sacagawea pipeline (North Dakota Public Service Commission, 2016) to transport oil and gas produced at the Bakken oil fields from Keene, ND to Palermo, ND. It would cross under Mandaree Lake situated on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, home of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nations (MHA) (MHA Nation, n.d.). As with the other pipeline projects outlined above, the MHA opposed[4] the construction because the Tribe was not properly consulted, along with concerns about contamination of the lake which is the source of drinking water for the Ft. Berthold Reservation and several nearby communities. In early August 2016, the MHA was informed of a report received by state and federal regulatory agencies detailing a

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[4] The MHA Nation has approved other oil drilling and pipeline projects on their land, and receive revenue from them.

severe lack of proper inspection procedures. This, and concerns about construction, prompted the

MHA to issue a cease and desist order. Later in August 2016, Paradigm Energy Partners filed

and was granted a temporary restraining order in federal court against the MHA and the

construction resumed (Dalrymple, 2016b & 2016c).

Common threads that connect the conflicts around the DAPL, the KXL pipeline, the

Sandpiper Pipeline and the Sacagawea pipeline are as follows:

1) The US government does not interact with the tribal governments on a nation-to-nation

   basis as stipulated in Article One, Section Eight of the US Constitution (The Foundation

   for the National Archives, n.d.)

2) tribal governments are not adequately consulted about infrastructure developments

3) construction and the resulting infrastructure violate treaty terms agreed to between the

   involved tribes and the US government

4) negative consequences (contamination of natural resources) disproportionately affect

American Indians

5) resource extraction/transportation yields little to no benefits for the members of the tribes

6) historical homelands are adversely disturbed and significant cultural/spiritual sites are

destroyed

7) information and news coverage of most of these conflicting situations does not reach the

national public consciousness (Jenkinson, 2016; Naurekas, 2016a; Naurekas, 2016b; Van

Kueren, 2016).

8) misleading negative information about American Indians informs the majority of

American citizens

Researcher Positionality

As a child, I had an interest in American Indian culture and history. As an adult, my interests changed into intellectual discovery. The dissonance between versions of historical events taught to me and the versions I discovered through in-depth study of alternative texts and counter-stories challenged me. I began to question the accuracy of how American Indians are portrayed in education, literature, movies, pop culture, and the general cultural attitudes of many Americans (Deloria, 1969; Iverson, 1998; King, 2013; Laduke, 1999; Mack, 2015; Mihesuah, 1998; Nabokov, 1991; Sleeper-Smith, et al., 2015).

In 1995, I was introduced to the cultural and spiritual life lived by members of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe[5] (RST) who occupy the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. I became actively involved in the community and culture, and created relationships with many people. In 2010, I was honored by being adopted into a family[6]. This event prescribed neither rights or privileges, nor the identity as an Indian. It did not assign to me any authority or special relevance to their culture or history. It simply meant that I am a relative, part of a family whose historical and contemporary life experiences differ vastly from my own. Over the past twenty-two years, I have listened to first-person and family stories of historical events involving my relatives and the Lakota. I have learned counter-stories of the interactions between "Whites" and "Indians" told by the direct descendants of the cultural and spiritual leaders of the Lakota people who sought to protect their families and homelands.

I am aware that many of the changes wrought through the struggle for Civil Rights for minority groups do not often serve or protect the rights of American Indians. I am witness to the ongoing struggle of American Indians to claim their own historical and cultural identities

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[5] The Rosebud Sioux are also known as Brule Sioux. They identify themselves as Sicangu Lakota.
[6] The Hunka Ceremony (Making of Relatives) is described by White Hat (2012, p. 38).

(Sleeper-Smith, et al., 2015; King, T., 2013; Iverson, 1998). I hear ignorant and prejudicial remarks, and witness discriminatory behavior from White people who have no understanding of historical or contemporary context of what it is like to be Indigenous in America (Alfred, 1999; Churchill, 2004; Cote-Meek, 2014; Deloria, 1969). I listen to these same people explain that the "Indian Problem" is self-inflicted because the Indians are culturally inferior, intellectually deficient, lazy people who live off the hard-earned tax dollars of "Real Americans" and profits from Indian casinos. I am witness to the everyday challenges faced by my Lakota relatives that I don't have to face because of the circumstances of my birth.

Why Resistance Matters

The unprecedented actions and resistance of American Indians against the construction of the DAPL is in part a response to over five-hundred years of oppression and is happening because as one Lakota Elder stated, "I want to win for once" (Healy, 2016b). Across the U.S., American Indian Nations are speaking out against historical and current mistreatment, and the misrepresentation of their people, their cultures and their histories (Alfred, 1999; King, T. 2013; Miller, 2005; Reinhardt, 2015; Sleeper-Smith et al., 2015). Around the world, historically marginalized peoples are now speaking up and telling their counter-stories (Alfred, 1999; Trembath, 2016). In 2008, the heads of government in both Australia and Canada offered formal apologies to their Indigenous Peoples and acknowledged historical wrongdoing, tacitly accepting that these historical actions still carry devastating consequences today (CBC News, 2008; CNN Asia, 2008). The US government has never formally acknowledged or apologized for the mistreatment and genocide of American Indians, though many people around the globe are aware of our less than exceptional history.

I am not trying to "save the Indian" (Alfred, 1999; King, T., 2013; Mihesuah, 1998; Williams, 2005). I am trying to influence discourse about American Indians. I seek to bring awareness and acknowledgment of historical events that White people, people like me, can disregard because we don't have to know; or more importantly, we perhaps don't want to. To know necessitates writing a new story that includes the dark history of this country. Our insistence that we are an exceptional country, founded on and guided by our Constitution, requires this change.

Purpose of the Study

What will it take to discover personal and cultural imperatives to address the dissonance between what we have been taught about American Indians, and the verifiable facts and information contained in their counter-stories? The consequence of not listening to, accepting and assimilating these counter-stories into our national consciousness is the continued marginalization of American Indians. The ramifications are the indifferent treatment of American Indians, and the continued violation of their historical sovereign rights and privileges as dictated by Treaties and the U.S. Constitution (Alfred, 1999; Deloria, 1969; King, 2013; Iverson, 1998; Mander, 1991; Newcomb, 2008; Reinhardt, 2015; Sleeper-Smith et al., 2015; Smith, 2012).

The false and harmful identity created for American Indians by law, culture, and prevailing attitudes of many American citizens is evident in language and images used throughout our media and public discourse. Although, White Americans seem to not be conscious of, or even ignore, this overt prejudice, discrimination and racism. This racism towards American Indians is also actively denied, resulting in ongoing oppression that renders American Indians, and the significant obstacles they encounter, invisible. This creates a critical

need for confrontation and education about the harm caused by the misrepresentations and outright lies. If White Americans acknowledge that American Indians have the right to declare their own experience, speak their own narrative, and name their own identity, they are more likely to see American Indians as worthy of ethical treatment and moral respect. White scholars McCaslin and Breton (2008) encapsulated the importance of this study and the benefit of this research, "We who are White, who are colonizers, desperately need decolonization too" (p. 513).

For this study, the confrontation of ignorance and disregard toward American Indian experience, identity, and narratives begins with an examination of reports of the DAPL conflict. This conflict is a social event with defined social relationships which necessitates a critical analysis of those relationships. Critical analysis can reveal interpretations and explanations of social events, identify causes of social wrongs, and form necessary knowledge to mitigate the effects of those wrongs (Fairclough, 2010). According to van Dijk (1993), the social wrongs of inequality and racism are justified through two complementary strategies, an inflated positive representation of the dominant group and a negative representation of the oppressed group. These representations are present in language and discourse produced by the actors in social and political events such as the DAPL conflict. Thereby, a critical analysis can provide "an account of the role of language, language use, discourse or communicative events in the (re)production of dominance and inequality" (van Dijk, 1993, p. 279).

The following questions will frame the analysis:

1) What types of language and ideologies are prevalent in selected news media and social media reporting the DAPL conflict?

2) How does the discourse of colonization and oppression function within the text, and in comments from consumers of the text.

3) How does the discourse of decolonization, American Indian experience and sovereignty function in the text and in comments from consumers of the text?

Precis of Chapters

In Chapter 2, I will discuss how racist language toward American Indians was developed in documents from the 15th century and how the continued use of this language frames the discourse, identity and understanding of American Indians. In Chapter 3, I present Critical Discourse Analysis as developed by Fairclough, and elaborated on by van Dijk, the method I employ for this study to examine language present in the reporting of the DAPL conflict. I will also discuss aspects of TribalCrit and Red Pedagogy and what will be drawn from each to further frame the analysis. I will then delineate how the specific texts were selected and what discursive themes were discovered. Chapter Four will show what types of language and ideologies were prevalent in selected news media and social media. It will also provide an account of the role that language and language use or communicative events has had in the defining the competing narratives and worldviews of those supporting DAPL, and those opposing it. An analysis of reader comments from the Facebook pages of each source will show how consumers of the text responded to the text, the language they used, and the ideologies they expressed. Finally, the differing interests of the those involved in the DAPL conflict, as reflected in social practice, should provide insight into the causes of action and response during the conflict. Chapter Five provides a summary of the study, discussion on the results of the analysis, interpretation of the results, limitations of the study, suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature will begin with language in historical documents and discourse, connect that language with identity formation and stereotypes, and report on consequences of the created stereotypes. It will then explain the importance of dominant and counter-narratives and examine them through Critical and Critical Indigenous theories. This review will focus upon language contained in dominant legal and cultural narratives, and lead to how that language created stereotypes related to identity formation. This will provide a framework for understanding historical and contemporary text and discourse about American Indians. Additionally, it will review Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012), Tribal Critical Race Theory (McKinley & Brayboy, 2005) and Red Pedagogy (Grande, 2004) to provide information and context around how American Indians and American Indian scholars understand and relate to dominant narratives, counter-stories, and identities.

Oppressive Language and Discourse about American Indians

The Doctrine of Discovery issued by Pope Alexander in 1493 to guide European voyages of discovery, directed explorers to seize foreign lands for conquest, exploitation and habitation. It relieved these explorers from extending any rights towards the inhabitants of those lands if they were infidels, pagans, heathens or savages (King, 2013; Newcomb, 2008; Williams, 2005). According to Gonnella-Frichner (2010), Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Doctrine of Discovery "has been institutionalized in law and policy….and lies at the root of the violations of the of indigenous peoples' human rights" (p.1). The application of the Doctrine of Discovery also allowed the North American continent to have

been declared *Terra Nullus,* considered to be unoccupied because the inhabitants were pagans, heathens or infidels (Gonnella-Frichner, 2010; Newcomb, 2008).

The saliency of these laws and policies are evident in the Colonial Charters created in the formation of the early American colonies, which retained language ascribing the superiority of Europeans and the inferiority of American Indians (Grande, 2004; Newcomb, 2008; Williams, 2005). Based upon these early documents, the Founding Fathers of the United States of America (USA) created a political and legal framework to marginalize or eliminate American Indians and seize their land and resources (Williams, 2005). Examples of this are hostile language towards American Indians in the Declaration of Independence and the incorporation of the Doctrine of Discovery as an original, legal source to extinguish American Indian possession and use of lands (Williams, 2005). The dispossession of American Indians was further enacted through *Manifest Destiny*--the belief that White settlers were God's chosen people. The rightfulness of taking American Indian land was thereby framed as acceptable using the metaphor of North America as the "promised land" (Newcomb 2008, p. 52).

