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An examination of local newspaper photographs of the Wounded Knee occupation of 1973

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**AN EXAMINATION OF LOCAL NEWSPAPER
PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE WOUNDED KNEE
OCCUPATION OF 1973**

Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Communication

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements of the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Anne Schmidt

May 2000

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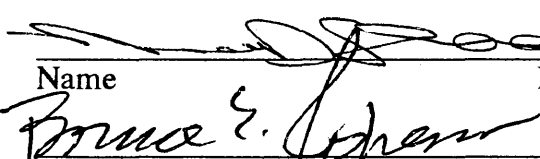
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Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,
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requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University
of Nebraska at Omaha.

Committee

Name	Department/School
	Communication
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Chairperson



Date

March 27, 2000

ABSTRACT

In February of 1973, the American Indian Movement occupied the small village of Wounded Knee. AIM's purpose was twofold, to increase awareness of the plight of Native Americans in the area and to remove the Tribal Chairman, Richard Wilson. AIM used the historic site of Wounded Knee and stereotypical images of Indians in hopes of gaining national attention through the media. AIM thought this media attention was necessary in order to bring about change.

Portrayals of Native Americans in the media have for the most part been stereotypical. Evidence of this can be found in the extensive research on Native American stereotypes. The previous research has focused mainly on films, but there is evidence of Native American stereotypes in the print and broadcast media.

The following research examined news photographs of the Wounded Knee occupation of 1973. The sources of these photographs were the *Alliance Times Herald*, the *Rapid City Journal*, and the *Chadron Record*. Each photograph was examined using five categories: the scene, the subject, the portrayal, the camera perspective and whether or not it was stereotypical. In addition, six photographs were analyzed in detail to give a close up view of stereotypical photographs versus images that were not stereotypical.

The scenes of the photographs most often showed confrontation on both sides of the dispute, but never showed either side actually being fired upon or firing upon another. Areas of relative safety were pictured a third of the time even though gunfire was a regular occurrence during the occupation. Native Americans were most often the subject of the images.

The portrayal of the occupation most often showed fatigue or relative safety. Only one photograph of a life-threatening situation was published. This is not a completely accurate portrayal since two people were killed and one left paralyzed during different exchanges of gunfire. The camera perspective was usually close up shots, with normal

views being used with almost the same frequency. Surprisingly, only 25% of the photographs were stereotypical. The savage warrior stereotype was most often found in the stereotypical images.

Differences were found in the newspapers' photographic coverage of Wounded Knee. The *Chadron Record* ran photographs related to Wounded Knee but none that were taken at Wounded Knee during the occupation. The *Alliance Times Herald* ran mostly close up shots that conveyed emotion. The *Rapid City Journal*, which published the most photographs, published a variety of photographs from government military equipment to groups of Native Americans demonstrating.

In general, these images show that a confrontation took place, but they do not show the life-threatening situations that were common during the occupation. The images convey a lopsided battle between Native Americans and the government. Images of helicopters, armored personnel carriers and tanks, all belonging to the government, make it clear that Native Americans were the underdogs. Some stereotypes were found in the photographs with the savage warrior stereotype the most common.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In 1973 on the evening of February 27, the American Indian Movement (AIM) occupied the tiny village of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge reservation. AIM's purpose was to bring attention to the injustices American Indians were facing and to force the removal of Tribal Chairman Richard Wilson, who many considered corrupt. At the occupation's end, May 8, 1973, two Indians were dead and one U.S. Marshal was left permanently paralyzed.

The year prior to the occupation was filled with tension. Two Indians were killed that year, both by white men who were tried for manslaughter and received light sentences. Indians were infuriated by these seemingly minor charges and sentences since Indians accused of killing whites were usually charged and found guilty of murder. On top of the injustice felt for these crimes, Richard Wilson was adding to the pressure through use of his "goon squad." This group of Wilson supporters were ready and willing to threaten or physically harm anyone who opposed Wilson.

In response to this and other problems on the reservation, AIM occupied Wounded Knee village. It took hostages and made demands of the government. Wounded Knee was chosen as the site of the occupation because of the historical significance of the massacre of 1890 and also because most of Wounded Knee was private property, so the government had decided to stay out of the area. AIM also wanted a nationally recognized site to gain the national attention it felt was necessary to bring about change.

Another way for AIM to gain national attention was to use stereotypical images of Indians. It knew these images were what people had come to expect of Indians. Many in the press believed the Wounded Knee occupation was simply a media event. The occupiers however, knew using stereotypes like warriors with braided hair, brandishing weapons would get them the coverage they sought.

• Stereotypes of Native Americans by Europeans have been prevalent since the late 1400s. The image of the Indian on horseback in full headdress, as the warlike savage or as the drunken Indian can be found in film,¹ on television,² and in the print medium.³ In fact, most minority groups are inaccurately depicted by the media with the use of stereotypes justified because they supposedly communicate information quickly.⁴

For Native Americans, perpetuation of stereotypes can be found throughout sports, with mascot names like the Indians, Braves and Redskins. The mascots themselves are usually on horseback with painted faces waving some type of weapon like a tomahawk. Some institutions have dropped the stereotypical mascots, but others remain even though Native Americans have made it known they are offended by them. The issue is an example of current stereotypes that affect the self-esteem and self-respect of Native Americans.⁵

- The media attention AIM sought was important to the occupation's success and using the old stereotypes was part of the plan. Russell Means, who many considered the spokesman throughout the occupation, openly admitted that events were staged for the television cameras' benefit. He states, "definitely there was some orchestration."⁶ He also

¹ Price, J.A. (1973). The stereotyping of North American Indians in Motion Pictures. Ethnohistory, 153-171.

² Hill, R. (1992). The Non-Vanishing American Indian. Quill, 35-37.

³ Bales, F. (1994). Hantavirus and the Media: Double Jeopardy for Native Americans. American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 18, 251-263.

⁴ Thomas, E.K. & Carpenter, B. (1994). Handbook on Mass Media in the United States: the Industry and its Audiences. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, p. 193.

⁵ Giago, T. (1995 October 21). Watch Series in Indians Moccasins'. Omaha World Herald, 8: Giago, T. (1992). Mascot Issue will not go away, and neither will Indian People. Editor and Publisher, 46.

⁶ Hickey, N. (1973 December 15). Cameras over Here! And Be Sure to Shoot My Good Side. TV Guide, 46.

- admitted that the occupiers had invited the media because they knew the government would not use full force with the cameras rolling. However, not all Native Americans agreed with the tactics of AIM. Some were embarrassed by the use of the old stereotypes to gain attention and felt reinforcement of these images did great damage to Native Americans.⁷ In the end, AIM would complain that the media's focus was more on the battle action between the government and the Indians rather than the reason for the fight.

The media's role in the occupation has been analyzed with some concluding that the media was used and that their presence kept the occupation going longer than it would have without the media's presence.⁸ When talking about the "media," these articles mainly refer to television and events that were staged for the cameras. The news photographs have not been analyzed to determine what role, if any, these images played in the occupation. Were the news photographs stereotypical as AIM suggested was needed for the world to take notice of Native Americans? In addition to the question of whether or not the news photographs of Wounded Knee are stereotypical, this research will look at local news coverage of the Wounded Knee occupation to determine what image was portrayed in the news photographs and whether there are differences in coverage in the newspapers being studied.

Minority portrayals in the media have not always been kind to Native Americans. Stereotypical images can be found throughout the media. Film, print and broadcast media studies all show evidence of stereotypes. Leaders of the American Indian Movement were accused of using stereotypical images of Native Americans during the Wounded Knee

⁷ Vine, D. (1974). The American Indian Image in North America. In G. M. Bataille & C. L. Silet, (1st ed.) The Pretend Indians: Images of Native Americans in the Movies (p. 51). Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press.

⁸ Trap at Wounded Knee. (1973 March 26). Time, 67; Schultz, T. (1973 June). Bamboozle Me not at Wounded Knee, Harper's Magazine, 46-56; Hickey, N. (1973 December 1). Was the Truth Buried at Wounded Knee? TV Guide, 7-11.

occupation. The reasoning behind using them was that it was what the public expected of Native Americans and were therefore images the public would accept. Whether or not these stereotypes are present in the news photographs of Wounded Knee is a question that has not been previously researched. This research will look at the news photographs to determine the image that was portrayed during the takeover of Wounded Knee in 1973. It will also determine if stereotypes are present in the news photographs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MINORITIES AND THE MEDIA

Portrayals of Minorities

There have been various portrayals of minorities in the media which will be examined in the following pages. Many of them are negative or stereotypical. In some studies, the white media image has been compared with the minority media image with the minority image usually negative and the white image generally positive. The minority at times has been molded in an image that although inaccurate did not change over the years. Other times minorities have been underrepresented or for some smaller minority groups non-existent in terms of media coverage.⁹

When comparing white and black families, white families were most often portrayed as intact, with married parents and children. Black families were usually depicted as having a divorced parent with children. When the white family only had one parent with children it was most likely due to being widowed. Rarely did white families

⁹ Atkin, D. (1991). The Evolution of Television Series Addressing Single Women, 1966-1990. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 35, 520; Northcott, H. C., Seggar, J. F., & Hinton, J. L. (1975). Trends in TV Portrayal of Blacks and Women. *Journalism Quarterly*, 52, 744; Seggar, J. F., Hafen, J. K. & Hannon-Gladden, H. (1981). Television's Portrayals of Minorities and Women in Drama and Comedy Drama, 1971-1980. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 25, 282.

have a single parent because of divorce. This contrasts with the rarity of a black nuclear family.¹⁰

Black and white politicians seem to be covered differently by the media. Black officials received more coverage in terms of length of the story. But on or close to election day, white officials were covered more, received more favorable page placements and the coverage was slightly more positive.¹¹

Blacks and Mexican Americans were asked what they thought of “television and newspaper portrayals of their ethnic group.”¹² Blacks rated television and newspaper portrayals negatively and gave the media an overall low score in terms of satisfaction of ethnic portrayals. Mexican Americans also responded negatively, for the most part. They were split on their overall satisfaction with the television media. Although they were critical of newspaper portrayals, they were not as critical as blacks.¹³

The reason for the negative responses, especially for blacks, could be explained by looking at other research studies that found negative portrayals of blacks. In television news, 37% of the stories in the Chicago stations studied were about blacks. Politics and crime accounted for almost half (49.8%) of those stories. The images that accompanied these stories were generally negative. Photographs of blacks usually were not accompanied by the name of the person and showed no movement, similar to a mug shot. These two things could reinforce the stereotype of blacks as less than human with them

¹⁰ Abelman, R. (1989). A Comparison of Black and White Families as Portrayed on Religious and Secular Television Programs. Journal of Black Studies, 20, 60-79.

¹¹ Chaudhary, A. G. (1980). Press Portrayals of Black Officials. Journalism Quarterly, 57, 636-641.

¹² Tan, A. T. (1978). Evaluation of Newspapers and Television by Blacks and Mexican-Americans. Journalism Quarterly, 55, 673.

¹³ Tan, 673-681.

being nameless and motionless. Blacks were also pictured more often dressed “poorly” and “in the grip of restraining officers”¹⁴ than whites.

On the other hand, a study that looked at minority lead roles on television between 1948 and 1991 found that the “average number of minority-centered series” increased each year and that after 1970 the minority leads were usually “portrayed as professionals.”¹⁵ This same study found that black men were represented more often than black women.¹⁶

Other media portrayals of minorities have led to protests. Local blacks protested what they perceived as an “anti-black tone”¹⁷ in the new layout of the *Washington Post* Sunday magazine. The protests were based on the following coverage of blacks in that issue: “1) The cover article focused on a black rap musician accused of murdering a drug dealer, 2) columnist Richard Cohen wrote about a local merchant who had called police when two well-dressed black men entered the store and wrote he would likely do the same thing, 3) A photo “portrait” of Sugar Ray Leonard [that] featured only his upraised fist, and 4) No blacks were featured elsewhere in the magazine, even in the ads.”¹⁸

A review of the *Post* magazine before and after the protest show that coverage of blacks prior to the protest was more negative than positive while coverage of whites was mostly positive or neutral. The months after the protest while white coverage either

¹⁴ Entman, R. (1992). Blacks in the News: Television, Modern Racism and Cultural Change. *Journalism Quarterly*, 69, 351.

¹⁵ Atkin, D. (1992). An Analysis of Television Series with Minority-lead Characters. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 9, 343.

¹⁶ Atkin, 346.

¹⁷ Lieb, T. (1988). Protest at the *Post*: Coverage of Blacks in the *Washington Post* Magazine. *Mass Comm Review*, 15, 61.

¹⁸ Lieb, 61.

positive or neutral continued to dominate, black positive and neutral coverage increased and there was no negative black coverage.¹⁹

Does network news portray African Americans negatively? The stories “centrally involving blacks”²⁰ were mostly about crime. Politics was the second most frequent category of black stories and “victims of social misfortune”²¹ was third. Of the crime stories, 29.4% of the time blacks were shown being physically restrained by police, compared to 10.5% for whites. In the instances where police raided homes to arrest accused criminals, six out of seven raids were on black homes. These things may “suggest ways in which news might reinforce negative stereotypes.”²²

Another question asked about television news is whether it contributes to “modern racism.”²³ One researcher in his review of racism and blacks, believes that while local news programs help to diminish “old-fashioned racism, the belief that blacks are inferior and should be segregated,”²⁴ they may be furthering “modern” racism. The term modern racism refers to the idea of an “anti-black affect combined with resentment at the continuing claims of blacks on white resources and sympathies.”²⁵ What reinforces this idea is black anchor persons, journalists and black authority figures which may lead some to believe that racism is no longer a problem. At the same time, modern racism may be reinforced

¹⁹ Lieb, 61-67.

²⁰ Entman, R. M. (1994). Representation and Reality in the Portrayal of Blacks on Network Television News. Journalism Quarterly, 71, 513.

²¹ Entman, 513.

²² Entman, 513.

²³ Entman, R. M. (1990). Modern Racism and the Images of Blacks in Local Television News. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 7, 332.

²⁴ Entman, 332.

through crime news where blacks are shown as threatening and violent or in coverage where black politicians are shown favoring their own race.²⁶

News photographs of minorities give another indication of how minorities are portrayed by the media. The images that are most often seen are minorities involved in violence, demonstrations,²⁷ crime, sports and entertainment.²⁸ These three latter categories are considered stereotypical. Overall coverage of minorities and especially everyday life coverage, is generally low.²⁹

Stereotypical Coverage

Stereotypical portrayals of minorities have at times been justified by saying that “media professionals use stereotypes frequently, usually in order to communicate a great deal of information quickly.”³⁰ Yet stereotyping has been defined as “a failure to see distinctions between members of a class or category”³¹ and as “a fixed or conventional notion as of a person, group or idea held by a number of people and allowing for no individuality.”³²

²⁵ Entman, 332.

²⁶ Entman, (1990), 332-345.

²⁷ Fedler, F. (1973). The Media and Minority Groups: A Study of Adequacy of Access. Journalism Quarterly, 50, 113.

²⁸ Lester, P. M. (1994). African-American Photo Coverage in four U.S. Newspapers, 1937-1990. Journalism Quarterly, 71, 380; Lester, P. & Smith, R. (1990). African-American Photo Coverage in *Life*, *Newsweek* & *Time*, 1937-1988. Journalism Quarterly, 67, 128.

²⁹ Lester, 391; Oliver, M. (1994). Diversity. Photojournalism, 3; Sentman, M. A. (1983). Black and White disparity in coverage by *Life* magazine from 1937-1972. Journalism Quarterly, 60, 504.

³⁰ Thomas, E. K. & Carpenter, B. (1994). Handbook on Mass Media in the United States: the Industry and its Audiences. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group. 193.

³¹ Severin, W. & Tankard, J. (1988). Communication Theories: Origins, Methods and Uses in Mass Media. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group, 78.

³² *Webster' New World Dictionary*. (1988). (3rd ed.) Cleveland: Simon and Schuster, 1314.

Walter Lippmann writes about stereotypes in relation to what we know. He believes there is no way of knowing everything and stereotyping is a way of filling in the gaps of what we do now know. He goes on to explain that stereotypes are a defense, “the defenses of our positions in society”.³³ People use stereotypes to defend what they believe, especially when to go against the belief would create internal havoc. Stereotypes “may not be a complete picture of the world, but they are a picture of a possible world to which we are adapted.”³⁴

Several popular television shows with mainly black actors were said to perpetuate a stereotype. In the 1970s, shows like *The Jefferson's*, *Good Times* and *Sanford and Son* portrayed blacks as loud, obnoxious, lazy or unemployed. The 1980s were not much better with successful series like *Different Strokes* and *Webster* where the black children were considered better off in the care of white guardians.³⁵

The portrayal of George Foreman is considered stereotypical, yet he is very popular. His status as a prize fighter is important to his success, yet just as important it is argued, is the media image that has been created of him. One researcher felt of this image that

Foreman has managed to tap into the American racial memory and pull out a personality that conforms nicely to past stereotypes of the African American male as a lazy, carefree, subservient buffoon.³⁶

The stereotype could be reinforced by the way black leaders are depicted. In a network news review of black leaders, Justice Clarence Thomas and Mayor Marion Barry .

³³ Lippmann, W. (1922). Public Opinion. Toronto: Collier-Macmillan, 63.

³⁴ Lippmann, 63.

³⁵ Cummings, M. (1988). The Changing Image of the Black Family on Television. Journal of Popular Culture, 22, 75-85.

were mentioned most often. These two were controversial figures, both accused of a crime, sexual harassment against Thomas and drug charges against Barry. Of all the stories that mentioned black leaders, “more than one third included an accusation that the leader committed a crime. When compared to local news, network news stereotyping is not as blatant but still exists to “reinforce white’s antagonism toward blacks, especially among audience members already predisposed toward resentment and hostility.”³⁷

Whether the group is Hispanic, African American or Native American the stereotypes seem to be similar. Those in minority groups are characterized as lazy, violent, uneducated and of low income.³⁸ News coverage of minorities tends to be negative with stories about teen pregnancy, crime and gangs the norm. When minorities were covered positively, they were generally covered in sports and entertainment, categories that are considered stereotypical.³⁹ Nonminorities, on the other hand, were featured in a wide variety of stories where positive coverage did not focus on sports and entertainment but on everyday life activities.⁴⁰

In the 1940s, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese were stereotyped because of their ancestry. Approximately 70,000 Japanese Americans were relocated to

³⁶ Engen, D. E. (1994). The Making of a People’s Champion: an Analysis of Media Representations of George Foreman. Southern Communication Journal, 147.

³⁷ Entman, (1994), 516.

³⁸ Cumming, 75; Martindale, C. (1990). Coverage of Black Americans in Four Major Newspapers, 1950-1989. Newspaper Research Journal, 11, 96-112; Rouse, L. P. & Hanson, J. R. (1991). American Indian Stereotyping, Resource Competition and Status-based Prejudice. American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 15, 1-17; Shaugnessy, T. (1978). White Stereotypes of Indians. Journal of American Indian Education, 20-24.

³⁹ Gist, M. E. (1990). Minorities in Media Imagery. Newspaper Research Journal, 52-63; Hoffman, G. (1991). Racial Stereotyping in the news: Some General Semantics Alternatives. Et Cetera, 48, 22-30; Martindale, C. (1990). Changes in Newspaper Images of Black Americans. Newspaper Research Journal, 40-50.

⁴⁰ Gist, 58.

different states because of the fear of disloyalty not because of any proof of disloyalty. The fact that they were American citizens supposedly protected by the constitution and protected equally by the law regardless of race was disregarded. The media at that time was accused of relinquishing “its watchdog role, and to varying degrees, serving as a government publicist” by accepting the government’s decision without much questioning.⁴¹

Editorial reviews revealed that the mass evacuation was generally supported in 1941 and 1942. In some cases, the decision was supported just because the government said it was necessary. By 1944, the tone of the editorials changed with some people questioning the constitutionality of holding Americans just because of their Japanese ancestry. One subject missing throughout the editorials studied was background information on Japanese Americans. So while readers may have gotten the message that the encampment was necessary, they did not get “information concerning the social, cultural or historical contributions” of Japanese Americans.⁴²

Amount and Content of Minority Coverage

The content of minority media coverage is another significant area studied along with how much coverage minorities receive. When comparing minority coverage to white coverage, minority coverage is low and often has a different focus than coverage of whites.⁴³

⁴¹ Chiasson, L. (1991). Japanese American Relocation during World War II: a Study of California Editorial Reactions. Journalism Quarterly, 68, 263-268.

⁴² Chiasson, L. E. (1991). The Japanese-American encampment. Newspaper Research Journal, 92-105.

⁴³ Lichter, S. R., Lichter, L. S., Rothman, S. & Amundson, D. (1987). Prime-time Prejudice: TV’s Images of Blacks and Hispanics. Public Opinion, 10, 13-16; Murphy, J. E. & Avery, D. R. (1983). A Comparison Alaska Native and Non-native Newspaper Content. Journalism Quarterly, 60, 316-323; Thibodeau, R. (1989). From Racism to tokenism, the Changing Face of Blacks in *New Yorker* Cartoons. Public Opinion Quarterly, 53, 482-494.

In a review of the *Columbus Dispatch* from 1965 to 1987, the amount of minority coverage had changed little (3.22% in 1965 and 3.34% in 1987) but the tone was generally more positive. Stories on social issues decreased while crime coverage increased.⁴⁴ Crime coverage of Hispanics was greater in Southwestern cities when compared to Anglo coverage. All other coverage seemed to be similar.⁴⁵ One study did report that minorities received more coverage than non-minorities. The content however was “more apt to concern demonstrations and violence than the publicity received by comparable established groups.”⁴⁶

Previous to the middle 1960s, only a small percentage of characters on television were minorities. By the mid 1960s, black roles increased and some of the characters were intelligent, capable professionals. The 1970s brought about more roles for blacks but some of the roles were obnoxious, bigoted, womanizing black men. These characters did little to further the cause of blacks. Many times other roles were stereotypical black portrayals such as criminals. The 1980s showed blacks receiving starring roles of positive characters. Hispanic portrayals had not changed much over the years. Over these three decades the research found that “whites have portrayed 94% of the educated professionals and business executives, blacks have played 5% and Hispanics only 1%.”⁴⁷

The *New Yorker* magazine, studied from 1946 through 1987, used black characters less than one percent of the time in the cartoons of the weekly magazine. The black characters who did appear were many times non-American. Portrayals of blacks that.

⁴⁴ Pease, E. C. (1989). Minority News Coverage in the *Columbus Dispatch*. Newspaper Research Journal, 10, 17-37.

⁴⁵ VanSlyke, Turk, J., Richstad, J., Bryson, R. L. & Johnson, S. M. (1989). Hispanic Americans in the New in two Southwestern cities. Journalism Quarterly, 66, 107-113.

⁴⁶ Fedler, 110.

were included seemed to reflect the “historical alterations in the status of blacks.”⁴⁸ Only one cartoon was found over the 42 years studied that depicted a black character when being black had nothing to do with the relevance of the cartoon.⁴⁹

Black news was studied in a series of studies by reviewing issues of the *New York Times*, the *Atlanta Constitution*, the *Boston Globe* and the *Chicago Tribune*. The first study looked at the decades of 1950, 1960 and 1970. The second study used the same decades and added the *Youngstown (Ohio) Vindicator* to the review and the third study reviewed the four major publications during the 1980s. All three studies asked these questions: “1) How much coverage of blacks was of everyday life, 2) How much of the coverage was stereotypical, 3) How much of the coverage explains the problems facing blacks and 4) How does the coverage compare over the years.”⁵⁰

Results indicated that everyday life coverage of blacks increased over the years but so did stereotypical coverage in all papers except the *Chicago Tribune*. Any coverage explaining causes of black problems was minimal in the first three decades then increased in the *Globe* and the *Tribune* in the 1980s but decreased in the *Times* and *Constitution*.⁵¹ Another similar study showed that coverage of black problems was low when compared to overall black coverage. The content of the black problems stories focused mainly on

⁴⁷ Lichter, Lichter, Rothman & Amundson, 16.

⁴⁸ Thibodeau, 488.

⁴⁹ Thibodeau, 488.

⁵⁰ Martindale, 96-113; Martindale, C. (1985). Coverage of Black Americans in five Newspapers since 1950. *Journalism Quarterly*, 62, 321-328,436; Martindale, C. (1986). *White Press and Black America*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

⁵¹ Martindale, (1990), 96-113; Martindale, (1985), 321-328; Martindale, 87.

“economic, health, justice and crime issues involving low-income or no-income African Americans.”⁵²

Extensive information was gathered that reviewed media coverage of minorities from 1934 to 1996. One conclusion drawn from this research was that:

News coverage of the five racial and ethnic groups compiled in this volume paint a fairly devastating picture of the American news media. News coverage of these groups by the media of the white mainstream has ignored, stereotyped and distorted them.⁵³

The authors who came to this conclusion go on to state that they have found “clear patterns in the press’s flawed dealings with minority groups” and “remarkably similar shortcomings in coverage across groups and over time.”⁵⁴ Another volume on minorities and the media drew a similar conclusion. It stated that a “media content of all kinds over the past twenty years continually has underrepresented minorities” and depicted them “primarily in outdated stereotypes hindered by numerous subtle limitations.”⁵⁵

Minority stereotypes in media coverage abound. Evidence of stereotypes appear in television shows,⁵⁶ network news coverage,⁵⁷ and in the print medium.⁵⁸ One of the

⁵² Martindale, C. (1994). Significant Silences: Newspaper Coverage of Problems Facing Black America. Newspaper Research Journal, 15, 102-115.

⁵³ Deepe Kever, B., Martindale, C. & Weston, M.A. (1997). U.S. Coverage of Racial Minorities: a Sourcebook, 1934-1996. Westport, Ct: Greenwood Publishing Group, 345.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 345.

⁵⁵ Thomas & Carpenter, 193.

⁵⁶ Cummings, 75-85.

⁵⁷ Entman, (1992). 341-361.

⁵⁸ Lester, 380-394.

media's justifications for using stereotypes is that they communicate "a great deal of information quickly."⁵⁹ But many times this justification disregards accuracy.

News photographs are no exception when it comes to stereotypical coverage. Crime, sports and entertainment, which are considered stereotypical categories, are the subjects of most news photographs. Photographs of everyday life or special interests of minorities are generally at a minimum.⁶⁰

NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

Influences of news photographs

Photographs have the kind of authority over imagination today, which the printed word had yesterday, and the spoken word before that. They seem utterly real. They come, we imagine, directly to us without human meddling, and they are the most effortless food for the mind conceivable.⁶¹

This was the opinion of Walter Lippmann, a respected scholar and author. Many have agreed with his view that photographs have a powerful impact on society.⁶²

A few strong and dramatic images can have an effect on one's overall perception of an event. This was one of the conclusions drawn from a review of news magazine photographs of the Vietnam War. The author stated,

Selective perception by the general public of certain highly dramatic events led to the public's projection of those events as characteristic of media coverage of the Vietnam war to a far greater extent than was actually true.⁶³

⁵⁹ Thomas & Carpenter, 196.

⁶⁰ Lester, 380-394.

⁶¹ Lippmann, 61.