Eventually, this language found its way into rulings made by the Supreme Court to decide cases involving possession and use of lands in North America. Joseph Story, a Supreme Court justice in the early 1800s, opined about conceptual boundaries and constraints, concluding that American Indians, due to inferiority, were constrained in right of possession and use of their historical lands. Due to superior White intellect, the American Indians were obligated, bound, or destined to surrender and relinquish their lands and resources (Newcomb, 2008; Williams 2005).

The Supreme Court, under John Marshall, invoked the language and logic of the Doctrine of Discovery in three separate rulings that had immeasurable impact upon American Indian's right to possess and use their historical lands (Grande, 2004; Newcomb, 2008; Williams, 2005).

In the first case, *Johnson v M'intosh*, Marshall cited the DCD as justification for the legal imposition of absolute dominion over American Indian territories. This effectively established an authoritative, legal discourse directly sanctioning a White, racial dictatorship (Newcomb, 2008). According to Grande, "The Johnson decision set the stage….for future, unremitting attempts to dispossess Indians of their land" (2004, p. 39).

The second and third rulings, known as *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia,* and *Worcester v. Georgia* came about because of efforts by the state of Georgia to dispossess the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw and other tribes from their historical lands. White settlers in Georgia wanted to lay claim to and occupy American Indian lands, but they were prohibited due to nuances of the Johnson ruling. The federal government prohibited the state government of Georgia from dealing directly with the tribes because that action was solely under the purview of the federal government. These two rulings further entrenched American Indians in a place of inferiority in the racial hierarchy of the United States. Marshall contended that American Indians did not have the status of independent, sovereign nations as stipulated in the Constitution, but were dependent, domestic nations. These rulings established that American Indian Tribes were "wards of the federal government, and were incompetent to handle their own affairs" (Grande, 2004, p. 39). The Worcester ruling, however, did peripherally confirm the sovereignty of the tribes while giving Congress plenary power over them and reaffirmed the protected ward status from the earlier rulings. But President Jackson, in accordance with the wishes of the state of Georgia, defied the Worcester ruling and ordered the removal of the Eastern American Indian tribes to Western reservations. This now infamous forced exodus, named the "Trail of Tears" resulted in the deaths of thousands of American Indians.

In 1871, the federal government formed the Indian Peace Commission to deal with "hostile" American Indians who continued to resist colonization and forced removal to reservations. The outcome of this commission's findings effectively terminated American Indian's rights to negotiate treaties and extinguished their only means of representation on a federal level. What followed was a series of Acts passed by Congress that eroded American Indian rights and appropriated lands guaranteed to them by earlier treaties. Overall, one hundred and twenty Federal and Supreme Court cases, more than thirty legislative acts and nine Executive Orders have been enacted because "the narrative tradition of tribalism's incompatibility with white civilization [has] generated a rich corpus of texts and legal documents for dispossessing the Indian" (Grande as cited in Williams, 2004, p. 41). Newcomb (2008) used concepts based in the cognitive theory formed by Lakoff and Johnson, to postulate that language depicting American Indians as heathen or savages conceptualized "…them in terms of what they were *not.*" He stated this "serves a tacit cognitive function of judgment based on negation" (p. 103). This negation allows denial of existence and constructs a process of conceptualization that diminishes the object of negation. Newcomb declared that through this imaginative process, the creators of these legal rulings and legislation mentally negated the rightful identity and existence of American Indians. Identical language has been erroneously used to define American Indian identities and create damaging stereotypes.

American Indian Identity and Stereotypes

The stereotype of the American Indian as presented in text and images generally falls into three related yet distinct categories: the noble savage, the historical savage, and the unredeemable savage (King, 2013). The first is the "Indian-as-ecologically-noble-savage" which represents American Indians as an exotic indigenous people who are in harmony with nature

(Grande, 2004, p. 63). This American Indian identity signifies a pan-Indian role as "Native Americans" who practice ancient ceremonies and possess arcane wisdom. Popular culture, Hollywood, and thousande of books perpetuate this version of American Indians and it prompts people to want to dress like, act like, and sometimes ignorantly claim American Indian ancestors (King, 2013). Because of the influence of pop-culture stories and icons, most people today believe they "know" what American Indians are like and what they do (Deloria, 1969; Williams, 2005).

American Indian identity as historical produces perceptions and images of them only as they were, not as they are. This idea of American Indians as a doomed race stuck in the past precludes contemporary awareness of them and conditions people to believe American Indians have no present or future role in American society (McKinley & Brayboy, 2005; Williams, 2005). Newcomb (2008) suggested that misconceptions and biased media portrayals of their current struggles to maintain their homelands and culture, such as the DAPL conflict, prompt most people to continue to think of them as backward and inferior.

The unredeemable savage identity results from the dehumanization of American Indians by the colonizers and settlers of North America in order to placate their consciousness (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Mander, 1991). Labeling American Indians as ignorant, uncivilized, barbaric savages substantiates claims of their inferiority; the incommensurable savage who is opposed to, and an obstacle to, western civilization (Newcomb, 2008; Williams, 2005). This perspective relies upon the idea that they lack the virtues of civilization disqualifying them from inclusion in Eurocentric civilization and even humanity (Smith, 2012).

The negative stereotypes created through racist language and then transmitted across generations becomes embedded in cognitive processes of those within the dominant group

(Williams, 2005). Williams claims that current attitudes and laws result from the process of Whites projecting their perceptions and meanings on American Indians. These projections then placed constraints upon American Indians as they conformed with the categorizations of noble savage, historical savage, and unredeemable savage. As shown in the research cited above, most people's perceptions about American Indians result from the process of mental negation of American Indian identities and narratives. Starting with this negation a story is then *leveled* by leaving out details; next, it is *sharpened* by specifying the remaining details even if they are not true; and third, the process of *assimilation* crafts the story to make the most sense to those who are telling it (Gladwell, 2000).

Consequences of American Indian Stereotypes

In his book The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America (2012), King, T. related that these stereotypes and clichés are often produced by collective fears and imaginings. He stated that Americans no longer *see* Indians, instead what they see is "…bits of cultural debris – authentic and constructed…" (p. 54). He aligned this idea of cultural debris with the theoretical concept of *signifier* which is an indicator, a signal in the social world of communication, that can be interpreted meaningfully (Norman, 2008). As stated by King, signifiers, or signs, can create *simulacra,* "…something that represents something that never existed" (p. 54). First introduced by cultural theorist, Baudrillard (1994), simulacra occur when the actual is manipulated resulting in distortion and disorientation. King applied Baudrillard's argument to American Indian stereotypes wherein American culture is so overwhelmingly misinformed by distortions, the actual is no longer possible to ascertain. For example, the unredeemable savage has been documented and codified through legislation and court rulings and is used as a signifier during times of conflict and/or to rationalize injustices that

are perpetrated upon American Indians. Likewise, their nobility is indicated by the simulacra of stereotypical behavior, customs and dress, which many people believe to be authentic (Chu, 2015; Iverson, 1998; King, 2012; Miller, 1999).

According to Fitzgerald (2010) and Campbell & Edmo-Suppah (2003), the genesis of most stereotypical portrayals of American Indians was literature such as the *Indian Fighter* stories by James Fenimore Cooper in the early 1800's. This literature was widely read by White Americans who had little contact with American Indians but were fascinated by the fierce and noble savage encountered on the American frontier. Starting in the 1900's, these early stereotypes were the basis for subsequent portrayal of American Indians in movies, "where accurate representations of Native Americans were sacrificed in favor of 'the Hollywood Indian', a cinematic creation springing directly from the ubiquitous images of the old bloodthirsty savage and his alter ego, the noble savage" (Campell & Edmo-Suppah, 2003, p. 18).

The medium of television exposes many people to information that subsequently informs their worldviews and conceptualizations of people, places and events unknown to them. Representations of minorities in television shows, and news programs, usually fit existing stereotypes and function to place them within the "colonizer discourse" (Fitzgerald, 2010, p. 368). News reporting of American Indians on television is usually relegated to Pow Wows, cultural events, or local tribal disputes, and ignores the large-scale issues confronting them.

Although NAs have undeniably faced hardship and discrimination at the hands of the American state, the portrayal of that fate is, predictably, warped in the media. Movies have consistently justified the right of the White people to colonize the American continent and have denied any persecution by the White settlers. Likewise, news coverage of crime, poverty, treaty rights, and the environment has framed NAs as a

problem to the society and even to themselves. Much of this discourse frames Native–

White relations in terms of conflict and suggests a historically justified defeat of the

Natives in confrontations with the White society (Kopacz & Lawton, 2013, p. 20).

The most pernicious stereotypes encompass the use of both the noble savage and the

fierce savage as mascots in sports and advertising. The impacts created by negative stereotypes

associated with mascots range from cultural insensitivity to overt racism and, despite growing

awareness, those who support and defend these mascots don't really see a problem with their

use. Consequently, the very real issues confronting American Indians become shrouded and little

to no effort is put forth to adequately address their concerns or educate Whites and others about

the harm caused by the misrepresentations and outright lies (Loewen, 2007; Munson, 1998;

Sleeper-Smith et al., 2015). Churchill, citing Ludwig Wittgenstein stipulated,

> We must begin with the misrepresentation and transform it into what is true. That is, we
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> must uncover the source of the misrepresentations; otherwise, hearing what is true won't
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> help us. The truth cannot penetrate when something is taking its place (2004, p. 1).

Narrative Paradigm Theory

This part of the review is to highlight scholarship that explains the acceptance of some

historical accounts and the rejection of others. Nelson (2001) asserted that people tacitly accept

dominant narratives and these narratives function in a way to hold people captive. Since the

dominant narrative is uncritically analyzed, it serves to perpetuate distorted perspectives and

create negative identities for the subjects of the narrative. One-sided narratives, like the

dominant narrative of the events of the 1862 War outlined in the introduction, can be analyzed

using Fisher's Narrative Paradigm Theory (1984, 1985).

Narrative as an act of developing and transmitting culture has been used since antiquity (Clair et al., 2014; Fisher, 1984, 1985; Schuloff, 2015 & Striano, 2012). It constructs and describes the world, delineates personal and cultural identity, serves as a recounting of historical events, shapes contemporary culture(s) and prescribes direction for the future (Clair et al, 2014; Fisher, 1984, 1985; Harding, 2012; Hobart, 2014; Miller, 2005; Schuloff, 2015; Selg & Ruustso, 2014). According to Miller (2005), a narrative is a collection of memories selectively chosen to fit the needs of a particular social group resulting in a device that controls the past and possibly dictates the future.In their report of the narratives that emerged from Estonia's quest for independence Selg and Ruutso (2014) stipulated, "For history to take a narrative form there is a need for a focused effort to develop its accounts into a series of intertwined events that form a coherent story" (p. 371). The dominant narrative of the historical and contemporary interactions between White colonizer-settlers and American Indians validates the stories, worldview, and identity of the former while ignoring and negating that of the latter.