⁶² Goldberg, V. (1993). The Power of Photography. New York: Abbeville Publishing Group, 10; Perlmutter, D. D. (1995). Opening Up Photojournalism, Visual Communication Quarterly, 2, 9; Sontag, S. (1978) On Photography. Toronto: McGraw Hill, 5-6; Taft, R. (1964). Photography and the American Scene. New York: Dover Publications, 6-8.

⁶³ Patterson, O. (1984). Television's Living Room War in Print: Vietnam in the News Magazines. Journalism Quarterly, 61, 39.

The visual images of the Persian Gulf war also had a powerful impact on the public. The visual presentation was one of “us”, the Americans, versus “them”, the Iraqis. American leaders were shown in positive ways like at church, in command at a press conference or in the field surrounded by “cheering soldiers.”⁶⁴ Photos of military equipment were found 35% of the time representing the high technology used during the war.

Those who supported the war were pictured three times as often as protesters. Only 5% of the photographs showed the wounded or dead giving the impression that the human cost of the war was minimal. The authors of this research felt the “Gulf War was framed as a mini-drama.”⁶⁵

While the news photograph conveys a message, that message may not always be what the photojournalist intended. The public is influenced by its own biases, prejudices and points of view. At the same time, the photographer can be “influenced by his or her own preconceptions and prejudices, presenting in their images stereotypical attitudes.”⁶⁶

The public may view photographs as reality, expecting newspapers to use photographs that mirror everyday life. “Visual journalism seeks, then not reality, but “inreality,” intensified and interesting reality, events that really happened but that may not be representative of the greater picture.”⁶⁷ In any case photographs are said to be “important conveyers of information and shapers of attitudes” because it may be true that

⁶⁴ Moriarty, S. & Shaw, D. (1995). An Antiseptic War: Were News Magazine Images of the Gulf War too Soft? Visual Communication Quarterly, 50, 4.

⁶⁵ Moriarty & Shaw, 6.

⁶⁶ Banta, M. & Hinsley, C.M. (1986). From Site to Site: Anthropology, Photography and the Power of Imagery. Cambridge, MA: Peabody Museum Press, 7.

⁶⁷ Perlmutter, 9.

“the photos are the only representation of world events to which some people are exposed.”⁶⁸

The news photograph can be an asset to the written text by helping the reader better understand the story. Photographs provide more detail like the expression on a person’s face or the looks of the eyes or mouth to help provide a more accurate message and evoke more emotion than the written word alone.⁶⁹ On the other hand, the news photograph can detract from the written word and “inhibit the ability of readers to recall important information” about the news story it is intended to enhance.⁷⁰

It has also been noted that photographs can influence how a political candidate is perceived. Pictures help people form opinions of a candidate’s “physical well being, poise and vigor, economic status and sense of conformity.”⁷¹ Knowing this, candidates want to be photographed in ways that the public will be favorably influenced. Slight changes in things like camera angle or facial expression can

affect both the degree to which an individual is perceived to be fit for public office and the degree to which he is perceived to possess those qualities (competence, integrity, and likableness) that other research has shown to be relevant to voters’ evaluation of political candidates.⁷²

Minority News Photographs

⁶⁸ Blackwood, R. E. (1983). The Content of News Photographs: Roles portrayed by Men and Women. Journalism Quarterly, 711.

⁶⁹ Graber, D. (1987). Television News Without Pictures. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 4, 74-78; Kenney, K. (1992). Effects of Still Photographs. News Photographer, 41-42.

⁷⁰ Wanta, W. & Roark, V. (1994). Response to Photographs. Visual Communication Quarterly, 12.

⁷¹ Kenney, K. (1992). Election Photographs-They Influence Voters. News Photographer, 55.

⁷² Rosenberg, S. W. & McCafferty, P. (1987). The Image and the Vote, Manipulating Voters’ Preferences. Public Opinion Quarterly, 51, 37.

In looking at minority media coverage, news photographs of minorities tend to follow stereotypical patterns while the numbers of photographs published has increased over the years. A content analysis of African-American news photographs found that most of the photos were of crime, entertainment and sports which are generally stereotypical areas. Photographs of everyday life were found less often than the stereotypical ones. The author concluded that while the number of photographs increased over the years, “stereotypical images were high and news of special interest to African Americans was low.”⁷³

Photographic coverage of African Americans in magazines has increased from 1937 to 1988. But while the number of pictures overall increased, the categories in which they increased were stereotypical. Photographs of African Americans in sports, crime and entertainment increased while photographs of everyday life, social commentary and advertisements decreased. Also the percentage of photographs of African Americans were not similar to the percentage of the African American population.⁷⁴

A review of *Life* magazine’s depiction of blacks from 1937 to 1972 found no increase in black coverage over the years. The highest level of coverage was three percent which was in 1972. In 1937, the greatest amount of everyday life coverage occurred, that was point one percent of the total content.⁷⁵

Whites have been found to be pictured more often than minorities and more often in feature reporting. Generally, minorities were found most often in sports and news coverage⁷⁶ or coverage of violence and demonstrations.⁷⁷ While hiring minority

⁷³ Lester, 391.

⁷⁴ Lester & Smith, 128-136.

⁷⁵ Sentman, M. A. (1983). Black and White; Disparity in Coverage by *Life* magazine from 1937 to 1972.

photojournalists is one solution to the problem, they must be involved with all assignments not just those covering their own minority group. Research results showed that each minority group takes the greatest percentage of pictures from its own ethnic group.⁷⁸

News photographs in newspapers and magazines are another way for media to distort the image of minorities. While the number of images in newspapers and magazines has increased overall, they generally fall in the stereotypical categories. Native Americans are one minority group whose image has been misrepresented for years.

MEDIA IMAGES OF NATIVE AMERICANS

Stereotypes

◀ The image of Native Americans in the media can be found in the stereotypes of Native Americans that have been cultivated over the years. As early as the 1800s, the picture of Native Americans as poor, lazy, noble, drunken, savage and war-like has been dominant.⁷⁹ Descriptions like granite-faced cigar store Indians, riding horses, living in tipis, scalping and roaming the prairie began with Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows in the 1880s and has continued throughout the years.⁸⁰

↪ Origins of the term "Indian" go as far back as Columbus. He used it to describe the native people because he thought he had landed in India. Indian, which is a white man's term, may have been used out of "convenience"⁸¹ because at the time it began to be used,

⁷⁶ Oliver, M. (1994). Diversity. Visual Communication Quarterly, 3.

⁷⁷ Fedler, 117.

⁷⁸ Oliver, 5-6.

⁷⁹ Shaughnessy, 20-24; Stensland, A. L. (1974). Indian Writers and Indian Lives. Integrated Education, 12, 3-7.

⁸⁰ Stensland, 3-7; Churchill, W., Hill, N. & Hill, M. A. (1978). Media Stercotyping and Native Response: an Historical Overview. The Indian Historian, 11, 47-48.

⁸¹ Berkhoffer, R. F. (1978). The White Man's Indian. New York:Random House, 3.

there were an estimated “two thousand cultures and more societies, who practiced a multiplicity of customs and lifestyles, held an enormous variety of values and beliefs, spoke numerous languages mutually unintelligible to the many speakers and did not conceive of themselves as a single people.”⁸² But even with the knowledge of the diversity of tribes in American, Native Americans were still all grouped together as one people.⁸³

The idea that all Indians are the same with no diversity between the cultures is one misinterpretation that seems to dominate the thinking of whites and perpetuate the stereotypes. Another problem with the white’s view is judging Native Americans by “white ideals rather than in terms of their own various cultures.”⁸⁴ From this white point of view, Native Americans do not measure up. This judgmental thinking has helped to carry the stereotype to the present day.

↳ Media stereotyping of Native Americans can be categorized into three themes. They are: that Natives are “creatures of a particular time;” “Native cultures being interpreted through white values;” and “seen one Indian, seen them all.”⁸⁵ These stereotypical categories may be one way for white America to rationalize its domination of the Native American.

↳ A more current study showed the traditional stereotypes emerging among the public although all were not negative. Native Americans were seen as traditional, rural, hunters and associated with the past. A small minority still believed in the war-like savage image and the notion that “all Indians are alike.”⁸⁶ Those who viewed the Native people

⁸² Ibid, 3.

⁸³ Ibid, 3.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 25.

⁸⁵ Churchill, Hill & Hill, 47.

negatively (lazy, lack of ambition and lack of initiative), were more likely to live in close proximity to Native Americans or were competing with them for resources.⁸⁷

It seems that new beliefs are emerging but some traditional stereotyping still exists. While most subjects agreed that Native Americans are peaceful and civilized, and disagreed with the terms lazy and undependable, there were still significant percentages of those who agreed with the negative view. Twenty-eight percent agreed that they are lazy and 42% agreed with the statement that “Indian societies displayed a crude culture with a few simple languages.”⁸⁸

In 1995, the baseball World Series ended with the Atlanta Braves defeating the Cleveland Indians. Those games were protested because of the mascots. According to Frank LaMere, executive director of the Nebraska Intertribal Development corporation and a Winnebago Indian, the mascots perpetuate stereotypes of Native Americans.⁸⁹

Tim Giago, editor of *Indian Country Today*, believes the protest and the media coverage they received are positive for Native Americans. The mascot issue is one that affects the self-respect and self-esteem of Native Americans. Although the issue is far from resolved, he feels that several years ago it would not have been considered a newsworthy event for the media to cover.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Rouse, L. P. & Hanson, J. R. (1991). American Indian Stereotyping, Resource Competition and Status-based Prejudice. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 15, 13.

⁸⁷ Rouse & Hanson, 15.

⁸⁸ Hanson, J. R. & Rouse, L. P. (1987). Dimensions of Native American Stereotyping. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 11, 48.

⁸⁹ Blackwood, K. (Oct 21, 1995). Area Tribes to Protest in Cleveland. *Omaha World Herald*, 20.

⁹⁰ Giago, T. (Oct 21, 1995). Watch Series in Indian Moccasins'. *Omaha World Herald*, 8.

In a 1992 article he wrote, “Above all we are human beings. We are not mascots for America’s fun and games.”⁹¹ He further explains his distaste for the sports nicknames by giving an example. What if the name “redskins” was changed to “blackskins”? The African American population would probably be offended if people painted their faces black and wore afro wigs like they now do with red paint and feathers.⁹²

In 1992, *The Oregonian* made it the policy of the newspaper to no longer print sport team nicknames such as the Braves, Indians or Redskins, stating that these were offensive to Native Americans. The paper stated it could no longer perpetuate cultural stereotypes through the use of these nicknames. In defending the paper’s decision, editor Bill Hilliard stated,

I took this action with the belief that these names tend to perpetuate stereotypes that damage the dignity and self-respect of many people in our society and that this harm far transcends any innocent entertainment or promotional value these names have.⁹³

Journalists wrote many commentaries on this decision with both sides of the issue being defended. Some journalists felt the paper was going too far on political correctness which trivialized the issue. Others thought the names were offensive and eventually should be changed. However, of those who agreed that the names were offensive, most did not agree with the paper’s decision stating that objectivity would be hinged by not printing the names. They felt language should not be changed because it may offend someone and that the job of the newspaper was to mirror and record events in society, not to change it.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Giago, T. (1992). Mascot Issue will not go Away, and Neither will Indian People. Editor and Publisher, 46.

⁹² Giago, (1992). 7.

⁹³ Hilliard, W. (1992). Stereotypes on the Sports Page. ASNE Bulletin, 20.

⁹⁴ Jensen, R. (1994). Banning “redskins” from the Sports Page: the Ethics and Politics of Native American Nicknames. Journal of Mass Media Ethics, 9, 16-25.

Most Native American journalists see the use of the mascots as a continuation of the old stereotype of Indians wearing feathers on their heads and paint on their faces.⁹⁵

The Hollywood Indian

Films are one source of white America's stereotype of Indians. As far back as the 1900s in silent films, Indians were portrayed as savages. These stories were told by white American producers to white American audiences. The picture of the Plains Indian with the feathered headdress has been the most prominent in motion pictures. Native Americans were used most often in action scenes fighting with the white man. Yet some of these films showed diversity of the culture and used authentic dress. Occasionally, there were "pro-Indian" plots and portrayals of Indians having positive traits like "individualism, intelligence and cultural diversity."⁹⁶

But overall the stereotype has persisted as this:

They are usually characterized as riding horses, hunting buffaloes with bows and arrows or guns, wearing tailored leather clothing and feathers in their hair or in headdresses. They are seen as having been consistently cheated by whites and therefore as consistently against whites. They are portrayed as persistently involved with warfare, fighting as tribal units under a chief, and taking the scalps of their enemies as trophies. In more racist terms they are stereotyped as sexually desiring white women and therefore abducting them, being more adversely affected by alcohol than whites, and being humorless, taciturn and speaking simple languages.⁹⁷

When sound was introduced, the role of Native Americans in motion pictures did not change drastically. They were still used for action scenes, as a threat to the white man, as villains and as props. In the few speaking scenes that were written for Native

⁹⁵ Sunoo, B. P. (1994). Native American Journalists Oppose Media Stereotypes. Personnel Journal, 108.

⁹⁶ Price, J. (1973). The Stereotyping of North American Indians in Motion Pictures. Ethnohistory, 156.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 153.

Americans, they spoke mainly in short, broken sentences or they grunted. It was not until around 1950 that the historical portrayals began to be more accurate in that:

Audiences were now receptive to the idea of a more noble redman who had been victimized and forced into impossible situations. Indians were no longer seen as intrinsically bad or necessarily stupid. Indian heroes were often friends to the white heroes and there were both Indian and white villains. Indians were victims of circumstances created by whites and only renegade Indians caused trouble. Indians still lost, but then that was history, wasn't it?⁹⁸

During the 1960s, the old stereotype was beginning to change. Films tended to be more sensitive to Indian problems in a white dominated society. While violence was still a large part of the films, more attention was being paid to the details of Native American life. Yet in interracial relationships or marriages either the Native American man or woman died depending on the plot. White America was not yet ready to see these marriages end happily ever after.