Fisher explained that the criteria for selecting certain historical facts to form coherent stories is dictated by the needs of certain social groups. He postulated that an understanding of human communication requires viewing humans as storytellers (Fisher, 1984, 1985). Fisher defines narrative as "symbolic actions, words and/or deeds that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them" (p. 2). Fisher (1984) philosophically grounds his theory of narrative paradigm in an ontological perspective, which views human communication as both historical and situational. Fisher determined that *narrative rationality* is why one version of events, or story, is considered more credible and acceptable rather than another. Narrative rationality rests upon the dual notions of *narrative probability* and *narrative fidelity.* The first requires a story to unfold as it is believed it will, aligning with preconceived notions held by the

listener, and can epistemically satisfy the demand for coherence. The second depends upon how well the content and the story-line corroborate with prior construction and convergence of information in antecedent, or earlier versions of the story. Overall, narrative rationality can explain and justify past, present and future behavior, and often provides more credibility (as determined by the audience) than empirical evidence or logical argument (Fisher, 1984).

Fisher elaborated that narrative paradigm as a theory is concerned with pragmatic effects of accepted narratives and serves to translate historical events for contemporary cultures (Fisher, 1985). He also related that a significant feature of compelling stories and accepted narratives is to provide rationale for individual/cultural decisions and actions. Harding (2012), Miller (2005), and Selg and Ruutso (2014) concurred that narrative paradigm explains the process of construction, and re-construction of narrative, which is then used to determine individual and cultural perspective identity and perspective. According to Hobart (2013) and Kirkscey (2008), narratives that achieve dominance do so in part because they are constructed in accordance with the values of the subscribing culture and achieve coherence both epistemically and axiologically. These dominant narratives often become official historical narratives (Valdeon, 2015) and develop into what Selg and Ruutso (2014) termed *teleological narratives*. These teleological narratives construct individual and cultural stories that describe inevitable and predestined actions rather than historical events, and function to construct political antagonisms.

Counter-narratives -- Counter-stories

Narratives that do not fit a dominant culture's criteria for probability and fidelity are considered by many to take the form of oppositional discourse or counter-narratives. Counter-narratives (counter-stories) emerge when accepted narratives do not serve the individual/cultural needs of the discounted or marginalized. Counter-stories give voice and legitimacy to historically

underrepresented individuals/cultures and can challenge the fidelity of dominant narratives (Alfred, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Miller, 2005, Schuloff, 2015; Solorzano & Russo, 2002; Westerman & White, 2012). However, it is difficult for counter-stories to achieve acceptance or even acknowledgement because of the constancy of, and cultural dependence upon, dominant narratives. (Harding, 2012; Mack, 2015; Striano, 2012). To accept counter-stories as alternatives or replacements creates difficulties because it indicates the already accepted story could be a misrepresentation (Valdeon, 2015). Researchers who examine the narratives of marginalized and oppressed cultures often discover their stories reject the idea of a single historical perspective, and provide multiple perspectives in understanding the world. (Mack, 2015; Miller, 2005; Schuloff, 2015; Westerman & White, 2012).

Nelson (2001) stated that there are two steps to the process of telling counter-stories. First, it is necessary to critically analyze the parts of the dominant narrative that have been used to construct an identity of oppression and misrepresent marginalized groups. Second, the story needs to be retold to include "morally relevant details that the master narratives suppressed" (p. 7). Nelson addressed the argument that the inclusion of counter-stories into an accepted cultural narrative will produce an "epistemological crisis" (MacIntyre as cited by Nelson, 2001, p. 61). This position fails to recognize that members of marginalized groups are constantly in a state of epistemological crisis because they are disconnected from normative narratives and traditions constructed in the White, dominant narrative

Without the attribute of narrative rationality as determined by Fisher (1984), when counter-stories are told by marginalized groups, they are most often dismissed by a dominant group, though dismissal of a counter-story is most often not factually supported. (Alfred, 1999; Deloria, 1969; Mack, 2015; Miller, 2005, Schuloff, 2015; Westerman & White, 2012). If a

marginalized group is embedded in a dominant group (as are American Indians) the dominant group is "apt to dismiss" the narratives and counter-stories of the marginalized group, "*even when they are known within the larger group*" (emphasis added) (p. 87). Oppressive dominant narratives are distortions of actual events and cover up inconvenient facts that can challenge the credibility (rationality) of the dominant narrative (Deloria, 1969; Iverson, 1998; King, 2013; Laduke, 1999; Mack, 2015; Mihesuah, 1998; Nabokov, 1991; Nelson, 2001; Sleeper-Smith, et al., 2015). There is often great disparity between "what a master narrative demands of certain people and what those people actually do or are" (Nelson, 2001, p. 165). Nelson contended that counter-stories can be successful at overcoming the oppression caused by dominant narratives and stipulated that "optimally successful counter-stories *must* be master narratives, since success consists precisely in the counter-story's becoming widely circulated and socially shared" (p. 157).

Counter-stories from the point of view of American Indians have been available since first contact with European explorers and colonizers (Nabokov, 1991). As stated previously in the introduction, most American Indian nations were oral cultures and so their stories and speeches were mostly annotated by the Whites they encountered. Consequently, the written records of these counter-narratives were through the understanding and inherent bias of the recorder (Cote-Meek, 2014; Sleeper-Smith et al., 2007). The first-person accounts that are available are more recent and take the form of retelling of oral histories, as well as some personal accounts (Bordeaux-Bettelyoun & Waggoner, 1999; Deloria, 2006). In 2004, former South Dakota Senator Tom Daschle addressed Congress and informed them of recently translated letters written by Dakota men who were prisoners after the 1862 Dakota War. Daschle stated we need to consider the words of these men in order to understand history through a different

perspective. The imperative for this, according to Daschle, is to right the wrongs that have occurred because of the distortions and omissions contained within dominant narratives (US Congress, 2014).

Critical Race Theories

Authors of Critical Race theory contend that opposition to dominant stories can be created through the telling of counter-stories wherein the counter-story establishes a tool to expose, analyze and challenge. Solorzano and Yosso (2002) and Delgado and Stefancic (2012) both addressed the idea of counter-stories within the framework of Critical Race Theory (CRT). The development of Critical Race Theory occurred because lawyers and legal scholars determined new theories and strategies were needed to combat racism. CRT builds on insights from critical legal studies and radical feminism, and recognizes that race and racism are engrained in American history, culture, and contemporary society. CRT stipulates that counter-stories, grounded in oral histories of oppressed people, are central to challenging dominant narratives, as well as the stereotypical portrayals within these narratives. Smith (2012) stated that for American Indians, these counter-stories are held within the oral histories, genealogies, cultural artifacts, names, and in the very landscape they claim as their homelands. The power of counter-stories is essential to American Indian survival and continued liberation from oppression imposed by White settler-colonialism (Alfred, 1999; Cote-Meek, 2014; Smith, 2012). In fact, these counter-stories move beyond survival and frame the concept of *Survivance,* "narratives of indigenous peoples…that articulate the active recovery, re-imagination and reinvestment of indigenous ways of being" (Grande, 2002, p. 175). According to Solorzano and Yosso (2002), "the counter-story is also a tool for exposing, analyzing and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege" (p. 32).

Ideologically, CRT stipulates that since race is a concept socially constructed by way of mental categorization, attitude, and discourse, "changing the system of images, words, attitudes, unconscious feelings, scripts and social teachings" will serve to dispute that concept (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 21). Unfortunately, according to Delgado and Stefancic, this can create a situation of empathic fallacy, "the belief that one can change a narrative by merely offering another, better one" (p. 33). However, when the ideology of racism is examined and the injustices identified, the victims of racial injury can discover an oppositional voice that can challenge the justification and maintenance of the dominant narrative. Realistically, CRT stipulates that racism influences how people allocate privilege and status, and racial hierarchies determine which narratives are given validation. For example, European colonialist-settlers crafted narratives in their colonial charters to assuage their feelings about their exploitation and treatment of American Indians. Using CRT to examine inherent privilege and sustained racial hierarchies, counter-stories can challenge the misrepresentations within the dominant narrative and reveal their negative effect on American Indians

According to Alfred (1999), one of the essential elements of historical and ongoing colonialism is intellectual dishonesty. It is therefore imperative to undermine these intellectual, moral foundations and expose the internal contradictions of the dominant narrative. However, some obstacles to these changes are the subordination of tribal and indigenous ways of knowing and understanding, and the belief by some that American Indian academics can no longer hold an authentic viewpoint if they have received a western education (Grande, 2002; Smith, 2012). American Indian scholar Sheila Cote-Meek (2014) confronted some of these obstacles, detailing criticism of CRT in her book about colonization in education. Along with Smith (2012), she pointed out that purveyors of western research and scholarship methods often assume that theirs

is the only correct and rational model. Citing Grande's research Cote-Meek stated, "The predominantly white, middle-class advocates of critical theory will need to examine how their language and epistemic frames act as homogenizing agents" and how even critical pedagogies retain deep structures and belief systems based in western thought (2014, p. 158).

Alfred (1999), Cote-Meek, (2014), Deloria (1969), Grande (2004) and Smith (2012) all agreed that an American Indian point of view cannot be argued, nor substantiated, using the dominant western paradigm. This paradigm was created by colonization and racism and perpetuated by the idea that American Indians are helpless victims in dire need of guidance and assistance from more capable and knowledgeable White people. Cote-Meek cited bell hooks who stated that all marginalized peoples "are faced with the dilemma of developing particular strategies that draw attention to one's plight in such a way that will merit regard and consideration without reinscribing [*sic*] a paradigm of victimization" (2014, p. 24).

An essential aspect of developing a strategy to confront the racism inherent in dominant narratives about American Indians is the realization that acts of oppression stem from the needs of the oppressor. Africans brought into slavery were oppressed and exploited to build and maintain White American culture. American Indians, invaded and colonized, were oppressed by wanton acts of extermination and assimilation to provide White settlers land and opportunity (Churchill, 1997; Iverson, 1998; Tuck & Yang, 2012). In order to address the ongoing dilemma of American Indians, it is required to define *Colonialism* and *Colonization.* Tuck and Yang argued that the form of colonization wrought upon American Indians is *Settler* colonization; defined by the lack of spatial separation between the metropole and the colony. The intent and the impact of the colonizer-settlers' actions was to dispossess American Indians from their land, resources, and culture and make them disappear through the process of extermination and

assimilation (Churchill, 1997; Iverson, 1998; Tuck & Yang, 2012). This required total appropriation of land, resources, culture and language and creates "profound epistemic, ontological and cosmological violence" that continues through each day of occupation, resulting in it becoming a structure rather than an event (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). The ideology of colonization is framed by the normalization of racist practices which position the White settler as superior and the American Indian as inferior.

McKinley and Brayboy (2005) outlined a theory called Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) to address issues specific to American Indians and to recognize the liminal position they occupy. This liminal position is created by the complexities within the history of language and identity formation that serve to distort the realities of American Indians (McKinley & Brayboy, 2005; Smith, 2012). The primary tenet of TribalCrit is that colonization and its effects are endemic to American society and culture, and are held in place by language, narrative, and attitudes of mainstream society that emphasize the racialized status of American Indians. TribalCrit grounds the idea that for American Indian scholars, theories are not abstractions but instead serve as roadmaps for individuals, communities and Tribal Nations. It further paves the way to enable and legitimize self-identification for American Indians and what it means to be "Indian" (Mckinley & Brayboy, 2005). According to Cote-Meek, the obstacle to utilization of the tenets of TribalCrit to enable and legitimize is that "Sufficiently persuasive narratives have not been created, or they have not been successfully broadcast to wider audiences" (p. 38).

Cote-Meek extensively explored Grande's research in the formation of her *Red Pedagogy* (2004). Red Pedagogy is an Indigenous liberatory theory used to deconstruct existing Western theory and challenge universal modes of thought, which obscure some of the ongoing issues confronting American Indians (Cote-Meek, 2014; Grande, 2004). One of the elements for

success in employing Red Pedagogy is that tribal and traditional ways of life act as a sociocultural frame, which can serve as a critical lens: "Such a Red pedagogy would transform the struggle over identity to evolve, not apart from, but in relationship with, struggles over tribal land, resources, treaty rights, and intellectual property" (Grande, 2004, p. 159). Additionally, Red Pedagogy as a *Transformative* methodology can increase awareness of the connections between language, identity formation, colonization and racism for both White colonizer-settlers and American Indians.

Pedagogical imperative lies with all educators to ensure that historical events, as they are taught, are examined within context of intercultural encounters. Most Americans have little idea how radically their views and values might shift if they were to undertake a concerted effort to understand the worldview of American Indians; and it is the responsibility of educators to link the lived experience of their students with the process of social transformation. Reading between the lines of Grande's Red Pedagogy, (2004) as well as, Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970), educators can discover that the methods and strategies used to combat oppression by educating the oppressed can also be applied to educating the oppressors: "To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation" (Freire, 1970, p. 47). Freire and Grande both stipulated that acting to create a new situation depends upon not seeing the oppressed as an abstract category, but as people who have been dealt with unjustly, and to take seriously the claims and struggles of colonized peoples. Furthermore, educators need to develop systems of analysis to uncover the ways in which domination and oppression still inform the processes of schooling. According to Grande (2004), the task then becomes defining the common ground between Red Pedagogy and other critical praxis with the hope to reshape schools and the

learning process. This common ground serves as an entryway for educators to engage in public discourse about embedded discrimination and racism against American Indians within school systems and curriculum. It also provides tools for American Indian students who are struggling to make sense of their own histories and lived experience.

Conceptually, the work of many American Indian Scholars center upon the need and the right to declare their own experience, speak their own narrative, and name their own identity. Even more so, in seeking their survivance and emancipation from the effects of colonialization and racism, many American Indian scholars suggest that text and discourse should be examined through an indigenous lens using critical and indigenous thought and theory (Cote-Meek, 2014; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Deloria, 1969; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Grande, 2004; Kinchloe & Steinberg, 2008; Mack, 2015; McCaslin & Breton, 2008; McKinley & Brayboy, 2013; Newcomb, 2008; Smith, 2012). Grande (2004) stated the condition of "rhetorical imperialism" (p. 56) that has been created and maintained by White colonizer-settlers, and the reliance on language and stereotypes contained within the dominant narrative, is due to power structures that "assert control of others by setting the terms of the debate" (Grande, 2004, p. 56). She further stated that throughout historical discourse, language and terms have changed whenever it served the needs of the dominant culture. Grande then argued that "just as language was central to the colonialist project, it must be central to the project of decolonization"[7] (p. 56).

Summary

This review of the literature has identified numerous salient points germane to this study. First, language that created identities and narratives about American Indians was developed by White colonizer-settlers prior to contact with American Indians. Second, this language, as

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[7] The concept and process of Decolonization is too broad a subject to be covered here. See Alfred (1999), Cote-Meek (2014), Grande (2004) and Smith (2014).

understood and put into action, perpetrated unjust and inhumane treatment of American Indians and caused the dispossession of their lands, cultures, and identities. Third, this language was codified and became the basis for Federal Indian law, enactment of Manifest Destiny, and the formation of sociocultural awareness and understanding of American Indians. Fourth, these factors led to the marginalization and oppression of American Indians by White colonizer-settlers historically and contemporarily. Fifth, scholars have developed critical theories to analyze and understand counter-stories of American Indians and reveal the inconsistency and errors contained in the dominant stories of White Americans. Sixth, this led to the formation of Indigenous theories predicated upon Indigenous ways of knowing which provide a more culturally appropriate tool to examine discourse about American Indians.

Justification for the colonization of American Indians, formation of harmful identities, disregard for their counter-stories, and ongoing illegal and immoral treatment, is predicated upon a European-Colonial doctrine of White-racial superiority written in 1493 (Williams, 2005). Opposition to these processes can be initiated through the ascendency of American Indian counter-stories which can then catalyze resistance to oppression and racism. Invariably, American Indians can then declare their own experience, speak their own narrative, and name their own identity using language fundamentally rooted in American Indian knowledge and praxis. Grande's assertion quoted above, that language must be central to reversing and repairing these processes, will help frame the Critical Discourse Analysis conducted for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

Fairclough (2010) postulated that critical analysis will provide interpretations and explanations of events identifying causes of injustice and oppression. Additionally, creation of knowledge and understanding can occur that will contribute to mitigating these causes. Fairclough constructed an often-used method of CDA and "views discourse as performing a constructive function with regard to identity, relationships, and knowledge systems" (Benham, 2015, p. 38). Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000) stated the purpose of CDA is to analyze the relationships between dominance, discrimination, power and control as it manifests through language. They further related that the "locus of critique" for CDA is what they termed the *nexus* of language, discourse and social structure. van Dijk (1993), a prolific scholar on CDA, reported that "Critical Discourse Analysis should deal primarily with the discourse dimension of power abuse and the injustice and inequality that result from it" (p. 252). The use of CDA in this research is supported by the writings of many of the American Indian scholars previously cited in this work. As stated by Denzin and Lincoln, critical methods must seek forms of praxis and understanding that are emancipatory and empowering, as well as deconstruct structures that privilege Western thoughts and ideologies: "It must be unruly, disruptive, critical and dedicated to the goals of justice and equality" (2008, p. 2). Though racism toward American Indians cannot be simply reduced to a language or communication problem, it can be stipulated that both privilege and racism *are* manifested through language and discourse. It becomes necessary, as evidenced by the research cited in this study, to disrupt language that continues to privilege White superiority while concurrently assimilating language that posits American Indian counter-stories and identities.

Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA reveals that discourse is socially constituted and constructed; it is produced, and consumed in complex real-world context. Additionally, this social practice by social actors becomes contextualized as ideology which can be discovered by analyzing text contained in discourse produced by social events (Fairclough, 2010; Huckin, 1997; van Dijk, 1993). Using CDA, researchers can seek to understand the context of production and consumption, as well as *interdiscursivity* and *intertextuality* of discourse. Interdiscursivity results when different discourses work together, and intertextuality when a discourse refers to a past discourse either explicitly or implicitly. Understanding how text fits into social context requires understanding how it relates to other texts about the same issue, whether in referencing past discourses or in interacting with concurrent discourse. Along with understanding the production and consumption of discourse, CDA can explain how discourse *influences* the production and reproduction of dominance (Benham, 2015; Bloomaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Fairclough, 2010; Huckin, 1997; van Dijk, 1993). Consequently, CDA allows "long-term analyses of fundamental causes, conditions and consequences" that are the bedrock of the inequality, discrimination and racism directed towards marginalized and oppressed peoples such as American Indians (van Dijk, 1993, p. 253). In this study, the utilization of CDA should be able to provide an account of the role that language, and language use or communicative events, has had in the defining the differing interests and values of those supporting or indifferent to the DAPL, and those opposing it.

Description of the Text

Fairclough (2010) determined that the dialectical nature of discourse requires that analysis of textual elements be conducted in terms of the dialectical relations that produced them. This requires a *transdisciplinary* approach which crosses boundaries between language, politics,

and social actions. For Fairclough, a process of analysis stipulates more than application of predetermined methods, it incorporates construction of objects of research, such as coherent and researchable questions. This allows various points of entry for discourse analysis, which allows focus upon different aspects of the text and elements under consideration. Text produced by the Bismarck Tribune newspaper, geographically the closest to the Standing Rock area, and largest daily circulation newspaper, and the Bismarck Tribune's Facebook page will be examined. Indian Country Media Network (ICMN), an online media aggregate providing news, political reporting, and historical information, written by American Indian authors and scholars, and the ICMN Facebook page will also be examined. These two textual sources, as well as comments in response to the text listed above will provide these points of entry. The expected preponderance of language aligning with the concepts discovered in the review of the literature, guides the selection of these texts.

Process of Analysis

Narrative of Dominance and Oppression in DAPL Conflict

Two major dimensions of dominance exist, the enactment of dominance in specific textual contexts, and the influence of dominant discourse in shaping cognition. Socially cognitive acts, as they are affected by individual and group ideologies, are reflections of the interests and values of those individuals and groups (van Dijk, 1993). The acts and actions of social cognition by members of dominant culture "may be enacted and reproduced by subtle routine [and] everyday forms of text and talk that appear 'natural' and quite 'acceptable'" (p. 254). This analysis will parse out examples of language that are similar to, and align with, the dominant narrative about American Indians, as it is demonstrated within the discourse about the DAPL conflict. The analysis of the text will determine if key words and phrases can be construed

as perpetuating indifference and overt discrimination toward American Indians involved in the conflict. Additionally, this analysis will seek to determine what influence the examined text has in shaping cognition of the DAPL conflict among those consuming the text.

Counter-Narrative of American Indian Knowledge and Experience in DAPL Conflict

McKinley and Brayboy (2005) in their TribalCrit theory delineated nine requirements for analyzing discourse about American Indians. While all nine are important, three are the most salient to the emphasis of this study on language and counter-narrative. First, "Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized nature of our identities"; second, "Indigenous peoples have a desire to obtain and forge a tribal sovereignty, tribal autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification"; and third, "The concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens" (p. 429). Grande in her theory of Red Pedagogy (2004) revealed six major requirements, of which two are important to this study. First, language is paramount and a central key to analysis of the lived experience of American Indians, and second, American Indians need to be able to name and conceptualize their own experiences. This analysis will parse out examples of language that are similar to, and align with, the counter-narrative about American Indians, as it is demonstrated within the discourse about the DAPL conflict. The analysis of the text will determine if key words and phrases can be construed as oppositional to the racialization of American Indians, and/or are indications of sovereignty, self-determination and self-identification. Language in the text will be examined to determine if it reflects meaning and concepts as developed through American Indian knowledge and experience. Additionally, this analysis will seek to determine what influence the examined text has in shaping cognition of the DAPL conflict among those consuming the text.

Procedure

Research into the timeline of the DAPL conflict revealed some of the earliest mentions of the actions and events were in 2014. As reported in the introduction, the SRST erected the Sacred Stone Camp April 1, 2016, as a tangible point of resistance against the construction of the DAPL. News reports about the conflict were sporadic through June 2016 but increased starting in July 2016, so the starting collection point of data chosen was July 1, 2016. The latest date for the collection of data was December 31, 2016. Though, as of April 2017 the conflict continues, this six-month window provided ample data and information for this study.