Most Indian roles in motion pictures have been played by non-Indians. When Native Americans have been used, they have difficulty playing these parts which are written from a white person's perspective of Native American life. The Native American actors are then forced to act Indian according to the white producer's idea of how an Indian should act.⁹⁹ Native American leading men are usually played by actors who are handsome, with long hair, muscular, "one with nature" and "sexually direct but sensitive."¹⁰⁰

While small steps toward accurate portrayal of the Native people were taken, there were still some problems. Plains Indians were the most often portrayed, yet these tribes

⁹⁸ Ibid, 160.

⁹⁹ Price, 164-165; Edgerton, G. (1994). A Breed Apart: Hollywood, Racial Stereotyping and the Promise of Revisionism in *The Last of the Mohicans*. Journal of American Culture, 17, 4.

¹⁰⁰ Edgerton, 16.

are not representative of most Native American tribes. Other descriptions include the fact that:

No American Indians rode horses before Columbus and most still did not hunt from horseback in the middle 1800s. Most American Indians did not depend upon large game as their primary source of food, but were in fact agriculturists. Most American Indians lived in permanent houses, not in temporary hide tents. Most American Indians did not wear tailored hide clothing, but woven robes.¹⁰¹

Yet film producers continued to give Americans their version of history rather than the correct one. These stereotypes were needed to satisfy white audiences. The portrayal of a violent, savage culture may have helped to rationalize white society's takeover of the Indian people and their land.¹⁰² It may be true that the "Hollywood Western has influenced the public's perception of Indians more than any other communication form."¹⁰³

A 1950s film, *Broken Arrow*, is said to be the first Hollywood film to "depict the American Indian sympathetically." In this film, Hollywood deviated from the stereotypes of the past by not having the Indian characters talk in broken English, by setting "a tone of racial equality early in the film" and by accurately and in some detail dramatizing the Apache culture. The Association of American Indian Affairs felt this film had contributed to the settlement of Indians by depicting them as human beings.¹⁰⁴

A 1992 study looked at what Native Americans thought about Western films and the idea of cowboys and Indians. A focus group was conducted with both Indians and Whites to compare the two responses to the Western, *The Searchers*. Both groups liked

¹⁰¹ Price, 167.

¹⁰² Price, 159-160; Churchill, Hill & Hill, 48.

¹⁰³ Leuthold, S. M. (1995). Native American Responses to the Western. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 19, 158.

¹⁰⁴ Aleiss, A. (1987). Hollywood Addresses Postwar Assimilation: Indian/White Attitudes in *Broken Arrow*. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 11, 77-78.

the film and picked Westerns among one of the top favorites in terms of types of movies. In addition, both groups identified the most with John Wayne and next with the other white actor. Neither group identified with the Indian chief because the Indians were portrayed as the “bad guys.”¹⁰⁵

The differences emerged in “what they saw as authentic and what they saw as fictional,” with Whites believing the Westerns were an “authentic portrayal of the Old West.”¹⁰⁶ They believed the Westerns told about the history of settling the Old West. Indians rated the fact that cowboys and Indians were in the film as their reason for liking it. They did not think Indians were portrayed accurately and saw themselves as more like the cowboys who had freedom in roaming the frontier.¹⁰⁷

Another study that looked at Native Americans’ response to Westerns expressed some concerns. One was that the role models in the movies were not very appropriate for young Native Americans. Another concern was the popularity of the game “cowboys and Indians” when the “goal of the sport is to kill all the Indians; even the Indian children want to be cowboys.”¹⁰⁸ The way Native American women were portrayed was another concern. They are usually pictured as subservient to men when in actuality women in Native American cultures are usually treated as equals.¹⁰⁹

It has taken until 1998 for the first film about Native Americans to be produced entirely by Native Americans. The film *Smoke Signals* that portrays Indians as human

¹⁰⁵ Shively, J. E. (1992). Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of Western Films Among American Indians and Anglos. American Sociological Review, 57, 728.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 729.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 730.

¹⁰⁸ Leuthold, 165.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 166

beings with real emotions and sensitivities. It also realistically portrays reservation life and the “realities of poverty, discrimination, HUD housing and alcoholism”¹¹⁰ with the difference being that the film is from the point of view of those who have experienced these things.

Other Sources

The print medium and television have also played a part in society’s image of Native Americans. More negative than positive or neutral qualities of Native Americans have been recalled through watching television. Even though overall personal contact with Native Americans may be positive, stereotyping still occurred. Whites still considered themselves superior especially in the areas of patriotism, intelligence, alcohol abuse and being self-supporting.¹¹¹

In 1993 when the Hantavirus was found to be the cause of death in a Navajo couple in New Mexico, it began to be publicized in newspapers as the “Navajo flu”, the “Navajo disease” and the “Four Corners illness.”¹¹² The majority of those struck by the disease were Navajo but non-Native Americans also contacted the illness.

The print media erred in disregarding Navajo culture in their efforts to get the story published. “Navajo tradition requires a four-day mourning period for the dead, with the mourners refraining all the while from speaking of the deceased or even of death itself.”¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Hornblow, D. (Aug 2, 1998). Writer Hopes Film Alters how People See Indians. WorldHerald, 18.

¹¹¹ Tan, A., Fujioka, Y. & Lucht, N. (1997). Native American Stereotypes, TV Portrayals and Personal Contact. Journalsim and Mass Communication Quarterly, 74, 275-277.

¹¹² Bales, F. (1994). Hantavirus and the Media: Double Jeopardy for Native Americans. American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 18, 252..

¹¹³ Ibid, 256.

Regardless of this tradition, the media sought to find out the victim's names and at times published the wrong names.¹¹⁴

The type and amount of reporting on Native Americans seemed to change in times of Indian and white conflicts as found in a review of the *Skagit Valley Herald* and the *Concrete Herald*. These major newspapers of the Skagit Valley in northwest Washington state were reviewed over a number of years through the 1974 Boldt decision.

The Boldt decision gave Indians "treaty rights to fish in off-reservation locations and allocated half the Washington state salmon catch to Indian fishers."¹¹⁵ This federal court decision came as a "huge surprise to both Indians and whites"¹¹⁶ and created great tension between the two groups since whites had believed and acted over the years as if the entire salmon harvest was their own. During this period, newspaper reporting showed an increase in volume in reports on Native Americans with the emphasis mainly on Indian defiance.¹¹⁷

In another review of the print and television media, newspapers tend to portray Native Americans as alcohol abusers, lacking in education, in poor health, spiritual, troublesome and slow to change to the American way of life. Television shows about Native Americans are usually written by whites for white audiences with Native Americans portrayed as helpless victims of the white man who needs to be saved by the white man. Some public television shows have gotten better at educating the public on the Native

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 257.

¹¹⁵ Miller, B. G. (1993). The Press; the Boldt Decision and Indian-White Relations. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 17, 76-77.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 77.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 91-92.

American culture and the programming has shown a better understanding of the Indian people.¹¹⁸

Overall, there appears to be overwhelming evidence of stereotyping of Native Americans in the media. While the bulk of the research to date has reviewed films and their characterization of Indians, other research has found stereotyping in newspapers and television. Native Americans have been characterized as lazy, drunken, stoic, spiritual, helpless and inferior to the white man. And while there is a bit of evidence that these generalizations are changing for the better, the traditional ideas of what an “Indian” is may still be with us.

WOUNDED KNEE, 1973

Prelude to Wounded Knee

• The occupation of Wounded Knee took place from February 27 to May 8, 1973. Prior to the occupation by the American Indian Movement tension had been mounting in the Pine Ridge area. Several incidents occurred within the year before the occupation that created this tension between Native Americans and Whites.

• The first such incident was the death of Raymond Yellow Thunder on February 20, 1972. An investigation disclosed that he had been beaten and thrown into the trunk of a car. Then the four white men accused of the crime stripped his pants off and shoved him into a crowded bar. The same group harassed him again later in the evening, put his clothes back on and let him go.¹¹⁹ An autopsy revealed that he died from a cerebral hematoma, which most likely resulted from a blow to the forehead and aggravated by his head being banged around in the trunk of a car. The family was not allowed to see the body or the autopsy report. After going to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the tribal

¹¹⁸ Hill, R. L. (1992). The Non-Vanishing American Indian. *Quill*, 35-37.

government and private attorneys to no avail, they went to AIM for help. Through AIM's insistence, a full investigation was mounted and the details of his death were brought to light. In the end, three of the four white men were found guilty of manslaughter in the death of Raymond Yellow Thunder and sentenced to one to six years in prison.¹²⁰

- Another tension filled issue was in April 1972 when Richard Wilson took office as Tribal Chairman. Wilson was seen by some as a dictator. When he formed his "goon squad" in November of 1972, it helped to reinforce this opinion of him. The goon squad was Wilson's police force and considered to be a group of thugs who "beat up or threatened" anyone who opposed him.¹²¹

- Some Native Americans also felt Wilson was corrupt in that he was misusing funds and giving jobs to those who were friends or supporters and not necessarily qualified for the job. He also was criticized for being financially backed by rich whites and for banning AIM from the reservation. In response to this and other decisions Wilson made that they did not agree with, reservation Indians formed the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO). This organization was to help meet the needs of the people that they felt Wilson's tribal council was not meeting.¹²²

- The final incident that added to the trouble between whites and Native Americans was the death of Wesley Bad Heart Bull. He was stabbed to death in Buffalo Gap, South Dakota on January 21, 1973 by a white man. All the men involved in the incident, including Bad Heart Bull, had been drinking heavily. Darld Schmitz, the man who stabbed

¹¹⁹ Dewing, R. (1995). Wounded Knee, II, Chadron, NE: Pine Hill Press, 30.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 132.

¹²¹ Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973: In the Words of the Participants. (1974). Roosevelttown, NY: Akwesasne Notes, 14-15.

¹²² Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973, 15-21.

Bad Heart Bull, claimed he was protecting his girlfriend as Bad Heart Bull was threatening her.¹²³

~ Schmitz was charged with second-degree manslaughter. The trial was held in Custer, South Dakota, and Indians were not allowed in the court room. This, coupled with the fact that Schmitz was charged with manslaughter, not murder infuriated AIM and many other Indians who came together in Custer to protest. A riot ensued and in the end many were injured, the court house was set on fire and the chamber of commerce building next door was burned to the ground. Schmitz was eventually found not guilty in a trial that lasted three days.¹²⁴

On February 22, impeachment proceedings were once again being brought against Dick Wilson. Previous to the hearings, Wilson sought help from the state police, the FBI, the BIA and U.S. marshals. The marshals were “a Federal strike force, going anywhere, anytime without having to worry about local and state jurisdictions.”¹²⁵ Part of the team was a “sniper team supported by a squad of men with automatic weapons and two-way radios.”¹²⁶ This build up of government forces did nothing to ease the ongoing tension in the area.

The Takeover

~ The takeover of Wounded Knee village began around 7:30 p.m. on February 27. A caravan entered the village and several of the residents were taken hostage in their own homes. In addition to these hostages, AIM and OSCRO over took the Wounded Knee

¹²³ Dewing, 40-41.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 42-45.

¹²⁵ Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973, 24.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 24.

Catholic Church and burglarized the Wounded Knee trading post.¹²⁷ The FBI responded by setting up roadblocks leading to Wounded Knee while the occupiers had several bunkers around the village that were constantly manned.¹²⁸

→ The occupiers demands were quickly made public. They were as follows:

- * I. Senator WILLIAM FULLBRIGHT to convene Senate Foreign Relations Committee immediately for hearings on treaties made with American Indian Nations and ratified by the Congress of the US
- II. Senator EDWARD KENNEDY to convene Senate Sub-Committee on Administrative Practices and Procedures for immediate, full-scale investigations and exposure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of the Interior from the Agency, reservation offices, to the area offices, to the central office in Washington DC
- III. Senator JAMES ABOUREZK to convene the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs for a complete investigation on all Sioux Reservations in South Dakota.

People we will negotiate with:

- 1. Mr. ERLICHMAN of the White House.
- 2. Senators KENNEDY, ABOUREZK, and FULLBRIGHT - or their top aides.
- 3. The Commissioner of the BIA and the Secretary of the Interior;

The only two options open to the United State of America are:

- 1. They wipe out the old people, women, children and men, by shooting and attacking us.
- 2. They negotiate our demands.¹²⁹

Equally important to these demands was a directive to have Dick Wilson removed as tribal chairman.¹³⁰

* On March 1, a meeting took place between AIM and Senators McGovern and Abourezk and aides to Senators Kennedy and Mansfield. Previous to the meeting, the Senators and the aides were told there were no hostages at Wounded Knee and all were free

¹²⁷ Dewing, 55-56.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 69.

¹²⁹ Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973, 35.

¹³⁰ Ibid, 112.

to come and go. The Senators had refused to meet with the Indians if the hostages were not released.

The next morning, McGovern held a press conference stating that the four-hour meeting was filled with the Indians voicing some legitimate complaints. While the senators and aides listened to the Indians, little was accomplished in terms of ending the occupation. McGovern felt that “a full scale investigation of the BIA and new legislation to meet the needs of the Indian people” was necessary. He also spoke of changing the role of the BIA, dealing with unemployment on the reservation and meeting again to end the occupation. The complaints were then taken to Dick Wilson and to BIA Superintendent Stanley Lyman.¹³¹

On March 3, AIM requested its attorneys be present and on the following day, William Kunstler and Mark Lane, two lawyers known for defending liberal clients,¹³² agreed to represent those at Wounded Knee. Ramon Roubideaux, a Brule and the “only Indian attorney in the area”¹³³ was the Chief AIM attorney. On March 4, the Justice Department sent in a proposal that all non-Indian residents could leave Wounded Knee and would not be arrested at that time. They stipulated that those leaving could be carrying no weapons and would be searched by the FBI upon their departure. All who wanted to leave would have to do so by 6:00 p.m. on March 5th and must leave through roadblock I. After no one left Wounded Knee by 6:00 p.m. on March 5, the offer was extended until 6:00 p.m. on March 8. On March 7 and 8, thirty-eight children, four women and many residents of Wounded Knee who were at one time hostages left the area.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Dewing, 64-66.