News about events relating to the conflict originating from the Bismarck Tribune and the Indian Country Media Network (ICMN) were searched for content. Both outlets' websites and Facebook pages were examined to select articles apropos to this study. Twenty-five articles out of more than one hundred from each source were collected, including four from each that directly correlated as they reported about identical events. The news articles selected from both outlets did not include any reader feedback or comments section necessitating an examination of the Facebook pages. This examination provided additional discursive data for analysis, as well as providing indications of the social practice of the groups and individuals engaged in the consumption of the selected text.

After the data was collected, it was examined for language and ideological conceptualizations that could be arranged into themes for further analysis. The overall revelation is that there are competing narratives produced by individuals and groups on opposite sides of the DAPL conflict. The narratives from both sides expressed two main themes: the worldview of the other is erroneous, and the constructed narrative of the other is false.

Additionally, careful reading of the text revealed a difference of how information was structured, nuanced and reported, requiring another of layer discernment toward understanding. Text from the <u>Bismarck Tribune</u> was structured using informational sources, reporting of "facts" as related by the writer, and inclusion of comments within the article from person(s) involved in the particular incident. This followed a fairly strict linear cause/effect/outcome relating of information. In text from ICMN, the structure often took the form of relating a story with digressions to other related stories in a circular fashion attaching deeper meaning to the point the writer was trying to make. Perhaps this indicates cultural differences amomg the writers of the text, or that they were tailoring the text to the specific audience they were trying to reach.

Overview of Results

Fairclough's (2010) structuring of CDA stipulates three interconnected levels of analysis: textual, which is the process of production; discourse practice, the process of interpretation; and sociocultural practice, the explanation or social analysis. Chapter Four will describe the results of textual analysis from the chosen data sources as well as the discourse resulting from these various news reports and opinions. Secondly, analysis of comments by consumers of the text will provide an account of how language functioned in forming and guiding discourse defining the differing interests and values of those supporting or opposing the DAPL. Finally, how the differing interests of the those involved in the DAPL conflict were reflected in sociocultural practice will be reported. This analysis should provide insight into some of the causes of injustice and oppression as witnessed within the DAPL conflict, and the creation of knowledge and understanding that can be used to mitigate these causes.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF COMPETING NARRATIVES

Determining what types of language and ideologies are prevalent within the content found in the reporting of the events of the DAPL conflict guided this analysis. The reports were sourced from the Bismarck Tribune from Bismarck, North Dakota, which is the regional newspaper closest geographically to the area of the DAPL conflict, and Indian Country Media Network (ICMN), an online news magazine written by American Indian scholars and reporters. Selection of these texts are significant for differing reasons. The Bismarck Tribune serves the region within which the DAPL conflict occurred and thereby should be reflective of levels of affect and importance the event has on the residents of the local area. ICMN, though not located in the area, provides perspective particular to American Indians as evidenced by the topics and tone of its reporting. Analysis of these sources revealed constructed competing narratives and contested, dichotomous worldviews within the DAPL conflict. In this study, the utilization of CDA provides an account of the role that language, and language use or communicative events, has had in defining the differing interests and values of those supporting or indifferent to the DAPL, and those opposing it.

Language and Competing Narratives

Both sides of the DAPL conflict contended the narrative of the other side was exaggerated, misleading, constructed upon faulty premises, or outright false. A primary example is those supporting DAPL opined that protestors were engaged in "mindless and senseless acts of criminal mayhem" (Grueskin, 2016, para. 8) while those opposing DAPL stated "reports of incidents were exaggerated creating resentment and danger for all involved" (Dalrymple &

Nowatzki, 2016, para. 8). An analysis of this discursive practice revealed connections between the language used, the constructed narrative, and the formation of the competing narratives.

One part of the competing narratives is the question of whether the conflict was taking place on treaty lands or non-treaty/private land. Opponents to DAPL claimed the area belongs to the SRST and the Oceti Sakowin[8] under the Fort Laramie Treaties of 1851 and 1868. They adamantly contend this land has never been ceded and, despite claims to the contrary, belongs to them. Energy Transfer Partners (ETP) purchased some property in the contested area even though they had been granted an easement by the former property owner. ETP's position, enforced by local law enforcement agencies, is that SRST claims under the treaties are inaccurate and invalid. DAPL opponents stated, "we took back un-ceded territory and enacted Indigenous Eminent Domain" (Grueskin, 2016b, para. 2). However, law enforcement officials said, "trespassing on private land can't be justified by claiming Eminent Domain. We will enforce current laws and rights of possession; Treaty matters will have to be decided in the courts or by Congress" (Grueskin, 2016b, para. 5).

Another aspect of the competing narratives involves motives, scale, and scope of law enforcement actions during the conflict. Both government and police officials stated that "mutual commitment to public safety" was the basis for the strategy and actions of police (Donovan, 2016, para. 2). Tribal officials and other protest leaders related that "police actions are inconsistent with their stated reasoning" (Dalrymple & Nowatzki, 2016, para. 5). One flash point in the conflict was the erection and enforcement of blockades along a main highway. Law enforcement officials maintained "the roadblocks are necessary because of the unpredictable situation" (Dalrymple & Nowatzki, 2016, para. 13). Tribal officials responded, "the roadblocks

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[8] The Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires) are commonly known and referenced to as the Great Sioux Nation

perpetuate the misconception that the protestors are violent and dangerous" (Dalrymple &
Nowatzki, 2016, para. 2). Tribal officials also stated, "the rerouting of traffic due to the
blockades is an attack on our economy, our nation and our race" (Donovan, 2016, para. 9). Law
enforcement officials responded, "the blockades are necessary in our commitment to public
safety" (Donovan, 2016, para. 2). This specific conflict highlights the notion of social power held
by social institutions, in this case law enforcement. Social power is defined as the ability to assert
control that stems from a power base such as force or coercion. Access to, and control of,
discourse in the form of news reports creates a power resource that can be utilized to influence
knowledge and opinions which directly or indirectly controls the actions of others. In this case,
law enforcement controlled the most influential discourse and thereby had a greater chance to
control the actions of others.

Physical confrontations erupted during the conflict and each side justified their actions as
a response to the other side. Primarily, opponents of DAPL pointed to brutal police actions and
reasoned these actions were examples of oppression. Protestors claimed they were "standing our
ground" (Nowatzki, 2016a, para. 4). Law enforcement justified their actions as necessary by
referencing overt acts and defiance of the protestors saying, "they forced our hand," and "they
have chosen a confrontation" (Nowatzki, 2016a, paras. 5&6). Protestors insisted that their
actions were non-violent and prayerful, claimed the moral high ground, and presented a unified
narrative of "peaceful action" (Dalrymple, Donovan, Emerson & Grueskin, 2016, para. 19). Law
enforcement and government officials framed the protestors as "obstructionists, thwarting lawful
completion of the pipeline" (Notwatzki, 2016b, para. 25), "creating fear among local residents,"
and presenting a unified narrative of a violent, armed protest (Emerson, Grueskin & Holdman,
2016, para. 7).

Along with language supporting competing narratives, examination of the text revealed language supporting contested and dichotomous worldviews. There are five different, yet intertwined threads: Protectors vs. Protestors, Illegal Protest vs. Legitimate Resistance, Sacred Ground vs. Not Sacred, Earth as a Resource vs. Earth as an Entity, and Indigenous Ways of Knowing vs. Western Ways of Knowing.

Competing Worldviews

Protectors vs. Protestors

Differing language used to identify those opposing DAPL was discovered within the textual reporting of the ongoing events. While "Protestors" was used by Law Enforcement and others who supported DAPL, "Water Protectors" was the identity preferred by those opposing DAPL. The use of "protestors" as an identifier relies upon language that asserts control by setting the terms of the debate. This enacts dominance in this specific textual context and actively negates the identity and narrative formed by those in opposition of DAPL. Discursively, this performs a constructive function with regard to identity, relationships, and knowledge systems which influences production and reproduction of dominance.

The influence of this discourse in shaping cognition for the consumers of the text necessitated those opposing DAPL to declare their own experience, speak their own narrative, and name their own identity. Those contesting DAPL insisted they be called "Water Protectors" because they were defending against encroachment upon, and damage to, water sources they view as a right for all people (Perkins, 2016, para. 3). Water Protectors claimed their opposition was not just about the current DAPL conflict, but that they were protecting the rights of all people to clean, safe water and environment to live in. To them the conflict at Standing Rock was about "protecting water on behalf of Creation" because "all people have a connection to

water" (d'Errico, 2016, paras. 3&4). As reported in this study, there is a long and consistent history of resource extraction and infrastructure projects that disproportionately affect American Indians, while profiting those removing the resources and benefitting the dominant culture. Though the DAPL conflict was concerned with a specific project, the Water Protectors promulgated a broad and systemic need to transition away from fossil fuel extraction and toward less damaging and more sustainable energy production and use. Along with declaring their own identity as Water Protectors, they began using the Lakota words for water (Mni) and for life (Wiconi) as their rallying cry, Mni Wiconi, which defined the discourse of the Water Protectors.

In this discourse, the Water Protectors insisted they were peaceful and engaged in actions grounded in prayer while in pursuit of self-determination. They repeatedly referenced pollution and contaminated water from previous pipeline spills, and rejected claims that DAPL was safe and would not have a detrimental effect on them or the local environment. The Water Protectors attached their cause to larger, and worldwide, environmental concerns as evidenced in the broad coalition of American Indian Nations, as well as national and international environmental groups who came together at Standing Rock.

Those supporting the construction of DAPL broadly rejected the Water Protector identity and claimed that they were simply Protestors, misinformed, and an obstacle to jobs, energy independence, and progress: "Native American groups and their environmental activist allies are attempting to roll back progress of the pipeline through illegal occupation of construction sites, intimidating and threatening law enforcement and construction workers, [and] shutting down public highways" (Ness, 2016, para. 4). Local residents and law enforcement officials evidenced the fact the majority of protestors were not from the SRST and alleged some were actually being paid by unknown sources to create mayhem and block construction of much needed

infrastructure: "As everybody knows, there are people from almost literally all over the world. Some of these people are professional protesters. Some of those people are not as inclined to be peaceful as the rest" (Emerson, Grueskin & Holdman, 2016, para. 14).

Describing the Protestors in this way constructs misconceptions and bias, prompting consumers of the text to think of them as backward and inferior. It also connotes violent, out of control, paid professional protestors as outsiders with a strictly political agenda. It also furthers the idea that American Indians, due to inferiority, are constrained in right of possession and use of their historical lands. Significant features of this text provide rationale for decisions and actions of those constructing and defending DAPL, and stipulates that the SRST is obligated, bound, or destined to surrender and relinquish their lands, and functions to construct political antagonisms.

Legitimate Resistance vs. Illegal Protest

In relation to the analysis of the text, the competing factions provided rationale for their perception of the actions undertaken by those opposing DAPL. Both rationales were rooted in the language used to describe the actions and the prevailing attitudes of those involved. Supporters of the DAPL construction repeatedly stipulated the protestors could have their say, if they acted within the law. They cited blocking traffic, interfering with construction workers, occupying construction sites, and belligerent resistance to law enforcement as examples of the unlawful nature of the protest. Some local residents "expressed worry that actions by protestors opposing the pipeline would stand in the way of people doing their jobs" (Pember, 2016b, para. 2). Law enforcement officials alleged the presence of weapons among the protestors: "officers have reported seeing protectors armed with guns and knives during the actions" (Pember, 2016a, para. 4). Law enforcement officials insisted that unlawful confrontations were instigated and

perpetuated unnecessarily by the protestors. They stipulated their duty was to keep everyone involved safe, enforce existing laws and property claims, and provide a necessary response to the illegal actions of the protestors. They stated, "If there's a confrontation, they've chosen to have it because we've tried everything we can over the last 2½ months not to have it" (Nowatzki, 2016a, para. 6). This hegemonically produced discourse of Illegal Protest served to validate the apparent attitudes, and overt actions, of law enforcement. Additionally, it was necessary to frame the Water Protectors as aggressors thus requiring and legitimizing the heavy-handed tactics used to confront them

Opponents of DAPL contested they were exercising their First Amendment right to assemble, state grievances, and protect against what they termed to be trespassing and illegal construction on historical Treaty Lands of the SRST: *"North Dakota law enforcement have proceeded with a disproportionate response to…nonviolent exercise of…First Amendment rights"* (Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, 2016, para. 3). They also maintained that "preventing government agencies from stripping protesters and tribal members of their constitutional rights to organize and protect our sacred places and water is paramount to both U.S. citizens and tribal sovereignty" (para. 6). They insisted they were dedicated to non-violent, direct action modeled on historical Civil Rights protests. They emphasized the self-policing aspect of the gathering that prohibited weapons of any kind, and the fact that "agitators" were often called out and expelled from the encampments. That actions of law enforcement were predicated upon safety for all was widely refuted, and the counter-claim was that police were acting as agents for the corporations building DAPL: "Native bodies stand between corporations and their money….North Dakota Governor Jack Dalrymple… has deployed the full force of the Highway Patrol and the National

Guard….to carry out the will of DAPL backers Energy Transfer Partners" (Estes, 2016, paras. 14&15).

The Water Protector's insistence that they were engaged in legitimate resistance is easily born out in light of other historical acts of resistance. Acts of resistance such as the Boston Tea Party, the Underground Railroad, and actions during Civil Rights protests were all considered illegal by members of dominant culture during the time they occurred. Only in retrospect did these other actions achieve consensus status as being legitimate, and only when the narrative(s) created through the discourse were accepted.

Sacred Ground vs. Not Sacred

Those opposing DAPL, especially members of the SRST and other member tribes of the Oceti Sakowin, insisted that construction violated and damaged culturally relevant and sensitive locations. They referenced their long habitation history in the area, as well as oral histories situating burials and other sites of significance in the pipeline route: "oil companies are causing the deliberate destruction of our sacred places" (ICMN Staff, 2016a, para. 2). Tribal historians identified numerous sacred sites, "and confirmed multiple graves and specific prayer sites," based upon culturally significant knowledge (Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, 2016a, para. 5). According to the SRST and others, parts of the pipeline will be located on Treaty Lands designated by both the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties, a point of contestation in the DAPL conflict. According to American Indian historian Suzan Harjo, "pipeline opponents are correct in citing the treaty in their efforts to stop pipeline construction on treaty lands" (Schlecht, 2016, para. 5).

This discourse within the DAPL conflict provides an intertextual link with the historical Ft. Laramie Treaties. The discourse contained in the treaties established the area for possession

and use of the SRST which could not be altered without consent of the majority of the SRST. As reported in earlier in this study, these two treaties were unilaterally altered by the U.S. Government when the needs of the colonial-settler population changed. It was determined that the land relegated to the SRST was better suited to serve the interests of the ever-expanding encroachment of colonial-settlers. Thus, claims of ancestral homelands and the oral histories of the SRST were effectively negated both in the original changes to the Treaties and in this contemporary DAPL conflict.

State agencies involved in permitting the construction process and the corporations building DAPL contended that appropriate surveys were conducted and no culturally significant sites were identified: "Archaeologists from the North Dakota Historical Society have concluded that construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) did not destroy sites sacred to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and that no sacred sites exist" (Pember, 2016b, para. 10). These claims are based upon archival information and through the utilization of accepted archeological practices used to implement the surveys: "Morton County is relying on the expertise of the State Archeologists who surveyed the property and have made a determination that no human remains or significant sites were found in the pipeline corridor" (Dalrymple, 2016c, para 15). These agencies refuted the knowledge presented by the Tribal historians as being invalid, not factually based or grounded in scientific methods. A story in the Bismarck Tribune reported on a critical confrontation over a burial site. Water Protectors attempted to occupy and prevent damage to the area, but were rebuffed by pepper spray and rubber bullets utilized by law enforcement. Water Protectors relied upon the refuted tribal history as motivation for their actions. They were countered by law enforcement who relied upon the reports from the State Archeologists and a

former owner of the property who stated, "I don't have any idea why they're making such a fuss about it. There's absolutely nothing up there" (Grueskin, 2016c, para. 38).

This refutation revealed an abuse of power which relegated the knowledge of the Tribal historians to mythical status. It ignored the point of view of a marginalized group and created an injustice by discounting the concerns of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. This injustice was manifested through the actions of construction workers destroying sacred sites even though knowledge of the sites was presented by the tribal historians. This dominant discourse of archeological knowledge contains the two necessary criteria, probability and fidelity, to acquire narrative rationality (Fisher, 1984) and has become positioned as an official historical narrative (Valdeon, 2015). This discourse within the DAPL conflict connects intertextually with many historical discourses that also defend a White-European narrative and promote the negation of American Indian beliefs, history and sovereignty. Throughout the history of the U.S., available discourse produced by the dominant White-European culture has portrayed American Indians as not having rights of possession to their lands or their cultures, and created a context of rationale and validation for ongoing acts of injustice and oppression.

Earth as a Resource vs. Earth as an Entity

The entire culture and way of living in the U.S. is dependent upon fossil fuels (oil, coal and gas) and it is difficult for most to envision life without the use of these resources. Additionally, the U.S. and World economies are intrinsically tied to the for-profit companies and corporations that extract and produce these products. This creates a situation where discourse about energy is bound within the perceived necessity to maintain an economy dependent on extracted resources. Proponents for the construction of DAPL hold the position that oil, as a product of extraction, is necessary to continued progress and a way of life and "will greatly

contribute to our energy independence…access to American-produced crude oil has already done much to lower energy prices in North Dakota and across the country" (Ness, 2015, para. 5). This view is substantiated by pointing out that the US and global economies depend upon the use of oil. Local officials cite job creation, energy independence and increased tax revenues as ancillary resources gained from the pipeline construction: "there is an opportunity to embrace energy independence ….by constructing the Dakota Access Pipeline, states…gain as many as 12,000 local jobs, $129 million in tax revenues" (Ness, 2016, para. 2). The prevailing attitude is to continue business as usual since the oil as a resource is present and there is the necessary technology to extract it, "after all, controlling the 'Indian Problem' has always meant maintaining unrestricted access to Native lands and resources and keeping Indians silent" (Estes, 2016, para. 15). By citing progress, energy independence, and lower energy prices as primary concerns, the disproportionate impact of DAPL construction on the Standing Rock Sioux tribe is discounted. This inequality is further compounded by the fact the pipeline route was originally north of the city of Bismarck, but was moved due to fears of polluting that city's water source.

Opponents of DAPL contend Earth is a living entity and that resource extraction causes irreparable harm, and as such "the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe is and will always be protecting our lands, people, water and sacred sites from the devastation of this pipeline" (Smith, 2016, para. 14). They hold that using Earth as an unending resource promotes an imbalance that affects all living beings both in the present and the future: "the waters and the land are part of a living network in which we have the right to defend if threatened, because it cannot defend itself and we depend on it for our very existence as a species" (Perkins, 2016, para. 4). They contend that practices and attitudes must change in order to avoid widespread and long-lasting environmental disaster and state, "our purpose here as human beings, as indigenous peoples on this planet, we

have an obligation to protect the earth, to end the oil industry and end the raping of our mother

earth" (Perkins, 2016, para. 8). This worldview is supported and substantiated by Indigenous

knowledge and ways of life that maintain "the tradition of living with the earth, the culture of

holding nature as sacred" (Perkins, 2016, para. 2). This worldview, and supporting discourse and

traditions, is ancient and predates ideologies that separate and elevate humans above all of

creation[9]. Earth as a planetary body is a closed system with finite resources susceptible to

permanent alteration caused by the actions of humans. Interestingly, twenty-first century

environmental movements align with this ancient worldview though most current efforts enacted

on behalf of the environment are superficial at best.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing vs. Western Ways of Knowing

Indigenous knowledge and understanding is framed by conceiving everything as

contextually connected, and operating in a dynamic flux. This conception, bound together within

the crucible of community life, directs empathy towards all of creation "the irreplaceable sacred

places across the landscape and the deep cultural and spiritual knowledge that is tied to

them….these are the places and the knowledge that make us who we are today as a tribe"

(Taliman, 2016, para. 13). To arrive at this understanding, knowledge is derived from

observations and lived experience within the ancestral places of origin and habitation. The

people at the Sacred Stone camp said, "we are a placed-based society…our culture, laws, and

values are tied to all that surrounds us….we cannot keep taking for granted the clean

water….and all that makes up the places [we] have inhabited since time immemorial" (Taliman,

2016, para. 7). This individual knowledge is built upon ways of knowing passed along by family,

and others, through the use of story-telling and mentoring so that "our young people have a right

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[9] The Great Chain of Being as espoused by Aristotle, Plato and proponents of Christianity.

to know who they are….they learn these things through connection to our lands and our history" (Allard, 2016, para. 12). Tribal historians indicate their way of knowing allows them to see and identify sacred locations and artifacts disputed by western-trained archeologists: "the State Historical Society 'walked right over sites'…that's the importance of tribal consultation…we have the ability to identify [and] evaluate sites…of cultural significance" (Dalrymple, 2016d, para. 6).

Western ways of knowing are predicated upon objectifying all things and each is awarded value according to a hierarchy of commodification and usefulness with humans as arbiter. This knowledge is codified and often passed along and accepted uncritically: "We are taught from birth thru schooling that the earth is a natural resource to be managed or property to be owned thru the system" (Perkins, 2016, para. 3). This separation and sense of dominion leads to exploitation of the natural resources, people and the earth in general and as a result, "modern humans have become estranged…and have lost empathy…for the planet." That has "allowed us to ignore the impact of excessive fossil-fuel dependence on the Earth" ((Pember 2016c, para. 28, para. 29). Non-indigenous peoples often stipulate Western ways of knowing are superior, and having a differing point of view is the result of being uneducated: "as far as the pipeline goes, I am of the opinion that educated people have deemed it safe and uneducated people can't bring themselves to believe this" (Braun, 2016, para. 6).