¹³² Ibid, 66.

¹³³ Ibid, 44.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 71-73.

The 6:00 p.m. March 8 deadline was seen by the occupiers as a date and time of imminent attack while the government saw it as a withdrawal of their offer. Both sides readied themselves for a violent confrontation. The occupiers would not budge from their position because of their fear of arrest when they left the village.¹³⁵

The National Council of Churches stepped in on March 7 with a proposal for resolution that was agreed to by both AIM and the Justice Department. It appeared that a truce was in sight when AIM decided the agreed upon departure date for the occupiers was unacceptable and they wanted a planned meeting with Interior Department officials. Soon after the Justice Department decided the roadblocks, which had been ineffective, would come down on March 10. If this happened, AIM agreed that they would withdraw from Wounded Knee. As the roadblocks came down, AIM began to withdraw from the area as promised. But some of the Indians were going to remain and deal with the problems at the Pine Ridge Reservation and would be free to come and go in the Wounded Knee area.¹³⁶

The FBI, in an overreaction, decided AIM was not withdrawing. The Interior Department stated it would not deal with AIM until everyone had left Wounded Knee. At the same time, FBI Special Agent in Charge Trimbach insisted that he would “continue investigating what he considered were serious violations of the law at Wounded Knee and to arrest those responsible.”¹³⁷ With this the truce ended.

The final incident that definitely signaled the end of the truce was a shoot out between the FBI and a group of Indians in a U-Haul van where an FBI agent was seriously injured. Both sides insisted that the other had shot first. Soon after this, the government roadblocks were put back up and SAC Trimbach was reassigned. His hard line into the

¹³⁵ Ibid, 76-66.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 78.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 80.

investigation and arrest of the occupiers did little to help the volatile situation. Roy Moore then took over as SAC. He withdrew the FBI from the negotiation process and from dealing with the press. He felt those were the job duties of the Justice Department.¹³⁸

Gunfire had been exchanged sporadically since the occupation but after the breakdown of the March 8 negotiations, the gunfire was very heavy and occurred almost every night. The government moved their perimeter closer to Wounded Knee “until they were virtually on the edge of the village.”¹³⁹

Negotiations Continue

On March 11, the Indians declared their sovereignty and “proclaimed the Wounded Knee area the new Independent Oglala Sioux Nation (ION).”¹⁴⁰ From now on the US would be negotiating with them “nation to nation.”¹⁴¹ In addition, they announced that the “Treaty of 1868 would be the basis for all further negotiations.”¹⁴² According to this treaty, the President needs to be involved in the negotiations or the Indians could appoint an emissary to come in his place. The ION would speak for both AIM and OSCRO to those on the outside.¹⁴³

Various negotiation meetings took place over the next month, all to no avail. On several occasions, it appeared the occupation would end but then one side or the other would get heavy handed and violence would break out. During this time, there were

¹³⁸ Ibid, 81-85.

¹³⁹ Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973, 118.

¹⁴⁰ Dewing, 86.

¹⁴¹ Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973, 54.

¹⁴² Dewing, 86.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 86.

reports of internal fighting between AIM and OSCRO. The government was also having its share of internal conflict.¹⁴⁴

March 26 was a significant day during the occupation. First of all, it was the day Dick Wilson put up roadblocks in addition to the FBI roadblocks. Only US Marshals and the FBI were allowed to go through them. March 26 also was the day Marshal Lloyd Grimm was shot. Grimm had decided to go along on a helicopter ride over Wounded Knee. While he and two other Marshals were on the ground looking over the village, he was shot in the chest in an exchange of gunfire. The shot paralyzed him from the waist down.¹⁴⁵

On April 5, a ten-point proposal¹⁴⁶ was set forth by Ramon Roubideaux. The main demands consisted of a “return to a tribal form of government and the restoration of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868.”¹⁴⁷ The agreement was that if these demands were met, the

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 100.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 98-99.

¹⁴⁶ Dewing, 105.

The ten point proposal is as follows:

A firm guarantee of a thirty to sixty-day moratorium on arrest actions against persons Oglala Sioux and otherwise, invited and granted permission to join in the defense of Wounded Knee. That Oglala Sioux and others assisting in the defense at Wounded Knee would not be denied permission to remain at Wounded Knee; Action be taken upon criminal complaints and criminal violations reported to authorities; All receipts and expenditures of the Oglala Sioux tribal council be investigated and audited and those results be made available generally to tribal members; Under the authority of the Sioux Treaty and the “Indian Bill of Rights” of 1868, the Justice Department should protect the rights of all Oglala Sioux against unlawful abuses by “tribal government authority.” If trials should occur concerning any matters arising out of Wounded Knee, the United States would hold all trials outside North and South Dakota; services such as medical services, communications and phone service remain in force and on the agenda; administrative, congressional and executive actions to deal with all matters of concern to Oglala Sioux Indians must proceed at the earliest possible time. II., p. 105

¹⁴⁷ Dewing, 105.

occupation would end. Another part of the agreement was that a meeting would take place in Washington to establish a Presidential Treaty Commission. Russell Means was at this time considered the chief negotiator and would meet in Washington along with Chief Bad Cob and medicine man Leonard Crow Dog.¹⁴⁸

The understanding the government and the occupiers came to on April 5 in the tipi was different from the signed agreement that was later produced. In the tipi, they all had agreed that a meeting with the White House and a meeting to discuss disarming Wounded Knee would occur simultaneously. The agreement according to the US Marshals was that they would move into the village while the talks were taking place in Washington. What the government wanted is for those in Wounded Knee to lay down their weapons, then the marshals, themselves armed, would interview and arrest those with outstanding warrants. The Indians would have no such thing.¹⁴⁹

The three men did meet with a government official in Washington with their position being they “would not tell the people of Wounded Knee to lay down their arms until after the meeting with White House representatives had produced meaningful results.”¹⁵⁰ The government’s position was that all arms need to be laid down before any discussion would occur, so the impasse continued.

An End to the Conflict

The last month of the occupation was marred by the death of two Wounded Knee supporters. The first was the death of Frank Clearwater, who was shot on April 17 and died on April 25. The circumstances of his death differed between AIM’s version and the FBI’s version. The two sides even disputed the man’s actual name. AIM claimed his

¹⁴⁸ Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973, 145.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 148-151.

name was Frank Clearwater, an Apache from Cherokee, North Carolina. He supposedly had been resting in the Episcopal church when he stood up and was fatally shot in the back of the head. The FBI's version was that his name was Frank Clear, a Caucasian from Virginia.¹⁵¹ Their report stated he was "shot in an open field."¹⁵²

The second death, which would lead to final negotiations and an end of the occupation, was that of Lawrence Dean "Buddy" Lamont. Lamont, a resident of the Pine Ridge Reservation, was thirty-two at the time of his death. Once again, versions of how he died vary. One version said he was shot from behind by machine gun fire as he tried to leave a gas filled bunker. Another versions said the BIA police shot him in the back. A third version was that he was shot by an FBI sharpshooter. The autopsy revealed he was shot in the front chest with the bullet piercing his dorsal aorta and stopping in his back.¹⁵³

Frank Fools Crow, an Oglala medicine man, played a large part in the final settlement. He and three other traditional chiefs met with government officials who warned that some force would be necessary if negotiations broke down again. They took the government's information to Wounded Knee. Eventually an agreement was established based largely on the April 5 demands. Those at Wounded Knee also wanted a letter from Washington stating a meeting would take place to discuss treaty issues.¹⁵⁴

On May 8, all remaining at Wounded Knee disarmed and surrendered to the government. Fifteen of the 129 people processed by the FBI were arrested, bringing the total FBI arrests to 237. At Wounded Knee, " seven rifles, five shotguns and several rifle

¹⁵⁰ Dewing, 109.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 119.

¹⁵² Ibid, 114.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 120.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 123-125.

barrels and receivers along with about 2700 round of ammunition”¹⁵⁵ were found. The village itself was in shambles from the vandalism. The Episcopal church had been heavily damaged along with the other Christian churches in the village. The stench at Wounded Knee was utterly disgusting. This could be because of the sickness that was rampant in the village and the lack of running water, which the government turned off and on at will. This in turn kept sanitation facilities from functioning properly during the occupation.¹⁵⁶

After the occupation ended, the government did little to address the Indian’s ten-point proposal. Government representatives did come to listen to opinions on the treaty issues, investigate civil rights violations and audit the tribal government.¹⁵⁷ But after a promise for a second meeting, a US marshal was sent to deliver a letter that basically said the government no longer made treaties with the Indians and that only Congress had the power change treaties. The Oglalas were not asking for a new treaty but for a re-establishment of the 1868 treaty, which gave them control over a large piece of land named the Great Sioux Reservation. This land included the Black Hills. Any reasons for a second meeting to take place, according to the government, would need to be “put in writing first.”¹⁵⁸

-- Only misdemeanor charges were brought against seven tribal members as a result of the government investigation of the tribal government and those charges did not come until 1975. The civil rights investigations came up with no prosecutions by the Justice Department. Over 300 Indians were charged with violations stemming from Wounded Knee and the Custer demonstrations prior to that. About half of those were actually

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 127.

¹⁵⁶ Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973, 184.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 133.

↳ brought to trial and many of them were acquitted or the charges were dismissed.¹⁵⁹ Russell Means and Dennis Banks were tried in court together in leadership trials. The government's case against them was weak and the charges were eventually dismissed. On appeal the acquittal was upheld "on the grounds that a retrial would represent double jeopardy for the defendants."¹⁶⁰ The two were later imprisoned for violations prior to Wounded Knee.

The Media at Wounded Knee

The media played a large part in the Wounded Knee occupation. AIM leaders were well aware of the importance of the news media in having their grievances heard throughout the nation. "Newspapers, television and radio services were advised by an AIM official to send reporters and photographers to Wounded Knee to witness,"¹⁶¹ the events. But while AIM did all it could to encourage the press to cover their story, they were disappointed that the media, in their opinion, failed to report on the real issues. The media focus tended to be on the armed conflict that was occurring rather than what was being fought for.¹⁶²

After the initial seizure of Wounded Knee, the members of the press were not allowed into Wounded Knee or past the federal roadblocks. They were, however, allowed to stay in the area. Sympathetic coverage of Wounded Knee could be found in newspapers across the country with public opinion siding with the occupiers.¹⁶³ This favorable opinion

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 133-136.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 260.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 143.

¹⁶¹ Dewing, 57.

¹⁶² Dewing, 57; Hickey, N. (1973 Dec 8). Was the Truth buried At Wounded Knee? 'Only the Sensational Stuff got on the Air.' TV Guide, 34.

helped AIM to gain the support of many and to get donations of the necessary supplies needed for the people in Wounded Knee. They even got an appearance on the Dick Cavett show where they were able to convey to the public some of the basic Indian grievances.¹⁶⁴

On March 26, all press was removed from Wounded Knee. The occupation had been going on for a month and many conservative newspapers questioned the sincerity of AIM and its motives at Wounded Knee. AIM defended itself by saying “treaty rights alone were the reason for the presence at Wounded Knee.”¹⁶⁵ But even with this sector of the media ridiculing AIM and the occupation, AIM still had tremendous support. A Harris Poll in March showed fifty-one percent sympathized “with the ongoing takeover” and sixty-two percent in the East “agreed that the Indians had been mistreated throughout history.”¹⁶⁶ After the breakdown of the April 5 negotiations, public opinion began to erode and so did the media coverage. Stories on Wounded Knee were now tucked away in the middle section of newspapers or it was not covered at all.¹⁶⁷

A series of articles ran in *TV Guide* in December of 1973 that questioned television’s role in Wounded Knee. It questioned whether television had crossed the line from reporting the news to making the news. AIM was referred to as “PR pros”,¹⁶⁸ in their use of the peace pipe, tipis, war paint and warriors with braided hair in staging the event. The article questions whether or not these symbols “pander to television” or is the

¹⁶³ Dewing, 79.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 93-94.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 101.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 102.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 111.

¹⁶⁸ Hickey, N. (1973 Dec 1). Was the Truth Buried at Wounded Knee? *TV Guide*, 10.

Wounded Knee occupation a real cry for help from a people who have not been heard for many, many years.¹⁶⁹

In using these symbols, AIM just gave to the media what they had come to expect from Indians. “College-trained intellectuals in suits and hornrims as Indians” was not an image the media could accept. The AIM leaders used the stereotypes of “Indian warriors in braids,” “beating drums,” and sometimes “brandishing guns” at Wounded Knee and “the media of the entire world took notice.”¹⁷⁰

A *Time* magazine report stated the press was contributing to the length of the occupation by its presence and that many of the events were staged for the media’s benefit.¹⁷¹ The first charge was refuted by those who saw the occupation continue for another month and a week after the press was ordered out of Wounded Knee on March 26. Regarding the second statement about the events being staged, one reporter replied that many events are staged for the press, like Presidential press conferences, and this is not always something negative. It was also reported that the media was used by the occupiers in that they knew the government would not use full force on them with cameras rolling. Even Russell Means admits that this is one of the reasons the press was invited into Wounded Knee.¹⁷²

Minorities generally have not been portrayed accurately by the media. Most of the portrayals have been negative with an overemphasis on minority crime, sports or entertainment and little coverage given to everyday life situations. Yet some stereotypical

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 11.