This process of objectification, commodification, and dominion is supported by ideas and beliefs formed within historical and contemporary cultural context, framed upon religious, educational, and political text and discourse. This cultural context functions primarily as ideology and serves to prop up the primacy of Western ways of knowing. Critical methods, like the analysis utilized in this study, seek forms of praxis to replace dominant thinking with a

different method of understanding. This new understanding accepts that there are many ways of knowing. Concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on new meaning when examined through the lens of those who have been marginalized. Ascribing value to Indigenous knowledge empowers and emancipates those oppressed by dominant thinking and serves to deconstruct structures that privilege Western thoughts and ideologies.

Discourse of Colonization and Decolonization Within the Text

How does the discourse of colonization and oppression function within the text, and in comments from consumers of the text? How does the discourse of decolonization, and the American Indian experience and sovereignty function in the text and in comments from consumers of the text?

Fairclough (2010) postulated that critical discourse analysis will provide interpretations and explanations of events identifying causes of injustice and oppression. Additionally, the creation of knowledge and understanding can occur that will contribute to mitigating these causes. An analysis of the Bismarck Tribune and the ICMN as textual sources revealed language of competing narratives and worldviews as reported in Chapter Four. Some of that language can be construed as latently aligning with either the discourse of colonization and oppression, or discourse of decolonization and the American Indian experience and sovereignty. Interpreting language from the chosen textual sources, however, did not adequately identify causes of injustice and oppression, nor knowledge and understanding to mitigate the causes; therefore, it was necessary to do further analysis.

The news stories and reporting contained in the chosen textual sources, the Bismarck Tribune and the ICMN, were accessed through their respective websites and Facebook pages. The information on the websites did not include any reader comments or feedback so it was

necessary to examine each Facebook page to discover how consumers of the text were responding, the language used, and the ideologies they expressed. It was discovered that comments showing support for and opposition to DAPL were evident on both sites but, as expected, the preponderance of comments weighed towards one side or the other. On the Bismarck Tribune Facebook page, comments trended towards support of DAPL, but there were ample comments relating opposition as well. Comments on the ICMN Facebook page mostly contained comments opposing DAPL with very few relating support.

Discourse of Colonization and Oppression

Analysis of the discourse contained in comments supporting DAPL followed two main threads. First, comments about pragmatic outcomes for the affected area and the well-being of the local residents were offered. These related to ideas such as progress, jobs, increased tax revenue, and situating the area as a valuable national resource. Second, comments were directed toward the protestors, and American Indians in general, and seemed to rely upon negative stereotypes. Four types could be differentiated from the language and context contained within these comments. The first type utilized language and statements forming ad hominem attacks such as "'lazy and unemployed," "alcoholics," "welfare Indians," and "playing the tribal card." The second ascribed motives to the actions, such as "protestors," "aggression," and "lawless thugs." The third offered perceptions of status, "conquered people," "no rights," "that land isn't sacred," "it is not their land," "it's a lost cause," and "get over it." Lastly, there were suggestions of actions to take against them like, "kick them out" and "exterminate them."[10]

While the pragmatic outcomes reported above can have an effect on all residents in the Standing Rock area, this particular discourse situates these concerns as more important than the

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[10] All words and phrases in quotations were gleaned from reader's comments posted on FB.

cultural and ecological concerns of those opposing DAPL. This reinforces existing structures of dominance and power that perpetuates the marginalization of the SRST and infers that those who oppose DAPL are acting as obstacles to progress and the well-being of others. The cultural norms associated with the use of reported derogatory stereotypes are identified earlier in this study. Dominant cultural discourse has assigned these negative characteristics to American Indians through misinformation, bias, and the need to position them as inferior. This then makes American Indians objects worthy of derision if they attempt to deviate from the identity assigned to them by dominant culture as is the case within the DAPL conflict.

Discourse of Decolonization and American Indian Experience and Sovereignty

Analysis of the discourse contained in comments opposing DAPL also contained two major threads, the first of which related to pragmatic outcomes resulting from DAPL not being constructed. These took the form of environmental concerns, local quality of life, and legacy issues. The language and context contained in the second thread differentiated three types of comments revealing perceptions of identity and experience and one stating perceptions of the actions initiated against the Water Protectors. The first type provided the underlying guidance for opposing DAPL, such as "ancestral values," "caring for the land," and "lifeways grounded in prayer." The second related values that were directing the opposition to include "Red Lives Matter," and "Mni Wiconi" (water is life). Third, "sovereignty" and "treaty rights" showed up as constituent parts of identity. Lastly, perceptions of law enforcement and governmental actions taken against the Water Protectors showed up as "unconstitutional"," "invasion by militarized police," unlawful use of force," "human rights abuses," "racism," and "environmental racism."

Both sides of this oppositional discourse delineated pragmatic reasons for either the completion or rejection of the construction of DAPL. Both were founded upon concerns for the

local residents, presently, and envisioned futures as framed by the beliefs, understandings and attitudes of each group. The lens or ethos of those opposing DAPL originates in teachings and practices formed within their cultural heritage and lived experience, both of which are mostly ignored and discounted by dominant culture. This disruptive discourse within the DAPL conflict enacted a declaration of sovereignty and indicted an unwillingness to be subjected to continued marginalization. The perception and description of law enforcement and governmental actions indicated a rejection of the legitimacy of these agents and agencies. This rejection also disputes the subordination by dominant culture of the inherent rights of American Indians, and the origins of those rights. Lastly, it highlights continued systemic misuse of the law and abuses of American Indians through use of force and violence.

Sociocultural Practice

As explained in previous chapters, CDA provides evidence on how discourse serves a constructive function. Those involved in the DAPL conflict produced text and discourse aligning with their values and ideologies regarding identity, relationships, and knowledge systems. Additionally, the processes of social cognition, how people process, store, and apply information about other people, guides social interactions between individuals and groups. Within the DAPL conflict, interactions between the individuals and groups in opposition originated through a synthesis of these values, ideologies and socially cognitive processes. The resulting sociocultural practices are clear indicators of how the competing narratives informed and shaped this conflict. This then requires an examination of how the two opposing sociocultural practices, informed and constructed by the text and discourse, were enacted.

Dominant Culture Sociocultural Practices

Acts and actions of social cognition by members of the dominant culture resulting in sociocultural practice, are produced and reproduced by subtle and routine forms of text and discourse. This sociocultural practice, normalizing actionable forms of dominance and oppression, appear as natural and quite acceptable. Within the DAPL conflict, the dominant culture can be identified as the corporations constructing DAPL, the local and national governing agencies reviewing and permitting the construction, law enforcement, and individuals whose values and ideologies favor the construction. As indicated in Chapter Five, acts of injustice and oppression such as racial/ethnic/cultural bias, discrimination or systems of racism, were not manifestly apparent in the reporting from the Bismarck Tribune. However, there were numerous and apparent latent examples.

      Latent acts of injustice and oppression

      The most egregious example is the rerouting of DAPL so as to not affect the drinking water supply for the city of Bismarck and instead situating it near the SRST reservation boundary. Another example is the refutation of treaty rights contained within the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties, claimed by the SRST. No serious consideration of treaty rights was given by the corporations involved in construction, the government officials, or law enforcement. The next example would be ignoring SRST's claim of the disruption and degradation of sacred sites. Finally, actions by militarized law enforcement, as reported, were out of proportion to the situation and raised local, national and international concerns about human rights abuses. These actions, or lack of action, were justified and considered legitimate despite the resistance from those opposed to DAPL.

Manifest acts of injustice and oppression

Two examples of manifest acts of oppression and injustice appeared in the reporting from the Bismarck Tribune, both involving construction employees brandishing firearms in the presence of the protestors. Though law enforcement consistently brandished loaded firearms and fired "non-lethal" rounds at the Water Protectors, these actions were considered legitimate. The use of firearms by non-law enforcement personnel to threaten individuals involved in the protests, though not prosecuted, can be understood as oppressive actions. Other manifest acts took the form of racial/ethnic/cultural bias in the discriminatory comments found on the Bismarck Tribune Facebook page and a few, sporadic comments on the ICMN Facebook page.

Comments selected and analyzed from the Bismarck Tribune Facebook page revealed racialized language often used to discriminate against and oppress American Indians. These comments can be considered as functioning as text and discourse practice, but commenting on a social media site also represents a sociocultural practice. The specific language reported in Chapter Five served to disparage American Indians behaviorally and culturally, as well as to situate them as contemporarily irrelevant. Furthermore, the language functioned to negate them individually and as a cultural group while suggesting conformance to stereotypical caricatures. Sociocultural practice within the DAPL conflict, manifested through these social media comments, acted to perpetuate racial attitudes and racism directed toward American Indians.

Non-Dominant Sociocultural Practices

Within the DAPL conflict, the non-dominant culture can be identified as members of the SRST, American Indians, and Allies[11]. Acts and actions of social cognition by members of the

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[11] The majority of Allies (non-Indians) were present for two reasons, they identified with the causes espoused by the SRST, or they had environmental concerns. There were some reports of competing agendas and Allies being asked to leave.

non-dominant culture must be defined differently than those of the dominant culture. Whereas sociocultural practices of dominance were produced in subtle and routine ways, sociocultural practices of resistance were not. Also, normalization of dominance and oppression appear as natural and quite acceptable, but the counter-stories framing the resistance are critical and disruptive. The sociocultural practices of the non-dominant culture take the form of praxis, reflection and action that is emancipatory and empowering, and seeks to deconstruct structures of oppression and dominance. Due to the critical and disruptive nature of the resistance by those opposing construction of DAPL, it is difficult to categorize any actions undertaken by them as latent so this discussion will only include manifest acts of resistance.

Manifest acts of resistance

Manifest actions were evident in the text from both the Bismarck Tribune and the ICMN. The opposition to the construction of DAPL took form as the declaration of Sovereignty and treaty rights, resistance, and obstruction by individuals and groups. Starting on April 1, 2016, various protest camps were erected as both gathering places and physical barriers to halt construction, and were developed for long-term occupation. Water Protectors declared a commitment to non-violence, and constantly staged multiple actions in various locations. Individuals locked themselves to construction equipment and groups attempted to advance upon and physically claim areas disputed as Treaty Territory. Most actions included spiritual leaders and elders leading the gatherings in prayer and acts of passive resistance reminiscent of the Civil Rights Movement. Compelling law enforcement to undertake mass arrests was another tactic utilized, and was combined with organized and funded legal representation. The use of passive, prayerful resistance in response to aggressive law enforcement tactics did often give way to verbal taunts and more combative acts by the Water Protectors.

Actions in various forms were also undertaken away from the camps and the location of the pipeline construction. Tribal leaders from SRST addressed different governing bodies and gatherings to include the Army Corp of Engineers, Morton County Sheriff's office[12], the North Dakota Governor's office, and the United Nations. Protests occurred in the local cities of Mandan and Bismarck, North Dakota, as well as solidarity gatherings across the U.S. and the world. An initiative to compel individuals and organizations to divest from banks and institutions connected to and responsible for supporting and funding the construction was undertaken. As of April 2017, nearly 4.5 billion dollars has been removed from these institutions worldwide.