¹⁷⁰ Koster, J. (1976). American Indians and the Media. Cross Currents, 170.

¹⁷¹ Trap at Wounded Knee. (1973 Mar 26). Time, 67.

¹⁷² Hickey, N. (1973 Dec 15). Was the Truth Buried at Wounded Knee? Cameras Over Here! And Be Sure to Shoot My Good Side. TV Guide, 44-46.

portrayals, like the image of George Foreman, have led to great success and popularity. It may be this very success with the stereotypes on which AIM was trying to capitalize.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

The press was invited to Wounded Knee to cover the village takeover. They came willingly and stayed throughout most of the occupation. AIM was accused of using the media to its benefit and staging events specifically for the media. AIM also was accused of using stereotypical images of Indians to get the world to take notice. It is the purpose of this report to determine if stereotypes of Native Americans found in the media are present in news photographs of the 1973 Wounded Knee takeover. This report will also seek to determine the image of the Wounded Knee takeover as seen in the news photographs of four local newspapers and whether there is a difference in coverage between the four newspapers. If stereotypes are found in the news photographs, the research will investigate which newspapers carried the most stereotypical photographs.

Content analysis will be used to review the news photographs. Content analysis has been the method of study used by many researchers studying news photographs.¹ Content analysis is defined as “a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.”² It

¹ The following studies have utilized content analysis in studying news photographs: Lester, P. & Smith, R. ((1990). African-American photo coverage in *Life*, *Newsweek* and *Time*, 1937-1988. *Journalism Quarterly*, 67, 128-136; Lester, P. (1994). African-American photo coverage in four US newspapers, 1937-1990. *Journalism Quarterly*, 71, 380-394; Tsang, K. (1984). News photos in *Time* and *Newsweek*. *Journalism Quarterly*, 578-584, 723; Moriarty, S. & Shaw, D. (1995). An antiseptic war: were news magazine images of the Gulf War too soft? *News Photographer*, 50, 4-10; Singletary, M. W. (1978). Newspaper photographs: A content analysis, 1936-76. *Journalism Quarterly*, 585-589; Miller, S. (1975). The content of news photos: women's and men's roles. *Journalism Quarterly*, 70-75; Blackwood, R. E. (1983). The content of news photos: roles portrayed by men and women. *Journalism Quarterly*, 710-714; Sentman, M. A. (1983). Black and white: disparity in coverage by *Life* magazine from 1937 to 1972. *Journalism Quarterly*, 501-508.

² Wimmer, R. D. & Dominick, J. R. (1994). *Mass media research, an introduction* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, p. 163-164.

is considered an ideal research method in communication research.³ The unit of analysis for this study is the news photograph.

The four newspapers that will be studied are the *Rapid City Journal*, the *Alliance Times-Herald*, the *Chadron Record*, and the *Valentine Newspaper*. The *Rapid City Journal* and *Alliance Times-Herald* are daily newspapers except the *Alliance Times-Herald* is not published on Sunday. The *Chadron Record* is a semi-weekly publication and the *Valentine Newspaper* is published weekly. The news photographs pertaining to Wounded Knee from each of these papers will be analyzed from February 27, 1973 to May 8, 1973. These dates mark the beginning and end of the Wounded Knee occupation.

The photographs will be classified using categories similar to those used in past studies of news photographs of a confrontational situation.⁴ The categories have been adapted to better answer the research questions of this study. The category on stereotypes is taken from studies on Native American stereotypes.⁵ The categories are:

1) Scene: The moment captured in the photograph will be coded as: a) an actual confrontational situation with Native Americans under fire or firing upon others, b) an actual confrontational situation with government officials under fire or firing upon others, c) a confrontational related situation in an area of potential confrontation but not actually

³ Babbie, E. (1995). The practice of social research (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, p. 307.

⁴ Sherer, M. (1989). Vietnam war photos and public opinion. Journalism Quarterly, 391-395, 530; Thompson, K. S. & Clarke, A. C. (1974). Photographic imagery and the Vietnam war: an unexamined perspective. The Journal of Psychology, 87, 279-292; Patterson, O. (1984). Television's living room war in print: Vietnam in the news magazines. Journalism Quarterly, 61, 35-39, 136.

⁵ Stensland, A. L. (1974). Indian writers and Indian lives. Integrated Education, 12, 3-7; Hill, R. (1996). High-speed film captures the vanishing American, in living color. American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 20, 111-128; Price, J. A. (1973). The stereotyping of North American Indians in motion pictures. Ethnohistory, 20, 153-171; Leuthold, S. M. (1995). Native American responses to the western. American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 19, 153-189; Churchill, W., Hill, N. & Hill, M. A. (1978). Media stereotyping and native response: an historical overview. The Indian Historian, 11, 46-56.

under fire, d) non-confrontational situation in an area of relative safety such as headquarters, cities or other locations.

2) Subject: The primary subject of the photograph will be coded as being either: a) Native Americans, b) Government officials, or c) other.

3) Portrayal: The way in which the primary subject was portrayed will be coded as: a) in an immediate life threatening situation, b) in a situation of discomfort/fatigue related to a confrontational experience but not in an immediate life threatening situation, c) a situation of relative safety without a sense of confrontation related discomfort or fatigue, d) Native Americans with weapons or e) government officials with weapons.

4) Perspective: The way in which the photograph captured the situation will be coded as: a) close-up view with emphasis on small numbers of people or objects shown in tightly cropped photographs, b) normal view with emphasis on full body shots or objects viewed in their entirety, c) distant views where backgrounds are highly visible and people or objects occupy relatively small parts of the entire image.

5) Stereotypes: The image of Native Americans as found in past stereotypes will be coded as: a) Indian as savage warrior with the image of the Plains Indians on horseback with tomahawk and headdress, with war paint on their face, living in tipis, roaming the prairie, b) Indian as victim with the image of Native American looking poverty stricken, sad, angry, drunk or lazy, c) Indian as noble redman such as a chief, a medicine man looking brave, stoic, free, happy, natural, child-like, innocent or simple, d) Indian as the vanishing American, often seen riding off into the sunset or seen as stuck in the past.

The research questions will be answered using these categories. The question on the image of the news photographs of Wounded Knee will be answered by looking at the scenes, the subjects, how the subjects are portrayed and the perspective from which the photographs were taken. These are categories one through four. The fifth category,

stereotypes, will answer whether or not the news photographs were stereotypical. The differences between the newspapers being studied will then be determined.

After the information is coded by the author, intercoder reliability will be established by another coder who will review a percentage of the news photographs. The frequency of each news photograph will be distributed across the mutually exclusive categories. The frequency distribution will tell how often the image falls into the various categories. The mode will be found to determine the central tendency of the photographs, that is the category most photographs fall into. This will help to answer the question of what image the news photographs gave to the Wounded Knee takeover. The image question will also be answered by looking at the frequencies of photographs in each category.

To determine if stereotypes are found in the news photographs, frequencies will be run on this category also. The frequencies will then be stated in percentages. Cross tabulations will be run to determine what the differences are, if any, between the newspapers being studied. Chi-square will be determined from the cross tabulations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In February of 1973, Wounded Knee South Dakota became the setting of the American Indian Movement occupation that lasted nearly three months. The events of the occupation were played out by the media. People on both sides of the issue have debated the intention and necessity of the media presence throughout the occupation. The American Indian Movement felt that media presence was important so their story could be heard throughout the world. The conservative media on the other side felt AIM was insincere and questioned AIM's motives. The purpose of this research is to review the news photographs that were published in four area newspapers during the siege and determine what image emerged, whether the news photographs were stereotypical, and if there were differences in the newspapers photographic coverage.

Content analysis was used to review 87 news photographs. Seventy-two (82%) of the photographs were found in the *Rapid City Journal*. Twelve (14%) were found in the *Alliance Times Herald* and three were published in the *Chadron Record*. No news photographs were found in the *Valentine Newspaper*. Therefore, the *Valentine Newspaper* will be excluded in answering the research questions. Intercoder reliability used to test the consistency of the categories studied was as follows: scene 82%, subject 88%, portrayal 88%, perspective 76% and stereotype 88%. Each photograph was analyzed as to the scene, subject, portrayal, perspective and stereotype of the image. These categories give some insight into how the occupation was presented in the news images.

Each of the images fits into one of the subcategories within each category. The mode, a measure of central tendency, was calculated for each category and reveals which subcategory most often described the image. A more detailed look at the categories can be found by reviewing the frequency tables.

There were four possible descriptions of each scene. The scenes were either an actual confrontational situation with Native Americans under fire or firing upon others, an actual confrontational situation with government officials under fire or firing upon others, a

confrontational related situation in an area of potential confrontation but not actually under fire or a non-confrontational situation in an area of relative safety. Only two of these descriptions were depicted in the news photographs. The mode, or description used most often, was that of confrontation with neither side firing on others or being fired upon. This scene was depicted 62.1% of the time (TABLE I). The rest of the time the scenes were of relatively safe areas. There were no news photographs of actual confrontation.

TABLE I
FREQUENCIES OF SCENE

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Confrontation but not fire	54	62.1	62.1
Area of relative safety	33	37.9	100.0
Total	87	100.0	

Confrontational scenes where neither side was under fire are captured in images such as government officials or Native Americans holding weapons in their bunkers, or standing guard of their territory with rifles in hand. One news page of three news photographs in the *Rapid City Journal* shows the mixture of confrontational scenes and relatively safe areas as seen in Figure 1. The first of these photographs shows a U.S. marshal aiming his rifle at AIM bunkers, a second photograph is of a marshal playing horseshoes and a third is of a marshal laying in the sun with a military tank in the background. The photographs with government officials in the scenes at times included playful images such as these of marshals playing horseshoes or sunbathing. Other playful images show a close up of a marshal with a dog licking his face and another image with a marshal in a bunker holding an Easter basket full of eggs.

The scenes with Native Americans are of anguish and destruction. Examples include an ambulance delivering a critically wounded Native American to the hospital and a woman crying because of the death of a loved one. A close-up of bullet holes in a car's windshield, the remains of a rancher's home that was supposedly burned down by Native



Contrasts at Wounded Knee

Scenes from government positions outside AIM-held Wounded Knee show the contrasts. In the top photo a U.S. marshal sights his rifle toward the church where militants have several bunkers. In stark contrast, the lower two photos show a marshal taking a sunbath and pitching horseshoes. The photos are reminders that while the surface is calm much of the time, the specter of death lurks nearby. (AP Wirephotos)

Figure 1

Americans, and the rubble of the old Wounded Knee trading post that was destroyed reinforce a sense of anguish and destruction. There were two peaceful images of Native Americans, one close up view of an infant on his stomach sleeping and a close up side view of an Indian with his head bowed meditating during mass.

Subjects of the photographs were coded as Native Americans, government officials or other. The mode for this category was Native Americans who were the subject of the images almost half of the time. While government officials were photographed less often than Native Americans, the government's military strength is pictured frequently. Several photographs of army tanks, helicopters and armored personnel carriers can be found . In addition, government roadblocks are pictured ten times while only two Native American roadblocks are pictured. The frequency table shows the subject to be Native Americans 48% of the time and government officials 28% fo the time (TABLE II).

TABLE II
FREQUENCIES OF SUBJECT

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Native American	42	48.3	48.3
Govt Official	25	28.7	77.0
Other	20	23.0	100.0
Total	87	100.0	

Discomfort and fatigue was portrayed most often in the portrayal category. Images of the portrayal were coded as an immediate life threatening situation, a situation of discomfort and fatigue related to a confrontational experience but not an immediate life threatening situation, a situation of relative safety without a sense of confrontation related fatigue or discomfort, Native Americans with weapons or government officials with weapons (TABLE III).

TABLE III
FREQUENCIES OF PORTRAYAL

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Immediate life threatening	1	1.1	1.1
Fatigue but not life threat	37	42.5	43.7
Relative safety	33	37.9	81.6
NA with weapons	9	10.3	92.0
Govt. official with weapon	7	8.0	100.0
Total	87	100.0	

Forty-three percent of the photos show some discomfort or fatigue but not in life-threatening situations. Close to the same amount of news photographs captured a sense of relative safety without a sense of confrontation (37.2%). Native Americans with weapons and government officials with weapons were each recorded in 9.3% of the photographs. Only one photograph showed a life-threatening situation. Examples of scenes of discomfort and fatigue are of Native Americans or government officials manning their respective bunkers or scenes of the bunkers in the foreground and the village of Wounded Knee off in the distance.

One telling photograph shows a large truck being packed with furniture and other household items belonging to a Wounded Knee resident who, with the help of two others, appears to be moving out of the village. A meeting held by Native Americans in the Wounded Knee church sanctuary and a press conference held by several members of the press show portrayals of relative safety.

The perspective taken by the news photographers was usually one of close up, tight shots (52.3%) with normal views being used 40% of the time. Only 7% of the photographs were of distant views (TABLE IV). The close up shots of Wounded Knee and those involved in the occupation get the reader involved with the action and the people who are the subjects of the news photographs.

The close-up shots of Native Americans show serious, mean and defiant expressions. One example of defiance in a news photograph shows a young Native American male wearing a headband, waving an automatic rifle that may be illegal, over his head. He has a defiant smile on his face (Figure 2). Government official close ups show them smiling or with neutral expressions on their faces.

The normal perspective shots are frequently groups of people. For instance, the images picture groups of Native Americans standing around listening to an AIM leader, members of the press sitting around a table waiting for news or government officials and Native Americans sitting around tables negotiating. The latter group usually has a tipi in the background. Several photographs show groups of Native Americans with government officials standing either inside or outside of the tipi during negotiations. The distant views are all of the village of Wounded Knee. They were either a 1973 photograph or one of the village in 1891.

TABLE IV
FREQUENCIES OF PERSPECTIVE

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Close-up view	44	50.6	50.6
Normal view	37	42.5	93.1
Distant view	6	6.9	100.0
Total	87	100.0	

When a photograph was stereotypical, which was 25.3% of the time, the stereotype was usually of the Indian as savage warrior. Table V shows the frequencies of each stereotype. The image of the Indian as savage warrior is consistent with the literature of Native American stereotypes. It has been one of the dominant images of Native



AIM'S WEAPON — An American Indian Movement member raises his AK47 automatic rifle early during the siege of Wounded Knee in South Dakota. The Chinese-made assault rifle, possibly a Vietnam souvenir, was first noticed eight days after the siege began. Some federal officials believe the Indians have other automatic weapons, but only this one has been seen.

(AP Wirephoto)

Figure 2

Americans.¹

TABLE V
FREQUENCIES OF STEREOTYPES

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Savage Warrior	14	16.1	16.1
Victim	3	3.4	19.5
Noble Redman	3	3.4	23.0
Vanishing American	2	2.3	25.3
No Stereotype	65	74.7	100.0
Total	87	100.0	

The Indian as savage warrior stereotype can be seen in a news photograph of a male Native American waving a rifle over his head. Other stereotypical photographs show Indians applying war paint or an Indian shooting a cow with a caption that began “Meat for the Village.” (Figure 3) One photograph showed a group of Native Americans, some sitting and some standing, around AIM leader Dennis Banks while he spoke to them. In this photograph one’s eyes go to the Native American man wearing a headdress. This man is a little bit taller than the others standing around him. The headdress he wears clearly sticks out above the other people. In addition, the headdress appears white in the photograph of mostly gray and black tones, making it stand out even more.

Cross tabulations were run to determine the differences, if any, between the newspapers. The obvious difference in the newspapers is the number of photographs each newspaper chose to publish. Eighty-two percent of the news photographs studied came

¹ Deepe Keever, B., Martindale, C. & Weston, M.A. (1997). U.S. Coverage of Racial Minorities: A Sourcebook, 1934-1996. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 24; Haan, Richard L. (1973). Another Example of Stereotypes on the Early American Frontier: The Imperialist Historians and the American Indian. Ethnohistory, 20, 144; Deloria, Vine. (1974). The American Indian Image in North America, as found in Pretend Indians, Images of Native American Movies. (1980). Ames, IA: University Press, 1st Edition, 50-51; Leuthold, Steven M. (1995). Native American Responses to the Western. American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 19, 159; Churchill, W., Hill, N., & Hill, M.A. (1978). Media Stereotyping and Native Response: An Historical Overview. The Indian Historian, 11, 48.



Figure 3

from the *Rapid City Journal*, which is a larger newspaper than the others. In looking at the variables newspaper and stereotype, the probability level for chi square is greater than .05. A probability level of less than .05 suggests there may be a relationship between the variables. Therefore, there is not a relationship between the newspapers and whether or not a photograph was stereotypical.

Differences can be found by reviewing the images of each newspaper as a whole. The *Chadron Record* ran three news photographs of the occupation. Visually, this newspaper printed a somewhat detached view of the action at Wounded Knee. One photograph is a normal view of a gentleman holding up a foreign newspaper that printed an article about the occupation. If not for the caption at the bottom of the photograph it would be difficult to figure out this photograph's significance to Wounded Knee. The second photograph is a view of the United States cavalry on horseback with the Wounded Knee village in the background. This photograph was taken in January of 1891 after the massacre at Wounded Knee in December the previous year. The third photograph is of two helicopters landing on a field. The caption states the pasture is ten miles from Chadron.

The majority of the news photographs the *Alliance Times Herald* published were close-ups of Native Americans that conveyed emotion. One photograph that stands out is of a male Native American from the neck up. His lips are turned down in a frown, his eyes are squinting and the existing light only lights up the right side of his old, wrinkled face giving him the look of a mean old Indian.

One photograph published by the *Alliance Times Herald* best symbolized the Wounded Knee occupation (Figure 4). The view is a close up of the back side of a Native American with the words "AIM, Indian and proud" written on the back of his jean jacket. He has a hat on with a feather in it. One arm is at his side and the other is slightly bent holding a rifle. This best symbolizes the occupation for several reasons. First of all, without AIM there would be no occupation. The rifle symbolizes violence or the potential for violence and also the Indians' willingness to fight for what they believe. It also feeds into the Indian as warrior stereotype.

The *Rapid City Journal* had much more variety in their visual presentation of the



HE'S 'INDIAN & PROUD'— This armed AIM trooper at Wounded Knee wears his feelings on the back of his jacket.

(Times Herald Photo)

Figure 4

occupation of Wounded Knee. The overall perspectives in most images was normal views. Close up shots that were used tended to be small photographs of both government officials and Native Americans from the neck up or chest up. Native Americans were photographed mostly in groups doing things like demonstrating, applying war paint, manning bunkers or roadblocks with weapons in hand or at meetings at the church. This newspaper carried most of the photographs of the government's military presence at Wounded Knee by running photographs of tanks, either as the main subject of the photograph or in the background, of armored personnel carriers and of government officials standing guard at bunkers or roadblocks holding rifles.

The frequency statistics of the differences in the newspapers are as follows. The portrayal of the occupation in the *Alliance Times Herald* was most often one of relative safety (41.7%). The *Chadron Record* and *Rapid City Journal* chose the portrayal most often to be discomfort and fatigue related to confrontation. The *Chadron Record* used this portrayal 66.7% of the time and the *Rapid City Journal* used it 44.4% of the time (TABLE VI).

TABLE VI
CROSSTABULATION OF NEWSPAPER VS. PORTRAYAL
(in percentages)

	Alliance Times Herald	Chadron Record	Rapid City Journal	Total
Life threatening	0	0	1.4	1.1
Discomfort/fatigue	25	66.7	44.4	42.5
Relative safety	41.7	33.3	37.5	37.9
NA with weapons	25	0	8.3	10.3
Govt with weapons	8.3	0	8.3	8

All three papers tended their perspective in the majority of the news photographs toward close up or normal views (TABLE VII). The subjects were Native Americans more than half of the time for the *Alliance Times Herald* (58.3%) and for almost half of the time (48.6%) in the *Rapid City Journal*. The *Chadron Record* did not use Native Americans as subjects in any of their photographs but used the "other" category 67% of the time (TABLE

VIII).

TABLE VII
CROSSTABULATION OF NEWSPAPER VS. PERSPECTIVE
(in percentages)

	Alliance Times Herald	Chadron Record	Rapid City Journal	Total
Close-up view	58.3	33.3	50	50.6
Normal view	25	66.7	44.4	42.5
Distant view	16.7	0	5.6	6.9

TABLE VIII
CROSSTABULATION OF NEWSPAPER VS. SUBJECT
(in percentages)

	Alliance Times Herald	Chadron Record	Rapid City Journal	Total
Native Americans	58.3	0	48.6	48.3
Government Officials	25	33.3	29.2	28.7
Other	16.7	66.7	22.2	23

The scene of the photographs for all three papers fell into only two of the four categories. These were scenes of confrontation but not under fire or nonconfrontational scenes in areas of relative safety. While the *Alliance Times Herald* used both categories 50% of the time, the *Chadron Record* used nonconfrontational scenes 67% of the time and the *Rapid City Journal* used confrontational scenes 66% of the time (TABLE IX).

TABLE IX
CROSSTABULATION OF NEWSPAPER VS. SCENE
(in percentages)

	Alliance Times Herald	Chadron Record	Rapid City Journal	Total
Confrontational/not under fire	50	33.3	65.3	62.1
Nonconfront/area of relative safety	50	66.7	34.7	37.9

The general picture of the Wounded Knee occupation as seen through these three newspapers was one of Native Americans as the subjects in confrontational scenes. The portrayal of the occupation was about equally split between discomfort and fatigue images and images of relative safety. There was only one photograph of an immediate life threatening situation. Most of the images were taken from a close up or normal view perspective. Stereotypical images could be found and most often they resembled the Indian as savage warrior stereotype.

In the literature, there is a significant amount of evidence that stereotypical images of Native Americans exist in the media, especially in films. In light of this evidence, it seems appropriate to examine in detail several of the news photographs with Native Americans as the subject. Six have been chosen for this review. The first three are stereotypical photographs and the last three are not.

This first photograph is of a long haired young, Indian male with a headband on his head (Figure 5). His arm and fist are upraised in a defiant gesture. In his upraised fist is an automatic rifle. The caption says that it is an AK47, an illegal, Chinese made assault rifle. The defiant gesture of the upraised fist alone would give him a stereotypical look, but in addition, he is raising an illegal weapon defiantly and threatenly which even further



Figure 5

reinforces the war-like savage stereotype as found in the literature.²

There is a smile on his face as he raises the illegal assault weapon in the air. The low angle of view the picture is taken from makes him appear powerful and threatening. The combination of the upraised rifle and the smile on his face makes it look like he is enjoying what he is doing. This again coincides with the wild, violent, savage Indian stereotype.

This second image is of the Indian, Oscar Running Bear (Figure 6). He is standing, holding a rifle and has a scowl on his rugged, old looking face. His facial expression makes him look like a threatening, scary, old Indian. He is photographed from the waist up and is the obvious center of interest in the photograph. It is not quite a close-up shot, which would give an intimate view, but it is close to being just that. The camera angle is a subtle low angle, making him appear sneaky and threatening.

The rifle in his hand gives the impression of a violent Indian. It is not just that he is holding the rifle, but the angle of the rifle is almost pointing directly at the person taking the photograph. He appears to have no plans of backing down from any fight that may occur. He wears the stereotypical Indian headband.³ The whole image of the scowling Indian, with a headband on his head and pointing a rifle is one portrayal of the violent, savage Indian stereotype.

This next image is not a great photograph from a composition stand point because of all the white space in the image (Figure 7). But this photograph is a good example some of the images of Native American stereotypes. The photograph is of a group of Indians on the roof of the trading post in Wounded Knee. All appear to be male, with one standing, who looks very thin, and the others squatting or sitting. One Indian is behind the trading post sign and can only be seen from the shoulders up. At least one rifle is clearly visible.

Two of the Indians wear feathers in their hats.

² Stensland, A. L. (1974). Indian Writers and Indian Lives. *Integrated Education*, 12, 3-7; Price, J. (1973). The Stereotyping of North American Indians in Motion Pictures. *Ethnohistory*, 156, 164-164; Edgerton, G. (1994). A Breed Apart: Hollywood, Racial Stereotyping and the Promise of Revisionism in *The Last of the Mohicans*. *Journal of American Culture*, 17, 4; Churchill, Hill & Hill, 47-48; Shaunessy, T. (1978). White Stereotypes of Indians. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 20-24; Rouse, L.P. & Hanson, J. R. (1991). American Indian Stereotyping, Resource Competition and Status-based Prejudice. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 15, 13.

³ Price, 156.



Oscar Bear Runner on guard (AP Photo)

Figure 6

Trading post lookout

Young members of the American Indian Movement use the roof of the trading post at Wounded Knee for an armed command post lookout over the territory they have held since Tuesday night. (AP Wire-photo)



Figure 7

Several stereotypes consistent with those found in the the literature are present in this photograph. The trading post gives the sense of Indians living in the past.⁴ The long hair and feathers in their hats are another stereotype.⁵ The Indian standing who looks very thin, possibly undernourished, looks like the stereotypical Indian in poor health.⁶

This photograph is of a group of Indians with rifles on the roof top of the trading post giving the sense of a band of warriors waiting to attack those on the ground. The low camera angle this photograph was taken from makes the group appear threatening and powerful. This image once again represents the savage warrior stereotype.⁷

The next picture that was reviewed is of an Indian woman in front of a church (Figure 8). The stereotypes that were common in the other photographs are not found in this photograph. The Indian woman is in the center of the photograph but she is not the dominant image, which makes her seem nonaggressive. She is not wearing any stereotypical clothing like a headband, a feather in her hair, tailored hide clothing or headdress.⁸ There is nothing in the image that makes her look poor, drunk, savage or lazy which are some common stereotypes.⁹ The photograph is rather tranquil with the absense of weapons, or violent acts or looks.

The church in the background symbolizes mainstream Christianity. It gives the feeling of serenity and peace. The church being bigger than the Indian woman in the photograph takes away from the aggression or violence seen in the stereotypical photographs. The shot is taken from a normal angle of view so the powerful and threatening feelings do not exist here.

The fifth image (Figure 9) was also taken from a normal angle of view giving it the sense of an everyday appearance of this scene. It is not imposing like those taken from a

⁴ Hill, R. L. (1992). The Non-Vanishing American Indian. *Quill*, 35-37; Rouse & Hanson, 13.

⁵ Price, 156; Edgerton, 4.

⁶ Hill, 36.

⁷ Price, 156.

⁸ Price, 153.

⁹ Shaunessy, 20-24; Stensland, 3-7.



Barricade in front of church (AP photos)

Figure 8



Figure 9

low camera angle. This photograph is of a group of Indians, most of them sitting, listening to the Indian woman who is the center of interest. She is standing holding a bolt of cloth. The conversation is taking place in a tranquil atmosphere.

The body language such as the standing woman's bowed head, no direct eye contact with the camera and most of the Indians seated, speak to the nonaggressive manner in which this meeting is being held. There is a lack of violence and hostility in the group, which can be found in many stereotypical images. There is also an absence of the stereotypical looks of the headband, feathers or headdress. There are no weapons present.