Sociocultural practice by those resisting DAPL was also manifested through social media comments found on both the Bismarck Tribune and ICMN Facebook pages. Comments selected and analyzed from the two Facebook pages revealed language analogous with requirements stipulated by Critical and Indigenous theorists (Alfred, 1999; Cote-Meek, 2014; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Grande, 2004; McKinley & Braboy, 2005). The specific language reported in Chapter Five served to account for the desire to obtain and forge American Indian sovereignty, autonomy, self-determination, and self-identity. Additionally, the concepts of culture, knowledge, and power were expressed through an Indigenous lens. Sociocultural practice manifested through these social media comments acted to reflect meaning and concepts developed through American Indian knowledge and experience, and represented a backlash against historical and current mistreatment and misrepresentation.

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[12] Morton County, North Dakota is the contested geographical location of the pipeline construction

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The dominant narrative of the 1862 Dakota War in Minnesota led to injustice and racism against the Dakota people. These actions were justified by an inflated, positive representation of the dominant culture of White colonizer-settlers, and emphasized a negative representation of the oppressed culture, the American Indian nation known as the Dakota. In this present time, just as in 1862, misleading negative information about American Indians informs most American citizens. In fact, the false and harmful identity created for American Indians by law, culture, and prevailing attitudes is still evident in language and images used throughout our media and public discourse (Campbell & Edmo-Suppah, 2003; Iverson, 1998; King, 2013; Kopacz & Lawton, 2007; Loewen, 2007; Miller, 1999, Williams, 2003). White Americans seem to not be conscious of, or even ignore, this overt prejudice, discrimination and racism. This racism toward American Indians is also actively denied, resulting in ongoing oppression that renders American Indians, and the significant obstacles they encounter, to be invisible.

Implications of the Study

Throughout history White-European culture has been considered normative and superior, and identifying others as inferior was justification for unjust and inhumane treatment and denial of rights accorded by White-European religion, culture, and custom. This was exemplified through the ostensibly benevolent or necessary policy of imperialistic expansion in the U.S. known as Manifest Destiny, which through sheer numbers and use of force, dispossessed American Indian nations from their ancestral lands and cultures. The enactment of these laws and policies led to both literal and cultural genocide of American Indians, created misleading identities, damaging stereotypes, and situated them as obstacles to progress to be removed or

ignored. These identities and stereotypes, perpetuated by popular culture and media, inform misconceptions of American Indians held by many of the citizens of the US.

Fisher's Narrative Paradigm theory provided explanation on how and why certain narratives are accepted, while others are disregarded despite being more factual and germane. The dominant narrative about the SRST and American Indians in general informed many of those consuming the text and discourse created within the DAPL conflict. The fidelity and probability of this accepted narrative, as defined by Fisher (1984), were obstacles which prevented some consumers from understanding and assimilating the competing narrative. These consumers relied upon this dominant narrative to frame the conflict and direct how they perceived the stories and actions as they unfolded. This positioned the dominant narrative as teleological and perpetuated the construction and operation of the DAPL as an inevitable outcome and functioned to construct political antagonisms. In this way, the dominant narrative continued to support the effects of colonization endemic in American society and culture.

Within the DAPL conflict the counter-narrative challenged the fidelity and probability of the dominant narrative. It highlighted the right for the SRST and American Indians to declare their own experience and speak their own story which created an epistemological crisis for those ascribing to the dominant narrative. The revealed gaps in the coherence of the dominant narrative provided an opportunity for some consumers of the text and discourse to more readily understand and accept the counter-narrative. Critical and Indigenous Race theorists and others agree that these gaps will provide opportunities for counter-narratives to achieve rationality as the fidelity and probability of these narratives are recognized and assimilated (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Grande, 2004; McKinley & Braboy, 2005; Nelson, 2001; Sleeper-Smith et al., 2015). Additionally, pedagogies of resistance have already been developed (NYC Stands with Standing

Rock, 2016) and if implemented, will increase awareness of the connections between language, identity formation, colonization and racism for both White colonizer-settlers and American Indians.

In sum, analysis of the data revealed language and ideologies within the DAPL conflict supporting the dominant, colonial-settler narrative. This contemporary text, discourse and sociocultural practice is explicitly and implicitly connected with the historical text, discourse and sociocultural practice reported in this study. Likewise, the analysis revealed language and ideologies supporting decolonization and American Indian experience and sovereignty. This text, discourse and sociocultural practice are rooted in forms of praxis and understanding, as reported in this study, that are emancipatory, empowering, and serve to deconstruct structures that privilege Western thoughts and ideologies.

Competing Narratives

This study has provided insight into how the Dakota Access Pipeline conflict was reported by the Bismarck Tribune and Indian Country Media Network, and how the reporting influenced the way the conflict was perceived. Language and perceptions informed by historical, dominant narratives about history and identities of American Indians, and the experience, knowledge and narratives from American Indians, functioned as competing stories in the text and discourse. Throughout the conflict, the producers of these competing stories sought to gain relevance and acceptance of their version of the conflict and why it was unfolding at Standing Rock. Initially, this study positioned the dominant narrative in hierarchical fashion above the counter-narrative. This position of ascendancy seemingly created a situation portraying counter-narratives as only being a response to the dominant narrative. Though counter-narratives and counter-stories are by nature perceived as respondent, this is a latent manifestation privileging

White Eurocentric knowledge and history. Competing narratives from the point of view of American Indians have been available since first contact with White colonizer-settlers. American Indian nations were primarily oral cultures and so their stories and speeches were often translated and annotated reflecting any inherent experiences of the recorder. American Indian scholars and others are reclaiming and reporting on these historical narratives and returning them to the status they deserve as cogent, accurate depictions of American Indian identity, culture and history.

According to Fairclough (2010) contemporary problems of language and power in discourse need to be addressed by those subjected to "linguistic forms of domination and oppression." He stated that resistance is a constant response to domination and must take form in "contrary will to transform practices" (p. 533). Contemporary competing narratives constructed by American Indians then are of utmost importance because "it is mainly in discourse that consent is achieved, ideologies are transmitted, and practices, meanings, values and identities are taught and learnt" (p. 531). Internalized social structures, norms and conventions which form worldviews are constrained by available textual, discursive and educational resources, as well as specific socio-cultural practices (Fairclough, 2009). The competing narratives constructed by American Indians through contrary will, as well as discursive and sociocultural practices during the DAPL conflict will serve as both a resource for and a method of resistance. Successful resistance relies upon access to theoretical and analytical resources and the ability to succinctly inform and influence others. This ability to inform and influence was enacted during the DAPL conflict through the extensive use of Social Media resulting in a "contemporary intervention in discursive practices" which in turn can be used to achieve necessary social change (Fairclough, 2010, p. 532). The use of this type of intervention will no doubt be a factor in influencing current and future discourse about American Indians.

Challenging and Changing Discourse

What will it take to address the dissonance between the competing narratives presented within the DAPL conflict? It will require disruption of the language and discourse that privileges White, colonizer-settler superiority while simultaneously assimilating language and discourse that accurately depicts and positions American Indians both historically and contemporarily. There are serious inconsistencies forming the self-assessment, self-understanding, and identities of both American Indian and Non-Indians in the US. Awareness, acknowledgment and assimilation of historical events necessitates writing new stories that include the oppression caused by Non-Indians, and the racism experienced by American Indians. American Indian Water Protectors involved in the DAPL conflict have succeeded in influencing and altering the perception of some. This is part of a genesis of growing empathy for American Indian experience and creation of political space for change. What is now necessary is initiative and education that will force the general population of the US to engage with realities other than their own and become aware of the inconsistencies between how the world is and how it should be. Education holds the best promise for change--cultivating the ability to see other points of view and understanding other peoples' motivations and desires.

Education for Emancipation and Transformation

Pedagogy for the Oppressed by Freire (1970), and Red Pedagogy by Grande (2004) as well as works by many critical theorists, declare strategies and tactics for educating populations of marginalized and oppressed people. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) declared emancipatory education "…must be unruly, disruptive, critical and dedicated to the goals of justice and equality" (p. 2). Emancipatory education functions to awaken the consciousness, reject the oppressor's ideology, develop alternatives, and motivate people to participate in the struggle to

transform society. Cote-Meek (2014) in her book, <u>Colonized Classrooms: Racism, Trauma and Resistance in Post-Secondary Education</u>, reported on "Transformative Pedagogy," which enacts liberation through increasing awareness of ongoing racism and colonialism. Both emancipatory education and transformational pedagogy create conditions for understanding oppression and working for societal transformation and change.

According to Mezirow (2000) the entry point in the process of Transformative Pedagogy occurs when an individual is forced to confront the dissonance between competing narratives. To become aware of and acknowledge that staunchly held beliefs are not true creates discomfort and fear. Besides ignorance and prejudice, fear is one of the main reasons why racism and colonialism are condoned and perpetuated by White people in the U.S. This discomfort and fear result from the disruption of legal and moral beliefs which then disorders closely held and guarded worldviews. Discomfort and fear *require* an individual to either seek ways of understanding and assimilating a new worldview, or to retreat from and ignore the disruption. The first compounds discomfort and fear because it necessitates change and removes the individual from the privileged safety of a lifelong membership within dominant culture. To retreat from and ignore the disruption imposes a severe, internalized moral dilemma that has no resolution and acts to imprison the individual in a space they then fear to venture out of.

As stated in the introduction, this study is not about helping or saving American Indians. Instead, it is about discovering personal and cultural imperatives within White dominant culture to address the indifferent and racist treatment of American Indians and the continued violation of their historical sovereign rights and privileges. There is a critical need for confrontation and education to uncover these imperatives; ideas that can be found reading between the lines of

emancipatory and transformative pedagogies. All strategies and tactics necessary to educate the oppressed can also be used to educate the oppressors.

Limitations of this Study

This study is limited by numerous factors including inherent bias of the author. The focus on only two sources of reporting about the DAPL conflict, while necessary, left out cogent national and international news sources and numerous points of view expressed by myriad blog writers present at Standing Rock during the conflict. The time frame within which data was gathered, a six-month period from July 1 through December 31, 2016, though sufficient for the study, excluded rich data sets generated later. Finally, without experiencing the conflict first-hand, the author has relied upon the available text. The point can be made that a better study might have evolved out of a first-person experience by the author.

Contribution to Communication Research

Undoubtedly, there will be many studies originating out of the DAPL conflict. The contribution this study makes to the field of Communication is to provide perspective around the idea of capturing competing narratives as they unfold instead of in retrospect. Additionally, ignorance and apathy about American Indians is a byproduct of how we are educated about history. This study can perhaps be the spark that sets in motion more studies about counter and competing narratives that tell the stories of others. This will lead to solutions for the social injustices caused by relying upon a single story.

Future research could focus upon the ubiquity of social media coverage and how it functioned to either help and support the cause of the Water Protectors, or hinder them and diminish support. Another avenue would be to explore how extensive video coverage of events, clashes, and arrests aided the narrative of the Water Protectors when presenting their stories in

court on charges of trespass, rioting and terrorism. Finally, it is suggested to undertake a meta-analysis of the narratives being created around the globe as Indigenous People speak out and stand up.

Anaǧoptaŋ po!

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