The final photograph for review is of a baby girl sleeping on her stomach (Figure 10). She is resting on a blanket and is partially covered by another blanket. This is a blissful shot of an eighteen month old Indian child. She is sleeping peacefully. A lack of violence is implied because she is sleeping soundly. From this photograph of the sleeping child comes a sense of family and humanness, which is opposite of the savage warrior Indian stereotype. The clothes she wears do not appear to be anything different than other American children would wear, hence the idea of fitting into the mainstream is present, rather than the stereotype of Indians being slow to change to the American way of life.¹⁰

The literature so often describes Indians as violent and savage.¹¹ The photograph of this baby shows the complete opposite. Absent from this photograph is any kind of aggression. There are no weapons, no headbands, or no long hair in the picture. A child can also symbolize hope for the future. This is opposite of the stereotype of Native Americans living in the past as they so often have been categorized.¹² She appears to be a healthy little girl, which is opposite of the stereotype of the Indian in bad health.¹³

This research found only 25% of the photographs of Native Americans to be stereotypical. This is a small percentage in relation to the large body of literature that has found Native American stereotypes throughout the media. Most often this stereotypical

¹⁰ Hill, 35-37.

¹¹ Price, 156; Shaunessy, 20-24; Stensland, 3-7; Rouse & Hanson, 13; Churchill, Hill & Hill, 47-48.

¹² Stensland, 3-7; Churchill, Hill & Hill, 47.

¹³ Hill, 35-37.

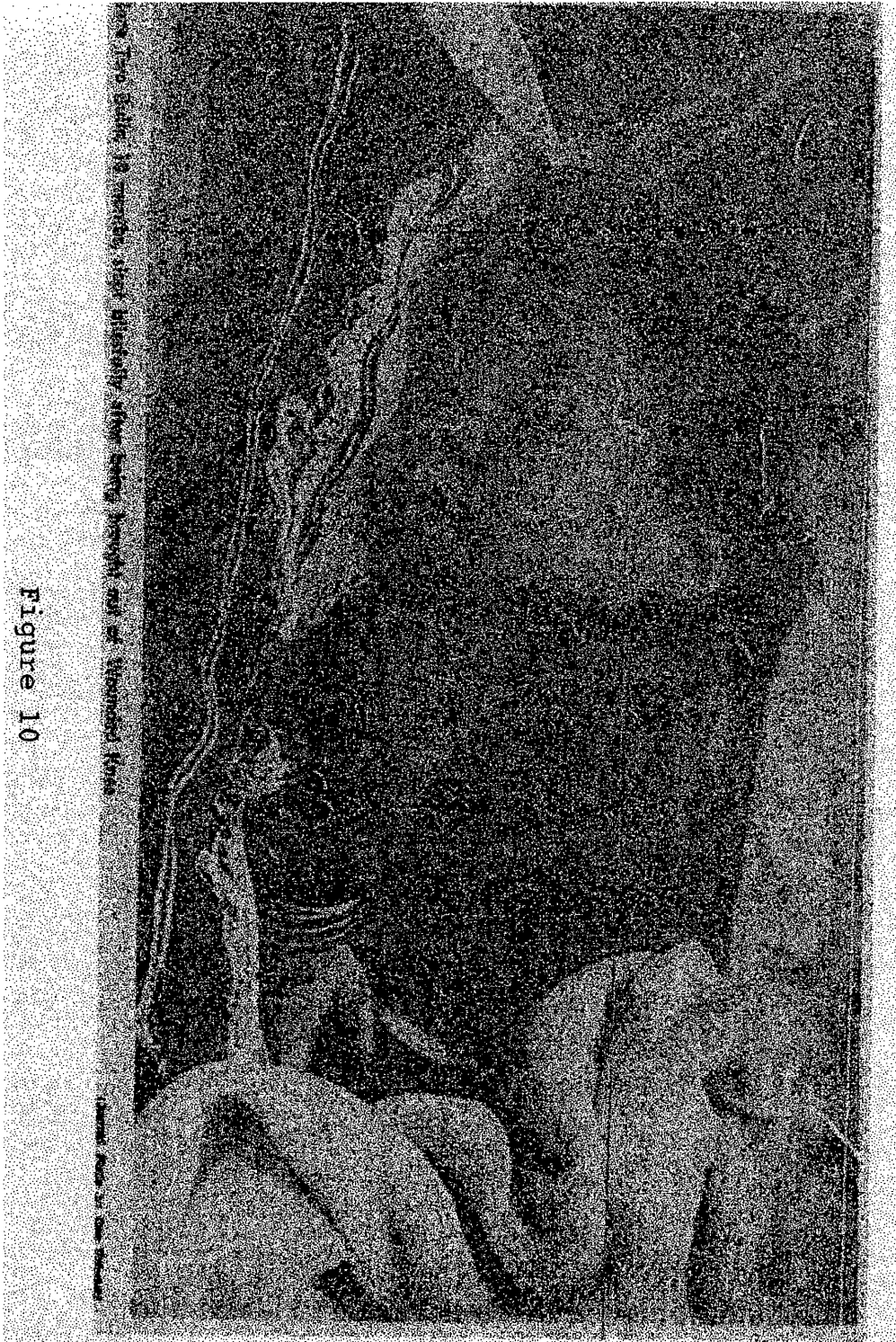


Figure 10

image was of the savage warrior. They showed the Indian to be fierce, threatening and forceful. An overwhelming majority of the stereotypical photographs in this research show Native Americans in this light.

In general, these images from the three local newspapers make it clear there is a confrontation occurring at Wounded Knee. The images portray the occupation with situations of either discomfort and fatigue or of relative safety. Only once is there a photograph of a life threatening situation and no photographs were published of either side under fire or being fired upon. The images of the confrontation do not appear to be severe, but there are several photographs of government army tanks, helicopters and armored personnel carriers.

Native Americans are most often the subject of the photographs. Government officials were photographed less often than Native Americans were, but images of government officials with weapons were almost as frequent as images of Native Americans with weapons. The photographs were shot from close-up views most of the time, with normal view shots being used almost as frequently. Shots of distant views were not used very often.

The newspapers each took a different approach in their photographic coverage. Most of the news photographs came from the *Rapid City Journal*, which is the largest of the three newspapers. It is the only one of the three that is printed daily. The *Alliance Times Herald* and the *Chadron Record* are smaller local newspapers that ran a combined total of fifteen news photographs. The *Rapid City Journal's* photographs most often pictured government related images. The *Alliance Times Herald* pictured several close-up shots of Native Americans, and the *Chadron Record* used photographs related to the Wounded Knee occupation, but none that were taken at Wounded Knee during the occupation.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions can be drawn from the results of this study. One is that the newspapers studied chose to use different approaches to the news photograph coverage of the Wounded Knee occupation. The *Chadron Record* ran news photographs that were disengaged from the occupation. None of the photographs were taken at Wounded Knee during the time of the occupation. The *Alliance Times Herald* ran mainly close-up shots of Native Americans that conveyed emotion. The *Rapid City Journal* targeted a majority of their news photographs on the government and its military presence.

The number of photographs that each newspaper published is an obvious difference between the newspapers. The *Rapid City Journal* published more news photographs than the other newspapers in the study. Since it is the only daily paper, it would make sense that it has more news photograph coverage. But the *Alliance Times Herald*, published six times a week at the time of the occupation, could have chosen to publish more than twelve news photographs.

Since there were so few news photographs found in the four newspapers studied, it is difficult to generalize the results. If the news photograph helps to explain a story and provides a more accurate, detailed message¹, it would make sense to publish more news photographs of the occupation which was a complicated story.

It is interesting to note that no news photographs were published of the occupation in the Valentine Newspaper. It can only be speculated as to why the newspaper chose not to run any news photographs of an event that was so close to home and that lasted the length of time it did. Valentine is only 125 miles from Wounded Knee.

¹ Graber, D. (1987). Television News Without Pictures. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 4, 74-78; Kenney, K. (1992). Effects of Still Photographs. News Photographer, 41-42.

The newspapers chose not to portray the Wounded Knee occupation as a life-threatening situation. Discomfort and fatigue were popular portrayals of the occupation but so were portrayals of relative safety. The scenes of the news photographs did not show any actual confrontation or either side firing or being fired upon. Ironically, shoot outs took place between FBI officials and the occupiers on many occasions. An FBI agent was shot resulting in permanent paralysis and two Wounded Knee supporters were shot. Both Native Americans died from their wounds. This lack of images portraying life threatening situations coupled with images of US marshals doing things like sun bathing and playing horseshoes could lead one to believe that the three newspapers through their use of the images did not take the occupation seriously.

If the news photograph is an important conveyer of information, or the only message about an event that a person might see², the photographs reviewed seemed to send the message that the government was not very concerned about what was going on inside Wounded Knee once they had their military machinery in place. With many photographs of tanks, armored personnel carriers, government helicopters and armed personnel at the various roadblocks, the image comes across that the government had things under control. It also appeared that the government had the upper hand when it came to military might. The government, therefore, had little to worry about as the messages sent by the images of the government officials sunbathing or playing horseshoes would convey.

Another conclusion that can be drawn has to do with the stereotypical news photographs. That there were stereotypical news photographs of Native Americans is not surprising in light of the overwhelming body of literature that speaks of Native American

² Blackwood, R. E. (1983). The Content of News Photographs: Roles Portrayed by Men and Women. *Journalism Quarterly*, 711.

stereotypes in the media. The savage warrior stereotype was used most often. This gives the impression that Native Americans are still thought of as savage, or at least they are still being portrayed that way. This should also come as no surprise in light of the literature that has found that minorities, such as Native Americans, many times are molded into an image by the media that has not changed over the years regardless of its truthfulness.³

It could be argued that this savage warrior image that was being photographed hurt AIM's credibility. While their hope was that the stereotypes would get them national attention, it may have given the government a reason not to take them seriously. Who wants to or can deal reasonably with a savage? While AIM did get media attention through the occupation and its use of stereotypical images, the message of the Indian's plight according to these news photographs did not get out. AIM may have been correct in complaining that the media failed to report on the real issues.

The message that did come out about Native Americans according to the news photographs is that they are savage, violent and warlike. They still live in tipis and have to kill their own animals for food. The images of their savageness and violence are seen in photographs of a rancher's farm burned to the ground and the Wounded Knee trading post completely destroyed. These images bring back visions of stereotypical cowboys and Indians movies where the Indians destroyed villages and killed innocent people.

Six photographs of Native Americans were analyzed in detail. Three of the photographs were stereotypical and three were not stereotypical images. The stereotypical images are examples of the savage Indian stereotype. Low camera angles, rifles and assault weapons, and defiant looks and gestures were used to portray the violent Indian.

³ Atkin, D. (1991). The Evolution of Television Series Addressing Single Women, 1966-1990. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 35, 520; Northcott, H. C., Seggar, J. F., & Hinton, J. L. (1975). Trends in TV Portrayal of Blacks and Women, *Journalism Quarterly*, 52, 744; Seggar, J. F., Hafen,

The photographs that were not stereotypical were of nonaggressive scenes. The camera angles were from a normal view and there is an absence of weapons or violence in these photographs. In these six photographs, the stereotypical photographs used Native American males as the center in interest. Native American females were the center of interest in the photographs that were not stereotypical.

In 1973, the American Indian Movement decided to occupy the small village of Wounded Knee, South Dakota in part to tell the nation of the injustices being done to Native Americans in the area. This historical site was chosen because of the significance of the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee. AIM's strategy was to use this site, the crisis situation in the village and stereotypical images of themselves to gain national exposure.

Native Americans did get attention, but whether it was the type they wanted is difficult to measure. As the results of this study show, Native Americans were usually the subjects of the news photographs published. The Indian as savage warrior stereotype was used most often when the image was stereotypical. Scenes of confrontational situations were common but no images of Native Americans or government officials firing weapons or being fired upon were published.

The fact that there were many life-threatening situations during the Wounded Knee occupation were not depicted by the three newspapers. The pictures show only one life threatening situation. Many scenes are of turbulence and discontent but none exhibit the true sense of violence that occurred during the occupation. Scenes of discomfort and fatigue or relative safety were the usual portrayal.

The images conveyed a fight between the government and Native Americans. It is obvious looking at images of armored personnel carriers, tanks and helicopters that the government had much more military power. The only weapons Native Americans are

pictured with are rifles. The images capture the sense of a lopsided battle with Native Americans as the underdog, unequipped to do battle with the government.

In a sense, these images convey the real problem underlying the occupation at Wounded Knee. The government did not take the Native Americans seriously in a military sense or in terms of negotiating their demands. Vine Deloria, a respected Native American author, used strong words in criticizing the AIM occupation:

The relevant social issues of the revolt were buried by the spectacle of Indians on horseback racing around before the cameras. If the activists had understood history of American-Indian relationship they would have seen themselves as the final clowns of the drama, for they served primarily to reinforce the worst suspicions of whites at a time when the ancient and derogatory image could have been buried once and for all.⁴

In the end, AIM's tactics did help change some attitudes. But the government did not give in to any of the demands and did nothing regarding the issues raised in the Indian's ten-point proposal. For all their efforts at Wounded Knee, many Native Americans were arrested and brought to trial. Most were acquitted.

Native American stereotypes in news photographs is a topic that can be researched further. In review of the literature, there are many studies that looked at Native American stereotypes in other media such as print, film and literature, but very few, if any, that looked at news photographs. Native Americans have been stereotyped for many, many years. Most of the stereotypes have been unfair and derogatory. The media helped to create these negative stereotypes and its use of images can be a powerful tool in helping to dispel the negative images.

Comedy Drama, 1971-1980. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 25, 282.

⁴ Deloria, V. (1974). The American Indian Image in North America. in G. Bataille & Silet, C. (1980). *The Pretend Indians. Images of Native Americans in the Movies*. Ames, IA: University Press, 1st edition, 51.

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